

On Hume and Husserl: An Analysis of Phenomenology as a Development of the Humean Science of Man

by

Daniel Joseph Brown

Oxford Brookes University

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the award of Doctor of
Philosophy.

January 2023

With thanks to:

Dr Dan O'Brien

and

Carina Klingenberg

Contents

<u>Abstract</u>	7
<u>Introduction</u>	8
<u>Chapter 1 – Principles of Humean Philosophy</u>	29
1.1 – Impressions and Ideas	29
1.2 – The Principle of Association	32
1.3 – The Separability Principle	34
1.4 – Belief in External Bodies	37
1.5 – The Identity of External Bodies	43
<u>Chapter 2 – Principles of Eidetic Science</u>	51
2.1 – Inward Evidence	52
2.2 – Existence and Essence	56
2.3 – Eidetic Intuition and the Hierarchy of Essences	60
2.4 – Limitations of Natural Science	66
2.5 – Method and Functionality of the Phenomenological Epoché	72
2.6 – Misconceptions Concerning the Phenomenological Epoché	77
<u>Chapter 3 – Problem's in Hume</u>	83
3.1 – Belief in the Unity of Distinct Existences	85

3.2 – Belief in the Notion of Self	89
3.3 – Hume’s Labyrinth	96
<u>Chapter 4 – Intentionality in Phenomenology</u>	107
4.1 – Intentional In-existence	108
4.2 – The Content/Object Distinction	112
4.3 – The Nature of Objects	114
4.4 – ‘Objectless’ Presentations	117
<u>Chapter 5 – Intentionality in Hume</u>	123
5.1 – The Basis of the Argument	124
5.2 – Extrinsic Intentionality – The ‘Causal Role’ Account	134
5.3 – Intrinsic Intentionality	145
<u>Chapter 6 – Noesis and Noema</u>	162
6.1 – Noesis	163
6.2 – Noema	166
6.2.1 – Føllesdal	166
6.2.2 – Sokolowski	173
6.2.3 – Synthesis	184
6.3 – Noesis & Noema compared to Impressions & Ideas	190
<u>Chapter 7 – Reassessing Hume</u>	203
7.1 – Reassessment of the Humean Concept of Ideas	204

7.2 – Husserl’s Objection to Empirical ‘Ideas’	212
7.3 – Intensionality	215
7.4 – Theory of Meaning	227
7.5 – Meaning-Intention and Meaning-Fulfilment	230
7.6 – Phenomenological Unity of Expressions	232
7.7 – Clarifications	239
 <u>Chapter 8 – Solving the Labyrinth</u>	 243
8.1 – Noetic-Noematic Structures of Positional Consciousness	244
8.2 – Belief-Characteristics and Positional Acts	252
8.3 – ‘Founded’ or ‘Predicated’ Positional Acts	262
 <u>Conclusion</u>	 281
 <u>Bibliography</u>	 304

Abbreviations for Cited Works

A Treatise of Human Nature (David Hume) – T X.X.X.X

Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion (David Hume) - DNR

Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint (Franz Brentano) – PES

Logical Investigations (Edmund Husserl) – LI

Philosophy as a Rigorous Science (Edmund Husserl) – PRS

Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy: Volume 1
(Edmund Husserl) – Ideas I

Erste Philosophie (Edmund Husserl) – EP

Formal and Transcendental Logic (Edmund Husserl) – FTL

The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology (Edmund Husserl) –
Crisis

Abstract

There is an acknowledged link between the philosophies of Edmund Husserl and David Hume, in that Husserl expressed on several occasions his admiration for Hume's work, and on one notable occasion, claimed that all the problems Hume tackles in the *Treatise on Human Nature* in fact belong to the field of phenomenology. Nevertheless, these two philosophical traditions have generally been considered as separate schools of thought, even on those rare occasions when both schools enter into the same discussion.

Consequently, there has been a dearth of research into the apparent relationship between Humean thought and Husserl's phenomenology. If we suppose that this relationship does exist, and that Husserl thought of Humean ideas as a sort of proto-phenomenology, then there are three main questions which we need to answer. First, to what extent does Hume himself exhibit signs of phenomenological thought? Second, to what extent does intentionality – a concept central to phenomenology – represent an innovation on Humean philosophy? Third, to what extent is Husserl able to resolve problems in Humean theory with his phenomenological approach? To answer these questions we will begin in chapters 1 and 2 with an overview of the core principles of each theory, before discussing the problems in Hume's theory which necessitate Husserl's intervention in chapter 3. Next, in chapter 4, we introduce the discussion of intentionality, and in chapter 5, we explore its possible presence in Humean philosophy, after which we discuss the manner in which Husserl articulates the nature of intentionality with his concepts of 'noesis' and 'noema' in chapter 6. In chapter 7, we move on to a detailed analysis of how Husserl attacks Hume's 'theory of meaning', and replaces it with his own, before concluding in chapter 8 with a demonstration of how this new theory bypasses the problems inherent to Hume's system of thought.

Introduction

David Hume has been one of the most respected names in western philosophy, and one of the most widely discussed since his own lifetime, and while criticism of Hume by his contemporaries was richest during the later years of his career, much of his enduring legacy can be attributed to his exceptionally well-known book, *A Treatise of Human Nature*. This book, though achieving little critical regard in his lifetime, being generally regarded as “abstract and unintelligible” (Mossner, 1950, p. 195), has been the source of much discussion in the years since Hume’s death thanks to its rich, detailed discussion of philosophical questions of perennial importance, and its sometimes staggeringly impactful rebukes of what had been some very central assumptions of western philosophy up to that point. Among the most significant of Hume’s contributions to what he called ‘the science of man’, a term used to encompass a broad range of topics including epistemology, psychology, philosophy of mind, moral philosophy and other, more peripheral fields, was the classification of two distinct kinds of perception, these being *impressions* and *ideas*. The observation that ideas, those perceptions which resided in the mind after the first experience had passed, were always ultimately copied from or comprised of the more immediate impressions led to the formation of a truly empirical philosophy rooted in pure, first-hand experience, bringing English empiricism to its purest form. Reasoning from this principle, Hume developed an expansive theory of human nature, addressing questions of how our ideas interact with one another in the mind, how they influence our beliefs, how we make connections between our different ideas, and how we are able to exercise reason. Key to many of these discussions is Hume’s discovery that, upon reflection, all of our different perceptions are discovered to be necessarily distinct from one another and hence, are entirely separable. Hume’s efforts to

explain how the mind is able to make connections between these distinct perceptions thus forms the basis of much of the first book of the *Treatise*, wherein are contained most of the arguments that will be relevant to us in this thesis. Hume attempts to; a) explain our propensity to make connections between distinct ideas, and b) explain why we perceive these connections as though they were necessary when necessity in the strictest sense is not possible. He does this by exploring the different types of relations between our differing perceptions that it is possible for us to perceive. There are three relations, Hume says, which allow us to make associations between our perceptions, and these are *resemblance*, *contiguity*, and *causation* (T 1.1.4.1). If we observe by virtue of one of these relations, that certain ideas arise in conjunction with each other, we develop the habit, Hume tells us, of associating those ideas with one another, even though no necessary association exists between them. Using these three principles; of impressions and ideas, of the separability of our perceptions, and of the habitual association of these perceptions, Hume is able to establish himself as an unusually perspicacious philosopher, and hence provides us with his philosophy which is of such depth and complexity that we do not seem to have run out of new things to say about it in the last three-hundred years.

For all its brilliance and influence however, Hume's philosophy is not without its difficulties, a fact of which Hume was himself aware. Throughout the *Treatise*, particularly the first book, Hume encounters topics that he has the gravest difficulties addressing due to the abstruse nature of the subject matter and the restrictions of his philosophical system which proceed from his conscientiously empirical style. Addressing the nature of these difficulties and the reasons for Hume's failure to overcome them will form a significant part of this thesis, so I will outline some of them here. Firstly, Hume has a theory of abstraction which, while an

improvement on the work of his empiricist predecessors, falls apart in the face of criticism due to its inability to ground what Hume calls 'general ideas' in an ultimately firm footing. In brief, prior to Hume the version of the theory of abstraction most popular with empiricists was one whereby abstract ideas consist of generalisations of empirically identified commonalities between different particular perceptions. By contrast, Hume contended that since we can never have an abstract impression, we can likewise never have an abstract idea, and what we call abstract ideas are in fact merely 'general terms' which we attach to certain qualities (or sets of similar qualities) which we perceive across a plurality of particular impressions. As we will see later in this thesis, this theory demonstrates an over-reliance on the principle of association on Hume's part, leading to an infinite regress, as the descriptive validity of each general term must be justified by reference to an ever-increasing set of perceptions bearing the common quality which the general term supposedly describes, without ever settling on any ultimate foundation. Second amongst Hume's problems is his account of belief. This, at least, Hume openly acknowledged was a topic which was beyond his abilities. In a paragraph included in his later-published Appendix to the *Treatise* he remarked that explaining the principle according to which the belief operates is a task which he found too difficult, and he was unable to explain it in any detail. In actual fact Hume seems to have come around to this way of thinking *since* the original publication of the *Treatise*. In the original text Hume seems satisfied that belief can be explained as the product of the different degrees of force and vivacity belonging to our ideas, and in fact he gives a lengthy discussion of belief on that basis. However, by the time he wrote the Appendix, he seems to have had a change of heart, and now ventures only to suggest that belief constitutes a difference in the *feeling* of different ideas.

The last, and most significant of the difficulties we intend to discuss here is also quite possibly the most famous. Hume's theory of personal identity has long been puzzled over due to its exceptionally sceptical consequences, and the fact that Hume felt so confused by it, that he seemingly disavowed his arguments, claiming in the Appendix that his account was 'very defective', and describing himself as "*involv'd in such a labyrinth, that... I neither know how to correct my former opinions, nor how to render them consistent.*" (T App. 10) At the root of the problem is Hume's separability principle, whereby he asserts that all of our perceptions are distinct existences with no necessary connections between them. In moving from matters concerning knowledge of the external world, where this principle is extremely useful, to matters concerning personal identity, Hume encounters the problem of how to constitute the identity of the self when all that can be identified through empirical reflections are the perceptions belonging to the self, and no necessary connections exist between these perceptions in order to produce a necessarily unified whole. The consequence of this principle seems to be that there is no such thing as the self, so Hume's next task is to explain why we think that there *is* such a thing, and this is where Hume appears to encounter some serious difficulty. The solution which he proffers is rooted in the principle of association which, if successful, would be very reassuring evidence for the soundness of his theoretical foundations. However, given the review which Hume gives his own arguments in the Appendix it seems that he himself did not consider his efforts to be particularly fruitful. Specifically, he comments that "*there are two principles, which I cannot render consistent; nor is it in my power to renounce either of them, viz. that all our distinct perceptions are distinct existences and that the mind never perceives any real connexion among distinct existences.*" (T App. 21) This passage, encapsulating the gist of Hume's labyrinth, the dilemma in which he supposedly found himself, has long been a source of confusion to scholars of Hume, due to

the rather plain fact that these principles do not seem to be in any way contradictory. In fact, these two principles could easily be taken to be representative of Hume's entire view on the matter, were it not for his own explicit repudiation of that conclusion. Further complicating matters is the fact that after the sceptical and rather murky conclusion of book 1 of the *Treatise*, wherein Hume arrives at his apparently solipsistic view of self, he then proceeds in book 2, to advance what seems to be a new and wholly positive view of the self, based on a reflection upon the passions of pride and humility which, he says, bear a relation both to the object of perception as the *source* of pride or humility, and to the self as the *object* of pride or humility, thus revealing by reflection the existence of the self. This introduction of an apparently competing theory of personal identity throws the nature of Hume's labyrinth into further doubt, and unfortunately Hume offers no comment on which model he prefers. Moreover, the fact that no such clarification is offered even in the Appendix, where his reservations concerning the sceptical arguments of book 1 are expressed, throws doubt on the idea that the book 2 arguments were intended to replace the sceptical arguments at all. If they were, then surely the Appendix would have clarified that Hume took the later arguments to be altogether more compelling than the earlier ones. Hume's labyrinth is a puzzle that has confounded scholars of Hume's work for a long time now, and I hardly expect to produce an indisputable solution to this problem. However, I believe that the difficulties Hume encounters in the labyrinth are illustrative of many of the problems inherent to Hume's philosophy in general, so we will use the labyrinth as a broad frame of reference for explicating the differences between the philosophy of David Hume, and that of Edmund Husserl, whose phenomenology I believe constitutes an innovation in the same tradition as Humean thought, and may in fact resolve many of the issues that Hume encountered.

The case for linking Humean thought and phenomenology within a single tradition is bolstered somewhat by the extent to which Husserl is known to have studied and admired Hume, although ultimately concluding that Hume's project was inhibited by some very serious limitations. The clearest endorsement Husserl ever gives Hume comes from his essay 'Philosophy as a Rigorous Science' (1911) where he writes that: *"Had [Hume's] sensualism not blinded him to the whole sphere of intentionality, of 'consciousness-of', had he grasped it in an investigation of essence, he would not have become the great sceptic, but instead the founder of a truly 'positive' theory of reason"* (PRS, p. 113). This comment I take to be remarkable, and that more has not been written on the relationship between Hume and Husserl in light of it seems to me to be very unusual. I can only venture to guess that the reason for this is that there may be a general assumption that by this remark Husserl merely means to convey that he admires Hume's empirical ethos, but that his lack of an understanding of intentionality is a significant deficit in his theory. However, if we take a stronger view of Husserl's comments, we might instead see them as explaining that indeed a true understanding of intentionality was the *only* thing that Hume lacked, and if he had only been able to incorporate it into his theory, he would, in practice, have been a phenomenologist. This reading should, I think, be uncontroversial since the very next thing Husserl says in PRS is that : *"All the problems that move [Hume] in the Treatise and drive him from confusion to confusion, problems that, because of his attitude he can in no wise formulate suitably and purely – all these problems belong entirely to the area dominated by phenomenology"* (PRS, pp. 113-4). From this we can easily imagine how Husserl may have conceived of Hume in some respects as a phenomenologist, or at least attempting to engage with the science of phenomenology, though without the necessary foundation. This is a view that is in some ways supported by Janoušek and Zahavi in the relatively recent article 'Husserl

on Hume' (2019), where they consider Husserl as a Hume interpreter, presenting numerous instances where he offers his opinions on Hume's ideas, and drawing our attention in particular to the fact that Husserl saw in Hume a philosopher engaged with the 'science of man' in the correct way, which is to say, he focused purely on actual lived experience itself, the only part of the world directly accessible to human consciousness and therefore the thing which *must* form the basis of any truly foundational philosophy. In effect, Husserl seems to read Hume as a transcendental philosopher in the same tradition of transcendentalism as Husserl himself (Janoušek & Zahavi, 2019, p. 17). If this is true, then a real exploration of the extent to which Hume and Husserl belong to the same philosophical tradition could indeed be viable, and would benefit our understanding of both philosophers, revealing important details concerning Hume's mysterious difficulties with respect to the self, and placing Husserl's otherwise rather abstruse and idiosyncratic philosophy in a broader philosophical context.

Phenomenology itself, as conceived by Husserl, is less of a system of philosophical beliefs as it is "*the science fundamental to philosophy*" (Ideas I, p. xvii). Since science is defined more by its method than its findings, phenomenology is therefore a doctrine concerning proper methodological practice for any attempt at any ultimately grounded philosophy. More specifically, phenomenology was devised as a remedy to the prevalent psychologistic school of thought which dominated the academic landscape in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The psychologistic view held that logic was a psychological phenomenon, which Husserl chooses to demonstrate with this passage from John-Stuart Mill's *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's philosophy*: "*Logic is not a science separate from and coordinate with psychology. To the extent that it is it a science at all, it is a part or branch of psychology, and*

includes as much of that science as is necessary to establish the rules of the art.” (LI, p. 40)

Husserl felt that this view had some very serious flaws, most notably that it conflates the normative laws of logic with the psychological process of thought, thereby making no distinction between how we *do* think and how we *ought* to think. The consequence of this, according to Husserl, is that *“psychology has so far lacked genuine and therefore exact laws”* because *“the propositions in it which are dignified with the name of laws, are merely vague, even if valuable generalizations from experience. They are statements about approximate regularities of coexistence and succession, which make no claim to determine, with infallible, unambiguous definiteness, what will go together or will follow in exactly described relationships”* (LI, p. 46). This summary could easily make for a criticism of Hume’s philosophy in particular, and this is certainly no accident. Husserl regarded psychologism to be intimately linked to empiricism, and Hume, as the ultimate empiricist, falls into many of the same traps in his attempt to ground his philosophy in nothing but empirical observations. Aside from the problems particular to Hume mentioned above, empiricists in general have great difficulty in finding an ultimate foundation for their projects, as all empirical observations must be confirmed by further empirical observations, and so on, resulting in an endless chain of justifications with no actual foundation ever discovered. To avoid this difficulty Husserl, following on from his teacher Brentano’s work in reviving the concept of intentionality, proposes a new ‘phenomenological analysis’ in order *“to bring the Ideas of logic, the logical concepts and laws, to epistemological clarity and definiteness”* (LI, p. 168). In order to do this, Husserl stresses the need to ‘go back to the “things themselves”’, an expression which became a slogan of sorts for the phenomenologists, encapsulating the central theme of phenomenology, the concerted study of *essences*, the essential parts of any object within consciousness, viewed apart from the context in which it is experienced, and apprehended in

essential purity as a thing existing as itself, without any of the extensional significations which it might have been imposed upon it by its relationships with other things in the world. In reducing objects of experience to their essential purity, Husserl hoped to demonstrate two things. First, that essences are the most basic components of human cognition, thereby forming the foundational stratum upon which all cognition is based and second, that any concerted study of logic or epistemology must be founded on an understanding of these pure essences.

Now, at this stage it may sound as if Husserl has rejected Humean philosophy entirely, having rebuked the empiricists for their self-defeating philosophy, but in actual fact Hume's uniquely dogmatic commitment to empirical observation as the ultimate basis for all human cognition and behaviour (as opposed to thinkers like Locke, whose theory of abstraction for instance, allowed for genuinely abstract ideas, which Hume thought could not be inferred from non-abstract experience), results in a number of similarities between Hume and Husserl, some of which may have even been overlooked by Husserl himself. First of all, the manner in which Hume divides the subject, into impressions and ideas, and further divides impressions into those of 'sensation' and 'reflexion', has significant parallels in Husserl's philosophy. Impressions and ideas can be loosely correlated with Husserl's conception of the 'noesis' and 'noema' as component parts of a mental act, showing that the two men had similar ideas about the structure of consciousness, and Hume's distinction between impressions of sensation and those of reflection shows an awareness of the difference between those perceptions which take place 'in the natural attitude' in Husserl's words (*Ideas I*, p. 5), and those which take place in phenomenological reflection, demonstrating a certain methodological similarity between Hume and Husserl as well. Second, Hume's theory of

general terms, while suffering from the sceptical consequence of its radically empirical foundation, nevertheless manages to occupy the same theoretical space as Husserl's eidetic hierarchy (Ideas I, p. 18), a supposed hierarchy of essences which establishes the relations between essences on the intuitive, mental level. Both of these ideas attempt to articulate the manner in which the mind establishes connections between different ideas, and both do so with reference to the actual experience in which the ideas are presented, in a purely empirical, non-abstract formulation. Finally, although Hume predated the modern discussion of intentionality by a significant margin, there has nevertheless been a certain amount of scholarship devoted to assessing Hume's work for evidence of an intentionalist viewpoint. In chapter 3 we will make a concerted study of two scholars with differing opinions on the matter, Don Garrett and Hsieh Qu. However it should be observed that intentionality in contemporary analytic philosophy means something very different to the concept of intentionality as Husserl understood it, and it will become apparent as our study progresses that a return to the earlier style of intentionality may help us to see more parallels between Husserl and Hume.

In contemporary analytic philosophy, intentionality is often explained as denoting the quality of 'aboutness', describing the potentiality for a given mental state to be 'about' something, which is to say that there is some specific object which that mental state concerns. Within this paradigm, much discussion has taken place concerning which of our mental states are intentional, and therefore have some object which they concern, and which are not. By contrast, the view of intentionality Husserl followed was, by and large, the view presented by Franz Brentano in *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1874), that 'intentionality is the mark of the mental', meaning that intentionality is not merely a possible property of mental

states, but that it is the defining characteristic of conscious thought. If a conscious thought exists, it must be intentional; if it is not intentional, then it is not a conscious thought. This is a view that gained significant traction among early phenomenologists, and even later, extended its influence into existentialism. Jean-Paul Sartre wrote that *“It is of the very nature of consciousness to be intentional and a consciousness that ceased to be consciousness of something would for that reason cease to exist”* (Sartre, 1940, p. 212), but this is not a view that has retained its popularity. Indeed there are many philosophers, notably John Searle (1980), who have considered the notion that *all* mental states are intentional to be absurd. Given this, it should be pretty clear why attempts to analyse possible evidence of intentionality in Humean philosophy have focused principally on the contemporary analytic model of intentionality, that preferred by most modern Hume interpreters who, as we shall see, concentrate primarily on Hume’s description of his copy principle, and his discussion of the passions. For phenomenologists however, for whom all consciousness is intentional and hence consciousness ‘of’ something, characterising intentionality as mere ‘aboutness’, and consequently implying that the essence of intentionality is merely object-relatedness, would be a massive oversimplification of the concept which forms the essential structure of all of our cognitive processes. We will see later in the thesis how this essential difference between these two interpretations of the concept of intentionality has stymied the study of Humean intentionality, and while it is certainly the case that Hume’s philosophy includes no deliberate study of intentionality, I believe there are a number of passages in the *Treatise* which demonstrate an inclination towards the Husserlian style of thinking, and illustrate further strong parallels between the two.

In addition to the aforementioned Janoušek and Zahavi, there is a shockingly small body of literature concerning the relationship between Hume and Husserl, despite the relatively strong consensus in the literature that *does* exist that Hume almost certainly had a significant influence on Husserl. Nevertheless, what there is provides some excellent foundations for our study, allowing us to focus more closely on the precise aims of our project. Janoušek and Zahavi, aside from the conclusion already mentioned that Husserl was, to a certain extent, an interpreter of Hume in his own right, have also identified certain key respects in which Husserl saw parallels to his own thought in Hume, notably in their mutual belief in “*subjectivity as the locus of all objective formations of sense and validity*” (Janoušek & Zahavi, 2019), while stressing Husserl’s criticism of Hume’s radical commitment to empiricism, and some of its consequences such as reducing all physical objects by necessity to nothing but bundles of sense data, and all our beliefs concerning the world to the level of fiction. Stefanie Rocknak, in her article ‘Husserl’s Phenomenologization of Hume’ (2001) identifies Hume’s value for Husserl’s phenomenological project in his accidental revelation of the flaws in empirical philosophy. She writes that Hume “*not only sank his own ship, but in his somewhat maliciously obscured manner, took down the whole empirical fleet with him.*” For Husserl, whose starting point in phenomenology was an attack on the psychologism invading the study of logic, Hume’s loyal devotion to the principles of empirical enquiry revealed all the flaws in its own theoretical constitution thus forming the basis for Husserl’s own critique. Rocknak also observes a concordance between Hume and Husserl in respect of their philosophical indifference to the question of whether or not there are external bodies, preferring to focus on, as Hume describes it, the question of “*what causes induce us to believe in the existence of body*” (T 1.4.2.1). She also identifies intentionality as the key factor distinguishing Hume and Husserl’s philosophical methods, a difference which Rocknak claims consists in Husserl’s

active ‘suspension’ of belief in the external world which, she says, enables him to approach the problem from a non-naturalistic perspective, thus avoiding the sceptical consequence of Hume’s naturalism. Besides these two main texts, work on the relation between Hume and Husserl has tended to characterise the relationship as rather tangential. Butts (1959) gives a treatment of Husserl’s critique of Hume’s concept of ‘distinctions of reason’, a part of Hume’s theory of ideas, the critique of which constitutes the largest part of the distinction between the two. However, Butts makes no mention of the otherwise similar character of the two philosophies. Kidd (2021) makes a more overt connection between the two, proposing that Husserl’s concept of the ‘epoché’ may originate in his reflections on the western sceptical tradition, to which Hume belonged, exploring this potential genesis in terms of Husserl’s critique of Hume’s purported ‘philosophical quietism’. As we can see, almost every paper which explores the relation of Hume to Husserl identifies the fact that Hume’s theories had at least *some* influence on Husserl, but almost nobody seems to have ventured to perform more than a cursory examination of the actual details of that influence.

The most significant text currently existing on the philosophical relationship between Hume and Husserl, and the only concerted long-form study of the subject that I have been able to find, is Richard Murphy’s book *Hume and Husserl: Towards Radical Subjectivism* (1980). As the title suggests, Murphy’s focus in the book is to examine the formal similarities between Hume and Husserl’s different modes of thought with special regard given to the issue of subjectivity. Murphy claims that there are strong parallels between the two, insofar as they both take a stance with regard to lived experience that Murphy characterises as solipsistic, by virtue of their mutual reduction of all matters of philosophy to the contents of subjective consciousness. This position is summarised by Hume when he writes that “*There is no*

question of importance, whose decision is not compriz'd in the science of man" (T. Intro. 6), an endeavour described by Husserl as *"the first systematic endeavor of a science of the pure givenness of consciousness... the endeavor of a pure egology"* (EP, p. 156-7). Over the course of his study, Murphy does a commendable job of finding equivalences between Hume's beliefs as they are stated in the *Treatise*, and the developing science of phenomenology as it emerges throughout Husserl's career. It is apparent however, that Murphy sees most of Husserl's philosophy as a work in progress, moving him inexorably towards what Murphy seems to think of as the ultimate aim of any true phenomenology, that is the development of a 'genetic' phenomenology. Genetic phenomenology, in this sense, is a philosophical system which enables us to trace our beliefs and ideas to their ultimate experiential genesis, and understand them in terms of their situation within the 'spatio-temporal flux' which constitutes the temporalized subjectivity which we perceive ourselves as having. This is to be contrasted with the so-called 'static' analyses which characterise Husserl's early work, and which concentrate on analysing the structure of only individual intentional moments within consciousness. Thankfully, it is not necessary for me to disagree with Murphy on this front in order to pursue my own aims within this project. Insofar as we are making a comparison between Husserl and Hume, looking ahead to the development of genetic phenomenology seems to me excessive, since genetic phenomenology has no direct relationship with Humean philosophy, being related to it only by virtue of the Husserlian innovations to be explored in this thesis. Murphy's general contention is that Husserl, by virtue of his understanding of intentionality and the study of eidetic intentional forms that he is thereby enabled to make, is able to develop his philosophy, at length, into a truly genetic phenomenology while Hume, who lacks this understanding, is deemed by Husserl to languish in his labyrinth for want of a truly intentional account of consciousness due to the inability of a non-intentional account to

accommodate the ordinary mental states of the natural attitude without falling into solipsism regarding the nature of the mind. While this may broadly be the case, and Murphy certainly provides an abundance of textual evidence to that effect, he omits what I consider to be the most pressing detail, which is *why* intentionality is such a significant development. Surely we cannot advance to a discussion of the validity of Husserl's genetic turn until we have a better understanding of the innovation which made it possible in the first place. Murphy, for his part, seems to take the validity of Husserl's model of intentionality for granted, possibly out of a desire to limit the extent to which he passes judgement on either philosopher, but consequentially the value of Murphy's observations for us will lie predominantly in the first two chapters of this thesis. We will make good use of the astute observations he makes concerning the parallels to be found within the theoretical foundations of the two different philosophies, which will provide us with a firm foundation from which to proceed upon our study of intentionality, and will make the force of our later arguments all the greater as a result.

It is probably worth mentioning some of the difficulties involved in making a comparison between Hume and Husserl, which I try to navigate throughout the course of this project. The bulk of the problems which we will encounter relate to the fact that Hume and Husserl are each engaged in a dual-purpose within their work, not merely trying to establish a model of 'human nature' as Hume would put it, but also trying to articulate the proper method for obtaining this model. As a result, the work of both men strays back and forth between discussions of what can be observed by philosophers under different methodologies, and what is generally observed by ordinary people in everyday lived experience. This leads to significant problems for interpreters, because the divisions between these topics are not

always made clear in the texts. For example, Hume observes a distinction between what he calls 'vulgar consciousness', meaning common, everyday consciousness, and 'philosophical reflection'. In this he draws a clear distinction between what is presumed to be the case by the unreflective mind (e.g. that perceptions are all connected) and what the philosopher may discover with the proper method (e.g. that perceptions are never necessarily connected). Since both of these states describe what is 'known' within different modes of consciousness, it is important for us to be sure whether Hume is discussing what is perceived within vulgar consciousness or within philosophical reflection at any given time within the *Treatise*, especially since the two modes of consciousness can produce entirely contradictory sets of knowledge. Likewise, Husserl makes a comparable distinction between what he calls the 'natural attitude' and 'phenomenological reflection', where the latter term refers to reflection upon pure essences, independent of any of the rote assumptions about the world which characterise the natural attitude. Since the function of cognition in the natural attitude itself is an object of study for phenomenological reflection, it can be difficult to distinguish between Husserl's description of the conceptual framework which describes the natural attitude, and his description of the contents of thoughts *within* the natural attitude. As frustrating as these confusions can be for us who wish to make a clear comparison of the two schools of thought, it is at least a little encouraging that both men make this kind of distinction, between an ordinary and a reflective mode of consciousness. In a general sense, this constitutes some small measure of evidence for our general thesis that Hume and Husserl belong to the same philosophical tradition. However, the more particular nuances of each philosophy do require us to understand our subjects in detail in order to make sense of those occasions where the broad differences in philosophical principles have important specific consequences, and hence make a truly detailed analysis. These nuances are not easy to detect or to understand,

so while we will do our best to take note of these shifts between methodological points and their consequences for the actual philosophical discoveries, the reader is advised to remain on guard for any occasion where we fail to respect that distinction.

Having outlined many of the topics which are going to be covered in this project, now will be a good time to lay out more explicitly the actual purposes to which we will put our study of these issues. As I have already remarked, the general purpose of the thesis is to demonstrate the extent to which David Hume and Edmund Husserl belong to the same philosophical tradition. Generally speaking, the two have been held apart as belonging to two very different schools of thought, with Husserl often being grouped into the continental school of transcendental idealism, with Hume thought of as occupying a fairly polar opposite position as an English (or indeed Scottish) empiricist. Nevertheless, the extent to which Husserl wrote about Hume gives us a very good reason to wonder how much of Hume's influence may have crept its way into Husserl's work, and the almost explicit endorsement of Hume in PRS, lamenting only Hume's failure to understand intentionality, gives us grounds to make a comparative study of the two to try and see if Hume was as close to the mark as Husserl seems to think. If so, we will then have a very strong case that Husserl, though he almost certainly did not explicitly intend to be an heir of sorts to Hume, was working within the same, empirical tradition as Hume, and therefore that Husserl's position in the history of philosophy may have to be reassessed. There are three main topics which I wish to address concerning the relationship between Humean empiricism and Husserl's phenomenology. In no particular they are: a) the extent to which the phenomenological conception of intentionality constitutes an innovation upon Humean philosophy; b) the extent to which Hume exhibits some tendency towards a phenomenological style of thought; and c) the extent to which

Husserl's phenomenology may be seen as resolving certain problems in Hume's thought, particularly those which may have led him to his 'labyrinth'.

Regarding the first of these, it is well known that Husserl had a lot of respect for Hume and held him above many of his contemporaries for the clarity of his thought, particularly concerning his move away from the 'naïve' empiricism of Locke. It is also a matter of record, as we have seen from Janoušek and Zahavi, that Husserl considered Hume to be very close to a phenomenologist in principle. As such, in this thesis we will be exploring some of the most significant parallels. For example, Hume's basic, structural division of perceptions into 'impressions' and 'ideas' finds strong parallels in Husserl's twin concepts of 'noesis' and 'noema', in respect of their similar functional roles in their respective philosophies. In both cases, for instance, these pairs of concepts are expressly correlated; every simple idea is copied from a simple impression, every noema arises in concert with its corresponding noesis. Equally, both impressions and noeses concern those elements of perception which are immediately present to the senses and therefore constitute what Hume calls 'matters of fact', as opposed to the ideas and noemata, which concern the 'relations between ideas'. This leads us to another parallel between Hume and Husserl, which can be found in the correlation between Hume's principle of association and Husserl's notion of eidetic relationships. As we will see, once we recognise the common emphasis on the apodictic self-givenness of first-person perceptual content, a premise which we take from Murphy, the commonality in the way Hume and Husserl describe how ideas are related together becomes very clear. Where Hume describes that there are three species of relation according to which ideas may be associated, Husserl describes the nature of this association in terms of those same species of relation, but on the *essential* level rather than the perceptual. These and other distinctions

will be explored as we progress, and it should hopefully become clear that the difference between Humean and Husserlian philosophy consists primarily of Husserl's introduction of a concerted model of intentionality. The importance of this innovation too, should hopefully become apparent because, as we shall see as we progress, Husserl's development of an intentionalist model of cognition marks the distinction between Hume's passive-acquisitive account of perception whereby meaning is only and always *derived* from the world, to an active, intentional account of perception whereby meaning is projected onto sense-content by an active, intentional consciousness. Cultivating an understanding of this development should go some way to helping us see how far phenomenology can be said to be an innovation on Hume directly.

It should be observed that there is already a body of literature concerned with the possibility that Hume himself unwittingly included an account of intentionality in his work, and we will be exploring this in due course as well. Hume never used the term himself, he lived at the wrong time to be involved in any debates concerning intentionality, but nevertheless certain aspects of his thought have led commentators such as Garrett (2006), Cottrell (2018), and Qu (2012) to wonder if an intentionalist reading of Hume may be viable. Of particular interest to these commentators have been Hume's copy principle, his account of causation, and his account of the passions with its emphasis on the 'directedness' of the passions. Which of these topics is of most interest depends on the commentator's preferred interpretation of intentionality and, interesting though they are, we will see that none of them come close to a model of intentionality that Husserl would endorse. Nevertheless, it is hardly the case that Husserlian intentionality is completely absent from the *Treatise*, we simply need to look much harder to find our evidence, and keep in mind while doing so the other ways in which Humean

thought corresponds to phenomenology already. Such observations, while certainly significant, are not always clear, so they will be pointed out throughout the thesis as they emerge, rather than having a whole chapter dedicated to them. At any rate, these observations will help to make it clear what Hume's more serious troubles were, due to the fact that any venture into an intentionalist line of thinking is quickly restrained by his strict empiricism, so we should be able to see from them some of the difficulties which contributed to Hume's declaration that he was lost in a labyrinth such that he "*neither know[s] how to correct [his] former opinions nor how to render them consistent.*" (T App. 10) Now, I have already said that I do not expect to produce an indisputable solution, and I certainly do not expect to be able to deduce with unerring certainty what Hume himself believed, but with the benefit of having discussed the various similarities and differences between Humean Empiricism and Husserlian phenomenology, we should be in a position to describe, at the very least, the problem insofar as it would be expressed by a phenomenologist, and the manner in which phenomenology would go about solving it. To this end, it will become apparent that much of the difficulty Hume encounters, from the phenomenological perspective, derives from his theory of ideas. Husserl dedicates almost the entire first volume of the *Logical Investigations* to a study of *meaning*, including sustained criticism on Hume's conception of ideas as copies of impressions, his consequent theory of abstraction. This discussion will feature prominently in chapter X. Husserl is not alone in thinking that Hume's theory of ideas is lacking. In his *History of Western Philosophy* (1946), Bertrand Russell criticises Hume's copy principle for its inability to account for certain psychological states such as those characterised by *vagueness*, and it is in a similar theme that our criticism of Hume will proceed. By illustrating which ordinary mental processes are inexplicable according to Hume's theory, and demonstrating how phenomenology is able to account for them using similar principles, with

the notable inclusion of the theme of intentionality, we should be able to see how phenomenology constitutes a development of Humean theory, and a possible route out of the labyrinth.

Chapter 1 – Principles of Humean Philosophy

David Hume's philosophical principles have often been praised for their scrupulous detail and dedicated commitment to strict empirical philosophy, deferring at all times to the primacy of experience. Given the importance of this detail to his philosophical project, Hume's first concern was to address the contents of the subjective consciousness, and establish where they come from, what they are like and how they relate to each other etc.

1.1 – Impressions and Ideas

The very first, and possibly most important point in the *Treatise*, is the distinction between *impressions* and *ideas*. Hume seems to indicate that the term 'idea' had been misused somewhat in preceding years, notably by Locke (T 1.1.1.1, fn), so the significance of this distinction is twofold. First, it is significant insofar as the use to which Hume puts it, which is to separate for us the notion of an immediate sensation, a perception which occupies the senses, and that of an idealised version of that impression, which lingers once the impression has passed. Second, this distinction represents a break in the empirical doctrine favoured by philosophers contemporary to Hume, it represents an innovation in empirical philosophy, enabling Hume to more precisely describe the relationships between different perceptions. An idea, according to Hume, is a copy of an impression. Or more accurately, a simple idea is a copy of a simple impression, as Hume readily acknowledges that there are things of which we can have idea without having first had an impression of them, such as unicorns, dragons, historical figures etc. In such cases, a complex idea is built out of simple ideas, which have always been copied from simple impressions. Hume summarises his principle thus:

“all our simple ideas in their first appearance are derived from simple impressions, which are correspondent to them, and which they exactly represent.” (T 1.1.1.7)

Important to note also about the relation between impressions and ideas is that an idea is always a less ‘vivid and forceful’ perception than an impression, though in every other respect they are exactly alike (T 1.1.1.3). The significance of this principle is not to be overlooked. With this single principle, Hume grounded all perception and consequently all thought, reason, and feeling, in pure empirical perception. We can have no ideas about anything unless they have ultimately been derived from some impression. This extreme devotion to empiricism is the characteristic that most defines Humean thought, as we will see as we progress.

Hume also divides each type of perception, impressions and ideas, into two kinds. Impressions he divides into impressions of *sensation* and those of *reflection*. Impressions of sensation are those which occur spontaneously or, in Hume’s terminology ‘those which arise in the soul originally, from unknown causes’ (T 1.1.2.1). This turn of phrase can be misleading, so it is important that I clarify that this does not mean ‘impressions with no discernible cause’, since even impressions with clearly defined stimuli qualify as impressions of sensation. The reason Hume refers to such impressions as arising from ‘unknown causes’ is in order to distinguish them more clearly from impressions of reflection, which are those produced by the apprehension of an idea. So, to give an example, if I burnt my hand on a candle, and subsequently perceive myself experiencing nervousness whenever I am near a candle, the nervousness I feel is an impression of reflection, because it is produced by my reflecting on

the sensation of pain I felt when I burnt myself. The sensation of pain itself however, is an impression of sensation, because the sensation occurred immediately as soon as I touched the flame. This impression is 'from an unknown cause' because, even though I know the candle was the stimulus for the sensation, the sensation itself is not inherent to the candle and so, by comparison to impressions of reflection, the sensation seems to come from nowhere.

Ideas too, are divided into two categories, depending on which faculty lends the idea to conscious apprehension, either *memory* or *imagination*. Ideas raised to consciousness by memory are considered by Hume to be much more vivid than ideas produced by the imagination, on account of their being copied directly from an impression. For this reason, Hume says that memories are something like an intermediary between impressions and 'pure' ideas (T 1.1.3.1). Ideas from the imagination, by contrast, are considerably less vivid, because the imagination produces ideas by combining or associating other ideas, and so these ideas are somewhat removed from the original impressions which supplied the necessary constituent ideas. As such, I have a clearer idea of a horse than I do of a chimera, since I have seen horses first hand and so have a memory to rely on, but I can only form an idea of a chimera by somehow learning its description (from the legend of Bellerophon, for instance), and assembling the necessary ideas in my own head into a form which aligns with my understanding of the description I have learned.

1.2 – The Principle of Association

Having established what kinds of perceptions there are and something of how they behave, Hume turns his attention to the next of his foundational principles, concerning how different ideas are associated with one another. He has already established that in absence of an impression from which to take a clear copy the imagination is used to combine or associate ideas we already have into new ideas. As such, Hume considers it essential to establish what principles govern the imagination in this process. He writes:

“As all simple ideas may be separated by the imagination, and may be united again in what form it pleases, nothing wou’d be more unaccountable than the operations of that faculty, were it not guided by some universal principles, which render it, in some measure, uniform with itself in all times and places.” (T 1.1.4.1)

The reason for Hume’s concern is that if the imagination were not governed by a reliable set of principles, ideas would only become associated with one another by ‘chance alone’, and it would be impossible for us to have consistent associations between our ideas. There must be some principle according to which the ideas of ‘fish’ and ‘chips’ are associated in my mind, or else I should feel no reason to associate the two more readily than I would associate ‘fish’ and ‘telephone’. The fact that I *do* happen to associate ‘fish’ and ‘chips’ together more readily than ‘fish’ and ‘telephone’ is therefore very good evidence that such a set of principles does in fact exist. The principles Hume proposes by means of which the imagination associates separate ideas are *resemblance*, *contiguity*, and *causation*. I do not wish to spend too long discussing these, as they will be amply explored in good time. Nevertheless, it will be a good idea to explain the significance of this notion to an empirical philosophy. The basic principle

here is very easy to grasp. Very basically, the principle is that it is easier to associate two ideas together if there is already some relation between them. As such, the imagination has an easier time making the link from one to the other if they bear one of these three species of relation to each other. So, I can easily perceive an association between a tree and a bush, because they *resemble* each other in respect of their colour, shape, material etc., I can perceive an association between a parent and a child because the parent is the ultimate *cause* of the child's existence, and I perceive an association between fish and chips because the two are frequently *contiguous* with one another on a plate. However, if we are to be good, honest empiricists, we must ask more questions. We must ask, "how do I know that trees resemble bushes?", "how do I know that parents are the cause of their children?" and "how do I know that fish is often served with chips?" Are we born with this knowledge? Hume would claim that we are not, and I think most people would tend to agree. For Hume, all of these relations are themselves derived from experience. Hence, in order to understand the concept of resemblance we must first observe that certain pairs of objects share certain properties, in order to understand the concept of contiguity we must first observe that certain objects bear a certain proximity to one another, and to understand the concept of causation we must first observe that certain pairs of events occur one after the other. This last relation in particular takes prominent place in Humean philosophy, as Hume points out that the perception of causation is only ever inferred from the 'constant conjunction' of one event to the next. This conjunction, if perceived often enough, is enough to produce a certain custom of associating those events as though causally related, even if what is perceived is only ever a succession of individual events. Hume writes of this:

“when I consider the influence of this constant conjunction, I perceive, that such a relation can never be an object of reasoning, and can never operate upon the mind, but by means of custom, which determines the imagination to make a transition from the idea of one object to that of its usual attendant, and from the impression of one to a more lively idea of the other.” (T 1.3.14.30)

This will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3, but for now we should note that this topic is representative of the significance of Hume’s characteristically meticulous empiricism. By breaking down our everyday experiences to such a fine degree, Hume is able to distinguish between what is actually given in the content of our experiences, and the assumptions that we make about them in order to facilitate natural, easy cognition. In short, Hume’s very detailed principles enable him to address the issue of *experience* directly, rather than the more general issue of knowledge.

1.3 – The Separability Principle

The last of Hume’s three main principles is referred to here (Hume never gave it a name) as the separability principle. Of the three principles we have identified it is the most curious, as Hume does not himself seem to consider it as a principle in its own right, but an inevitable consequence of his other two principles, though it has the same argumentative force as the others. In fact, we have to wait quite a long time in the *Treatise* before we arrive at any lengthy discussion of this principle, while the other two are discussed in the opening pages of the book. The separability principle is only properly introduced in part 3, under the section entitled ‘Of scepticism with regard to reason’ (T 1.4.1). However, there are some early

indications of the importance of the separability principle in the opening passages. When discussing the ideas of memory and imagination, Hume writes:

“...tho’ neither the ideas of the memory nor imagination can make their appearance in the mind, unless their correspondent impressions have gone before to prepare the way for them, yet the imagination is not restrained to the same order and form with the original impressions.” (T1.1.3.2)

What is meant by this is that the imagination is capable of taking its ideas apart and putting them back together in different permutations, recalling events in a different order than that in which they occurred, or changing the form or function of the ideas in order to produce novel ideas. More explicitly, Hume begins the very next section, almost offhandedly, with the words:

“As all simple ideas may be separated by the imagination, and may be united again in what form it pleases...” (T 1.1.4.1)

These two passages together demonstrate what we might call a ‘weak’ form of the separability principle. In these early passages Hume makes the claim that all *simple* ideas at least, are separable from each other, and that ideas of the imagination may be taken apart and reorganised, manipulated by the imagination into a new order, or a new form, a view which necessarily entails the view that whatever connections we perceive between these ideas are only contingent, else it would be impossible to manipulate them in this way.

The separability principle is established more properly however, in part 4 of the *Treatise*, where Hume explains that the nature of sensory perception is such as to preclude the possibility of inferring the existence of one impression from another. He writes:

“To begin with the senses, ’tis evident these faculties are incapable of giving rise to the notions of the continu’d existence of their objects, after they no longer appear to the senses. For that is a contradiction in terms, and supposes that the senses continue to operate, even after they have ceas’d all manner of operation.” (T 1.4.2.3)

By this remark, Hume means primarily to convey that the senses can never produce the idea of the distinct, continued existence of an object, a matter which we will discuss in more detail very shortly. Also contained within this passage however, is the principal basis for the separability principle. Since our senses convey only a single impression, they can never convey the existence of any other thing but that one, individual impression. Hume explains it thus:

“...[the senses] convey to us nothing but a single perception, and never give us the least intimation of any thing beyond... when the mind looks farther than what immediately appears to it, its conclusions can never be put to the account of the senses; and it certainly looks farther, when from a simple perception it infers a double existence, and supposes the relations of resemblance and causation betwixt them.” (T 1.4.2.4)

The overall effect of these conclusions is that all of our perceptions must be considered to be separate and distinct from one another, and any connections that we perceive between them according to the principle of association are only contingent, and never necessary.

Consequently, Hume considers every perception to be separable not merely from each other, but from the mind itself. He writes:

“Now as every perception is distinguishable from another, and may be consider’d as separately existent; it evidently follows, that there is not absurdity in separating any particular perception from the mind; that is, in breaking off all its relations, with that connected mass of perceptions, which constitute a thinking being.” (T 1.4.2.39)

This is a very bold claim to make, and a full discussion of its peculiarities will take place in a chapter 3. However, we can see that the claim made within this passage is rather radical, and demonstrates some of the far-reaching impact of the separability principle on Hume’s philosophy and, as we hinted in the introduction, some of the reasons why his over-reliance on this principle results in some of the difficulties we will go on to discuss. For now however, having hopefully gained an understanding of Hume’s three most essential principles, let us move on to a discussion of the practicalities of Humean empiricism, specifically regarding the issue of how we obtain knowledge of the world around us.

1.4 – Belief in External Bodies

Concerning our belief in objects within the world, Hume identifies that the issue is not one of whether or not there are such things as external objects, since there seems to be little we can do to persuade ourselves otherwise than that there are. Instead, Hume focuses his efforts on questions concerning what *causes* us to believe so intuitively and so strongly in those external bodies (T 1.4.2.1). To this end, he clarifies what he means by an external body, defining the

nature of our belief as a belief in the existence of objects with a *continued* and *distinct* existence; continued in the sense that the object's existence is of the same manner one moment to the next, and distinct in the sense that the object has an existence besides that of a mind-dependent perception (T 1.4.2.2).

Hume identifies three possible means by which belief in the continued, distinct existence of external bodies might be facilitated; by the *senses*, by appeal to *reason*, or by some action of the *imagination* (T 1.4.2.2). Hume discounts at length the possibility that the senses could be responsible for this belief, primarily on the basis that, proceeding from the separability principle, we know that once a body has passed out of sensory perception, the impression of its being is, by necessity, aborted. There is simply never any impression which is constant enough to give us an idea of a continuing body, since an impression which ends cannot produce the idea of an unending existence on its own account. Further, since bodies are present to the mind only in the form of impressions, and our impressions are not gathered directly from the world itself but are mediated by the senses, we cannot presume that the object itself is ever present to consciousness. In fact, we know for certain that we never witness the *entire* object at once, only that side of the object which is facing us. In any case, neither the mere impression, nor the visible part of the object can ever be accurately identified with the whole of the real thing.

Neither can the impression be taken to be related to, or caused by, the real object since, in order to suppose such a relation, one would have to suppose the separate existence of the external body *and* the correlative impression, which presents us with a number of problems. First, even if this would work, at no point in our day to day lives do we actually do it. Our

natural inclination is to believe that our impressions *are* in fact identical with the objects they supposedly represent; to suppose otherwise would be an act of philosophical reflection, which is mutually exclusive with vulgar consciousness, rendering this a useless explanation of our conventional (vulgar) beliefs. Second, since only the impression, and not the object itself, is really accessible to consciousness, any supposition concerning the existence, nature, or relations of the object itself are mere speculation (T 1.4.2.4). Third, and more fundamentally problematic, are the existing sceptical problems concerning causation which Hume outlines earlier in the *Treatise*. Specifically, the problem is that causation itself is never actually witnessed, it is only ever inferred from the regular conjunction of certain events. For example, when I see one billiard ball collide with another, and the second ball begin to move, I presume that it was the force of the collision which induced the motion of the second ball. However, I believe this only because I am accustomed to witnessing that sequence of events unfolding in that general manner whenever it occurs. For all I know there could be some unknown, invisible force which propels the second ball once it has been struck, and if this were the case then the causal relationship that I infer between the two balls is erroneous. Compounding this problem is the fact that since objects themselves are perceptually inaccessible, not even any *apparent* causal relationship between objects and impressions has ever actually been observed, and therefore no custom of causal inference can have developed regarding the relationship between them. Finally, this double existence of objects and impressions would require that our impressions have some special kind of existence separate from consciousness in order for their content to be relayed to consciousness, and this is simply not the case. Our impressions do not come in different types. All are immediately present to consciousness, whether they are impressions of internal phenomena, like pains, thoughts, or emotions, or whether they are impressions of external bodies. As such, the impressions cannot be

conceived of as separate entities through which content is *relayed* to consciousness, they *are* the contents of consciousness, and they exist in the precise manner in which they appear to the mind (T 1.4.2.7).

Hume does briefly entertain however, the question of whether our senses might deceive us, and show our perceptions to us *as though* they were external to and independent of us, which is to say, as *distinct* from us. However, it does not take him long to come up with a set of philosophical reasons why this cannot be possible. To begin with, he comes up with three reasons why the senses cannot represent our perceptions as *external* to us (T 1.4.2.9). First, as mentioned, we do not acquire our perceptions of bodies from the bodies themselves, only from our sensory impressions, and this is equally true concerning the perception of our own bodies. As such, we cannot easily define the concepts of ‘internal’ and ‘external’ due to the difficulty involved in ascribing a corporeal existence to anything. Second, impressions that *are* usually ascribed externality such as sounds and smells do not actually have any identifiable external existence, so the reason we make such ascriptions even when it feels natural for us to do so remains obscure. Third, even impressions we receive from our sight require us to exercise a degree of reasoning in order for us to make sense of an object’s ‘outness’, which is to say its distance, or the degree of its externality (T 1.4.2.9). For instance, it is possible for us to be able to see an object clearly, and yet have no clear sense of its size and distance, as in those circumstances where we cannot discern if an object is large and far away, or small and nearby. In such cases, we require a frame of reference, some object which is familiar to us, whose size we already understand, by comparison to which we are able to comprehend the scale of the original object. If it were the case that externality is inherent to the impression of an object, we should expect that the degree of externality would be equally self-evident, but

the fact that we can be confused on this front demonstrates that our understanding of externality is not derived directly from our impressions, but from the *regularity* of experience. As for the *independence* of our perceptions, in order for a perception to be seen as independent, it would be necessary for the senses to present that perception either as *represented* or as *original*. The former is impossible for reasons already discussed, that the inference that an impression is representative of an unperceived 'true' object is reasoning beyond experience, and the latter would require that our senses were able to access the objective world in order to show that the perception originated from the 'true' object itself and in no part from us, which is beyond the limits of our perceptual faculties (T 1.4.2.10).

The notion that it is *reason* which induces our belief in the continued, distinct existence of bodies is one that Hume barely settles on, having exhausted most of the arguments from reason while discussing the senses. He merely pauses here to reiterate in a more general context that all recourse to reason will inevitably fail to account for our unfaltering belief in these bodies because we are perfectly capable of believing in them without being aware of any reason whatsoever to do so (T 1.4.2.14). As such, he moves quickly onto the matter of the *imagination*, and since it is the last available option, we can deduce that Hume believes it is indeed the imagination which is responsible for these beliefs. He writes:

"Since all impressions are internal and perishing existences, and appear as such, the notion of their distinct and continu'd existence must arise from a concurrence of some of their qualities with the qualities of the imagination; and since this notion does not extend to all of them, it must arise from certain qualities peculiar to some impressions. 'Twill therefore be easy for us to discover these qualities by a comparison of the

impressions, to which we attribute a distinct and continu'd existence with those, which we regard as internal and perishing" (T 1.4.2.15)

What we are to take away from this passage is that the reason we believe that objects within our conscious apprehension have continued existence is that certain of our impressions remain coherent with the ideas we develop of their objects. The impression of an object at one time, a blue mug in a cupboard for instance, will produce an idea which lives in imagination, and at any time I think of that mug, I will imagine a blue mug in a cupboard. If, at a later time, I open the cupboard again, and once again see a blue mug inside, despite the length of time between the two impressions, the resemblance between these impressions to each other and to the correlative idea leads me to the conclusion that it is indeed the same object. If instead I open the cupboard and I see a red mug, I will probably think instead that the blue mug has been replaced. Hume takes this principle of coherence and generalises it until it can account for more or less all of our reasoning concerning external bodies. If, Hume tells us, he hears a door open, and a little while after sees a porter coming towards him, then he can suppose a great many things on the basis of the perceptions he recalls from memory, and the way these memories cohere with the new perception. For instance, Hume may recall that the sound he heard has, in his experience, only ever been produced by a door opening, and so he believes that in this case too, it was caused by a door opening, and therefore there must still be a door where he remembers there being a door. Equally, Hume recalls that his room is on the second floor, and that humans have always had difficulty escaping the pull of gravity, so he believes that the porter must have ascended by the stairs which, Hume recalls, lead to the door (T 1.4.2.19). In this way, one's immediate perceptions have the effect of unfolding the world around you, and inducing in the vulgar consciousness, a tendency to

believe in the persistence of external bodies for as long as the idea of the persistence of those bodies continues to be coherent with each new event one experiences.

1.5 – The Identity of External Bodies

In order to justify this system, Hume believes it necessary to address four key points. First, what is the ‘principle of individuation’, according to which identity is ascribed? Second, why is the constancy of impressions alone sufficient to ascribe identity to an object? Third, how is it that ‘broken appearances’ are united into a single identity? Fourth, why is the perception of identity so forceful (T 1.4.2.26)? The difficulty in identifying a single principle of identity lies in the fact that any object on its own constitutes only a unity, and so any impression of an object constitutes an impression of only a unity. Two or more separate things however, constitute not an identity, but a multiplicity, and so two separate impressions of an object must also be impressions of a multiplicity, but this is not how we interpret successive impressions of the same object. Hume observes however, that a change in time implies a succession, and this succession is only really *imagined* by us to have any bearing on the object. By this we mean, that since time cannot be observed per se but is only felt, we merely assume that everything within our perception is affected by the passage of time insofar as we perceive it. With this kept in mind, Hume tells us that we can choose how to view an object in light of this apparent succession of states. We can either perceive it as a single object simultaneous with a particular point in time, or we can consider two points of time separately, and compare two impressions to each other. In the former case, unity is preserved at the expense of multiplicity, and in the latter case the opposite is true. If at one time we think of an object as a unity, and at another time as a multiplicity of unitary states over a period, we are able to

compare one unity to another and observe whether or not each of the individually considered unities varies at all across a multiplicity of states, and if it has not (or has not noticeably done so), we ascribe to it an identity. As such, we can identify the principle of individuation as being *“the invariableness and uninterruptedness of any object, thro’ a supposed variation in time”* (T 1.4.2.31).

With this principle adequately defined, we can turn to the second of Hume’s queries. We continue to ascribe an identity to objects even when there is a significant gap in time between our impressions of them. Under these circumstances, our impressions only reveal objects to us as invariable, but not uninterrupted. Clearly then, the resemblance of two impressions is sufficient on its own to convince us of an object’s identity, but we are nevertheless left to wonder why. Hume writes:

“Nothing is more apt to make us mistake one idea for another, than any relation betwixt them, which associates them together in the imagination, and makes it pass with facility from one to the other. Of all relations, that of resemblance is in this respect the most efficacious; and that because it not only causes an association of ideas, but also of dispositions, and makes us conceive the one idea by an act or operation of the mind, similar to that by which we conceive the other” (T 1.4.2.33)

As we can see from this passage, Hume explains that the reason mere resemblance is sufficient to induce a belief in identity is that a resemblance of impressions not only unites the impressions into an apparent unity across time, but also produces a resemblance in the mental states simultaneous with their respective impressions. What this means is that the

way in which one views the object is as important as the way the object appears. For example, suppose I have a guest in my house and I have made tea for us in identical cups. My cup and that of my guest are not distinguishable by appearance, because they are identical, but they can be distinguished in two ways; by number (there are two cups and not one), and by the different dispositions which I bear to each cup. I am disposed to think of one cup as 'my cup' and the other as 'their cup', and as a result I know which cup to drink from. Suppose next though, that I later wish to reuse the cups to make new tea, but I have forgotten whose cup was whose. How are we to account for this lapse? The physical resemblance of the cups gives me the impression that they are the same two cups from earlier, but since they are identical to each other I cannot tell which was mine and which was my guest's. All that has changed is that the dispositions which I bore to each of the cups have been interrupted, and since forgotten. As a result, the force and vivacity of the resemblance between my earlier impression and my later one has been diminished. Further, as a brief addendum to this matter, Hume goes on to stress that any kind of relation between impressions should have a similar effect, allowing the mind to pass easily from one to the next and thereby conflating the distinct impressions into that of a single object with a specific unitary identity, and this allows him to segue into the third of his issues, the propensity to unite 'broken appearances' under the presumption of a unitary identity.

Clearly, two resembling impressions that occur some time apart are significantly interrupted and therefore, according to the principle of individuation cannot be equated to one another as depicting the same object, but nevertheless they are. If we return to the example of the blue mug in the cupboard, there is no reason why, once I leave the cupboard and return to it some time later to see a blue mug inside, that I should not entertain the possibility that it is a

different mug. Perhaps someone inadvertently broke my mug and replaced it with an identical one without telling me. Such an occurrence is possible, even plausible, and yet I am never inclined to believe so unless it is indicated by some other means. Hume accounts for this by claiming that the resemblance of the two impressions induces a belief in identity which is contradicted by the 'interruptedness' of the different impressions, and that in the face of such a contradiction, the mind simply invents a 'fiction' of continued existence in order to avoid confusion (T 1.3.2.37). This is the part of Hume's system that I find the least convincing. Though he goes on to suggest that any contradiction at all in the 'sentiments or passions' produces an uneasiness which needs to be resolved one way or another, I am less than convinced that any contradiction is ever perceived on this front. Hume claims that in vulgar consciousness we regard our impressions as though they were in fact the real bodies, and that it is to these impressions that we ascribe continued identity, *"but as the interruption of the appearance seems contrary to the identity, and naturally leads us to regard these resembling perceptions as different from each other, we find ourselves at a loss how to reconcile such opposite opinions"* (T 1.3.2.37). However, I do not grasp that there is any relationship between these points. I can accept that vulgar consciousness regards its impressions as real bodies, but I know for a fact that at very least I do not regard my different impressions of the same object as different from each other, and I believe I am quite safe in generalising that experience to everyone else. We simply do not think such things outside of philosophical reflection, so how our consciousness is supposed to recognise the need to invent the fiction of continued existence is left unaccounted for. Regardless, Hume goes on to explain how this 'fiction' is reconciled given what we know about consciousness. To do this, two things are necessary, to establish how it is that we can suppose an object to exist once removed from our perceptions, and to determine how we suppose such an object to re-enter

perception without being constituted entirely anew (T 1.4.2.39). The first is achieved when we consider that every perception is distinct and separable from every other perception, and as such can easily be considered as distinct from the body of perceptions which taken together constitutes the mind, thus being considered as a separate entity. The second is achieved when we recall that, for our subjective purposes, perceptions are interchangeable with objects, and if perceptions can be constituted as individual existences, then so can objects, in which case we have no difficulty in imagining that objects can exit and enter consciousness freely while retaining their own whole set of properties¹.

Now we have only the last of Hume's questions to answer. Given that we are not *reasoning* our way to belief in continued existence in the manner above described, but simply *believing* it, from where does this belief arise? In accordance with Hume's general philosophical system, he reminds us that belief in general is a matter of force and vivacity, and the greater the degree of force and vivacity of an idea, the more fervent the belief in such. On this basis, we know that the relatedness of impressions contributes significantly to the relatedness of ideas, since ideas inherit a large part of the vivacity of their corresponding impressions. More than this however, we must account for the fact that we easily ascribe continued, distinct existence to objects we have only seen once, and cannot therefore be perceived as invariable across time. This presents us with a particularly gnarly dilemma. We know that Hume believes that every simple idea is copied from a corresponding impression, and that as a result of this requirement, we never really have an idea of identity because all of our impressions are

¹ For Further discussion of Hume on the external world, see Malherbe, 2011; Stroud, 1977; Smith, 1941; Rocknak, 2019.

ultimately interrupted, and to have an idea of invariable, uninterrupted existence would require that we had an impression of such – but we don't. Hume gets past this problem by showing how impressions with a high degree of resemblance give the illusion of invariable, uninterrupted existence, but this account relies on there being a succession of impressions. Nevertheless, we still frequently believe in the identity of objects which we have only seen once, and cannot therefore have observed any regularity between successive appearances. What we learn from this is that there is something about the manner in which objects present themselves to us which we are accustomed to believing suggests continuity. In short, since every tangible object we have ever seen has seemed to have a distinct, continued existence, each new tangible object which appears to us is equally supposed to have a distinct, continued existence (T 1.4.2.44).

Despite this lengthy exposition of the role of the imagination in shaping our beliefs in the external world, Hume is not entirely satisfied that the imagination on its own is sufficient. After all, the imagination does not produce its own tendency to suppose a shared identity between perceptions which, in and of themselves, appear to us as numerically distinct existences. Even if the imagination does act in the way Hume describes, we still do not understand *why* it does so, and in such blatant contradiction to the evidence of our senses, which present separate impressions *as* separate. Hume believes that the error he has made is to suggest an equivalence between perceptions and objects (T 1.4.2.45). This equivalence is a conclusion derived from philosophical reflection, based on the impossibility of perceiving anything but a perception, but it is not, as it turns out, an assumption that we make in 'vulgar' consciousness. In fact, Hume points out that any number of circumstances can show us that in the vulgar consciousness we are aware that these things are entirely separate. For instance,

when seeing double we attribute invariable, uninterrupted existence only to one of the duplicate perceptions, despite the fact that both impressions are identical. Equally, when we notice that an object seems to get smaller as we move away from it, we do not believe that the diminution we observe within the perception is indicative of a real diminution of the object (T 1.4.2.46). In these cases, we can see very clearly by an uninterrupted succession of perceptions that the impression changes according to changes in our own body or positioning, and not according to any change affecting the object itself. Thus, we can see that by this distinction the vulgar consciousness recognises that our perceptions are affected by our sensory organs in some way, while the objects are not, and that perceptions must therefore be distinct from the objects themselves. Important to remember, however, is that vulgar consciousness is not in any sense a reflective consciousness, and so does not in any meaningful sense actively suppose this 'double existence' of impression and object. In vulgar consciousness we have no difficulty in believing simultaneously that a) our impressions of objects are identical to the object itself, and b) our impressions can be altered without any alteration to their objects. The double existence is inferred by reason upon philosophical reflection in order to try and resolve this obvious contradiction, and therein lies the difficulty.

"Were we not first persuaded, that our perceptions are only objects, and continue to exist even when they no longer make their appearance to the senses, we shou'd never be led to think that our perceptions and objects are different, and that our objects alone preserve a continu'd existence" (T 1.4.2.47).

In short, we are left with a philosophical system that depends upon the notion that objects exist independently of impressions, a notion which goes unsupported either by reason, which

defeats itself with scepticism when trying to account for how a perceptually inaccessible object can meaningfully be said to produce an impression, or by the imagination, due to the impossibility of imagining something of which one has never had an impression and so never has acquired a corresponding idea. Nevertheless, this philosophical system derives all its influence on the imagination from the vulgar consciousness, as it must do since it is vulgar consciousness which supplies us with our original impressions and, by extension, the corresponding ideas, and it is therefore vulgar consciousness on which philosophical reasoning depends to supply it with information. Something then, must connect the vulgar consciousness which takes for granted the separate existence of objects, with the philosophical system which depends for its validity on this unsubstantiated belief. Hume explains it as follows. Our perceptions, as far as the imagination is concerned, are representative of their objects. Since the imagination also supposes resembling perceptions to be identical, even when interrupted, we can deduce that an interruption, being contrary to the notion of identity, is simply overlooked. To put it another way, having not witnessed the annihilation of an object, having no evidence for the actual cessation of its identity, we do not suppose it to have been annihilated, and instead favour the belief which affirms its identity (and consequently our belief *in* that identity) over that which contradicts it. The interruption, therefore, is ascribed to the impression, but not to the object which, having been conceived of as bearing a particular identity, will not be perceived otherwise without new evidence to that effect.

Chapter 2 – Principles of Eidetic Science

Next, I shall expand more fully Husserl's account of the benefits of the scientific method. First and foremost, Husserl conceived of science as a 'system of evident cognitions' (Moran, 2000, p. 94), by which we mean a system whereby a route to knowledge is established by linking together in a methodical way, a series of propositions which are shown to be true by virtue of adequate evidence. This is to say, that propositional statements which have been properly validated are united with other validated propositions to create a unity of interrelated validatory arguments (LI, p. 24). The overall benefit of this linking of propositions is that the proof thereby evinced can be discovered by subsequent investigators by following the chain of propositions from start to finish, in order to gain access to the knowledge which was determined by the original investigator, thus bypassing the need for each new investigator to start the investigative process anew, much like the process of charting a route on a map. Each new person to follow the route confirms its accuracy by verifying the location of landmarks and the distances between them etc, such that ultimately, a well-known route is thereby established and can be reliably followed by newer navigators. Of course, this system is dependent on the guarantee that each proposition within each unity is valid, and this guarantee is difficult to obtain, because science demands that each proposition be validated scientifically, and each of those earlier validations must also be validated, and so on and so forth.

2.1 – Inward Evidence

In order for us to be able to rely on the findings of scientific enquiry, Husserl appeals to the concept of ‘inward evidence’ (LI, p. 17). By ‘inward evidence’, Husserl refers to the extent to which subjective consciousness makes the judgement that a particular proposition has a *semblance* of truth; it is a kind of evidence characterised as ‘cognition given with insight’ (Moran, 2000, p. 95). This kind of evidence may seem thoroughly spurious, but should be sharply distinguished from a hunch, or mere guesswork. Inner evidence, unlike these more mystical notions, is an expression of an ‘immediate intimation of truth itself’ (LI, p. 17), an understanding of the inherent validity of certain propositions. For some propositions, this idea of inward sense will be uncontroversial. Apodictic certainties such as mathematical proofs, tautologies, and Aristotelian syllogisms all constitute inward evidence because their truths are incontestable, and so long as we are sufficiently cognizant of all the relevant arguments in each case, the sense of each truth is self-evident². However, inward evidence is not limited to mathematical and logical certainties, but also extends to ordinary, first-person perceptual acts. The reason for this is that Husserl sees the contents of subjective consciousness as having a priori validity of a certain sort because subjectivity is in fact the *only* means of perceiving anything at all. He writes:

² Granted, from the position of Humean scepticism, we might maintain that while self-evident truths are themselves incontestable, human judgements regarding such are not, and therefore inward evidence may be subject to error as well (T 1.4.1.1). However, the purpose of inward evidence is not to produce infallible assertions of knowledge, but to provide grounds for a *consistent* set of assertions, a set which is suitable for investigation, on the basis of *consistent* evidence derived from phenomenologically given insights.

"We have seen universally with Hume that "world" is a validity which has sprung up within subjectivity, indeed – speaking from my point of view, who am now philosophizing – one which has sprung up within my subjectivity, with all the content it ever counts as having for me." (Crisis, p. 96)

From this we can see not only that Husserl takes subjectivity to be the original and indeed the sole source of knowledge about the world, he also attributes a similar view to Hume, on the basis that Hume's stated project was to *"propose a compleat system of the sciences"* (T Intro. 6) built upon a foundation of purely subjective empiricism. For Husserl then, he and Hume both share the view that 'objectivity' such as it is, is a concept that originates within subjective consciousness, that had a subjective genesis. As Murphy observes, *"[Husserl's] eidetic analysis revealed the a priori nature of intentional constitution."* (Murphy, 1980, p. 22)

The technical details of this theory will be discussed in the next two sections, but in practical terms, as far as inward evidence is concerned, it means this: if I think I can see a tree, I am right. It does not matter if I am mistaken, if I am hallucinating, if I am the only person who can see it and everyone else who is with me at the time insists that there is no tree there, for the instant that I think that I see a tree, my subjective perceptual consciousness is directed towards a tree, and a tree is what it finds. After all, an illusory tree must still be a tree, or else what is it an illusion of? The perceptual content is the same whether or not the tree is real and as such, a perception of an illusory tree must still be a perception of a tree. In short, insofar as any perception is objective when it originates in subjective consciousness, *all* perceptions are given as objective at the moment they are perceived. The importance of this fact should be made clearer by our discussions in chapters 6-8, but for the time being all we

need to know is that for Husserl, all perceptions, whether of apodictic certainties or synthetic perceptual content, are given within consciousness as 'immanently given' and therefore perform the functions of inward evidence. In this way, we can see how inward evidence functions as an ultimate grounding for empirical reasoning, using facts which are immediately evident to the subjective consciousness as a foundation from which to judge the validity of new cognitions as they occur.

To illustrate, we often express that we have knowledge of a certain fact without having the actual proof to hand within our conscious minds, but we nevertheless believe in our own assertions of such knowledge in these cases. To illustrate, let us take an example from Husserl and consider that I could say; "I know that the Pythagorean theorem is true, but I have forgotten the proof" (LI, p. 17). In this statement, I assert knowledge of a mathematically certain proposition on the basis that I recall that the proof was demonstrated to me at some point and I was convinced of the proof at that time. To my own mind, it is not necessary for me to have memorised the proof in order to have knowledge that the theorem holds true. My belief in the theorem then, is characterised entirely by inward evidence; the fact of its truth *seems* evident to me on the basis of earlier, unremembered cognitions. Given that I have a memory that the proof *was* at some point demonstrated to me, and given that I have a degree of confidence in the capacity of my past self to have recognised the apodictic certainty of the proof when it was presented to me, there is a sufficient chain of validations for me to believe in the validity of the proof in the present. If I did not remember that the proof had been demonstrated at all, then in all likelihood I would not be as comfortable accepting the judgement of an earlier version of me as my own.

Fortunately, in this example, the chain of validations is very short, so it is easy for us to trace it backwards and see how inward evidence demonstrates that the past and future judgements are consistent with one another. In the present, I have an idea that the square of the length of the hypotenuse on a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the remaining sides. I also have a memory of having this fact proved to me at some point. Both the perception of the theorem itself, and the perception of having had it proved to me are first person perceptual phenomena and are therefore guaranteed by inward evidence to be real perceptions. Next, I recall that in the past, I was just as able to identify the truth of mathematical proofs by inward evidence as I am in the present. Further, I recall that using this faculty, I previously judged the proof to be self-evidently true. Both of these recollections are also guaranteed by inward evidence as first-person perceptual acts. Additionally, I know that self-evident truths are always sufficient evidence for the proof of a proposition. Taken all together I innately understand, according to inward evidence, that the Pythagorean theorem is true because a) the proof was demonstrated to me, b) I understood the proof at that time, c) I judged it to be valid, and d) I have no reason to doubt my past judgements.

There are endless other ways in which we may appeal to inward evidence in order to validate our assertions, but the detail common to all of them is that they are rooted in a foundation of existing knowledge, and by appeal to inward evidence, we use our lived experience to validate the sense of new experiences and thus sort the reasonable cognitions from the unreasonable. It should be stressed that Husserl was well aware that inward evidence does not necessarily *prove* very much, certainly no more than can be proved by ordinary logical methods but importantly, he maintains that 'knowledge' is not limited to strict proof, as evinced by our Pythagoras example. While the truth of the theorem is proved by its own

innate validity, it is by no means certain that I actually *did* understand it when it was initially explained to me, only that *if* I did, and *if* it happened to be mathematically certain, *then* such a chain of reasoning is appropriate for the aim of justifying my own belief. Nevertheless, the chain of validations leading from the proof to my understanding is sufficient to be called 'scientifically valid'. Proof constitutes what Husserl would call "knowledge in the strictest sense", but in the wider sense, knowledge also encompasses the idea that we can have knowledge of the various graded probabilities of a given proposition being true (LI, p. 18) – again not with absolute certainty, but with a degree of confidence derived from inward evidence that helps guide our future cognitions. From this perspective, with our cognitions ultimately grounded by inward evidence, we can be at least relatively confident in the internal validity of our scientific reasonings since, even if our subjective perceptions are inherently unreliable as strict representations of reality, they are at least subjectively valid and subjectively consistent due to the ability of each individual subject to check their new cognitions against older ones and address any discrepancies. This means that a single investigator can be confident that their own perceptual acts will be able to produce an internally consistent set of cognitions which can be compared to another investigator's cognitions in accordance with good scientific practice, and through the practice of maintaining inter-rater reliability, a body of scientifically valid propositions can begin to build.

2.2 – Existence and Essence

It should by now be possible to see Husserl's position taking form, with its emphasis on first-person subjectivity as the foundation of scientific and (consequently) philosophical enquiry. It will therefore be a good time to express the important distinction between subjectivity and

objectivity in Husserl's phenomenology. The natural sciences (or 'experiential sciences', as he calls them) are sciences of 'matters of fact' (Ideas I, p. 7), they concern themselves with the truth of natural phenomena in an objective sense, they pursue a description of the nature of these phenomena in and of themselves, a 'real' existence given 'simpliciter'. By contrast, the object that resides in consciousness is an object of a very different type, characterised by perceptual biases of all kinds and often affected by antecedent cognitions such that it is in reality, only a representation of the object simpliciter, interpreted by consciousness in light of prior cognitions in order that some sense can be made of it, and we do not perceive that thing merely in terms of raw perceptual data. For example, when I see a car, the thing that I consciously apprehend is not 'a metal object roughly three metres in length and a metre and a half in height, with four rubber-clad wheels at the base etc.', it is not the sum of its immediate perceptual presentations, it is just a *car*, and its 'car-ness' is something I understand only in light of prior experiences, by virtue of which I am accustomed to interpreting such perceptual data in such a way as to produce the idea of a 'car' with all the implications which that impression entails. Those aspects of an object simpliciter, considered independently from its concrete existence that are regarded by consciousness to be constitutive of its nature are considered to be that which comprises that object's 'essence', and the mental object which is representative of the object simpliciter is an 'eidos', a being of meaning, a mental object which is comprised of only the formal 'essence' content of an object. This is to say, that an object in the world has both a tangible physical part, and an essence which is 'meant' by it, whereas the corresponding *eidos* is comprised of only the 'meant' essence, devoid of the physical part which produces it. For example, a sheet of metal *is* metal, in the physical sense, but its *essence* is that of the abstract quality of being metallic, and the idea of the sheet of

metal that we hold in conscious apprehension is not itself metal, but merely representative of that quality of being metallic.

Despite this distinction, Husserl is careful to remind us that these two phenomena are totally inseparable from one another. The perceptual act which instantiates any particular *eidos* in consciousness posits its object as existing in a particular way, with a particular nature, but such individual existences as are described by these *posita*³ are only contingent. In respect of their essences, they could be otherwise (*Ideas I*, p. 7). An object which I posit as being in my kitchen could just as easily be elsewhere without any destructive change in its corresponding *eidos*, and an object I posit as being green could just as easily be blue, and so on. That an object *is* green or *is* in my kitchen is incidental to my understanding of it, and it would be no more difficult to make sense of these perceptions were they otherwise. If there were no link between any particular existent and its own particular essence, this contingency would imply that no object has any really definite set of characteristics and is in a state of perpetual uncertainty, but this is not the case. As Husserl tells us:

“The sense of this contingency, which is called factualness, is limited in that it is correlative to a necessity which does not signify the mere de facto existence of an obtaining rule of coordination, among spatiotemporal matters of fact but rather has the character of eidetic necessity and with this a relation to eidetic universality” (*Ideas I*, p. 7).

³ *Posita* – plural of *positum*, ‘that which is posited’.

What this circuitous description means, is that every object has its own essential character, a range of necessary properties which must belong to it in order that a further range of secondary determinations can be applied to it. For example, an object must have the property of solidity if it is to be determined, within its solidity, if it is rigid or flexible, spongy or firm etc, or to use another example, in order for us to be able to say what colour an object is, the object in question must, by necessity, have a colour in the first place.

Correlatively, the existence of an *eidos* implies the existence of the object from which it is derived (from the perspective of the natural attitude, at least), and it is in this sense that we can make sense of what Husserl calls the 'ontic' or 'material' *a priori*. As Murphy remarks, *"According to Husserl the eidetic reduction shows that any straightforwardly given objectivity points back to a correlative a priori form of intentional constitution."* (Murphy, 1980, p. 22) What this means is that the mere existence of some *eidos*, standing testament to the occurrence of an act of perception, illustrates both the essentially subjective genesis of the *eidos*, since no *eidos* could be achieved if no subjective act of perception had taken place, and the 'intentionality' inherent to that perceptual act. Consequently, we can make sense of the following:

"...an ontic Apriori is possible, as a concretely full possibility, only as a correlate of a constitutional Apriori that is concretely united with, concretely inseparable from it."

(FTL, p. 246)

The 'ontic *a priori*' here refers to the *eidos* of some material thing, which within the act of perception comprises the *a priori* objectivation of its own subjective essence. The term

‘constitutional a priori’ refers to the intentionality inherent to the perceptual act. What Husserl means by intentionality is a matter that will receive considerable discussion in chapters 4 and 6, but in brief, what Husserl means by the above remarks, is that we are only able to suppose that there are objects outside our minds by virtue of the fact that all ideas have a subjective genesis. As such, the ‘material a priori’ has a claim to a priori validity by virtue of the fact that all subjective perceptions are objectively valid insofar as they *are* perceptions. For Husserl, the a priori is that which “...is grounded in the essence of the given ideas and is to be seen as inseparable therefrom” (EP, p. 352), and so since all perceptions are phenomenologically given, all perceptions have a priori validity and differ only in respect of whether they concern rational or material objects. Those already familiar with Hume may point out that this line of reasoning seems to lead us to the same scepticism which befalls Hume with regards to reason since, at best, this means that all our perceptions, whether of rational or material things, are equally uncertain due to the essentially fallible nature of subjective consciousness. However, Husserl’s theory differs in respect that for him, essences are related to each other within a strict hierarchy which the subjective consciousness understands by virtue of ‘eidetic intuition’, which is the subject of our next section.

2.3 – Eidetic Intuition and the Hierarchy of Essences

The relation of existence to essence in the way described above is the element of Husserl’s thought which best represents what he means when he talks about ‘intuition’ with regards to evidence, and it is best that we dwell on it a while longer, because the relations of essences to each other and their function within cognitive processes are central to Husserl’s entire project. We know that for Husserl, the object corresponding to a given *eidos* is a distinct

existent all on its own – a matter of fact. The perceiving of such an object is a presentative act whereby a new object – the *eidos* itself – is presented to the mind, an object which denotes the essential character which belongs to that existent object. There are two important things to note about the *eidos*. First, the *eidos* is distinct from the essences that comprise it. After all, a perception can be a complex thing, bearing many different properties, each of which has its own essence, and the *eidos* pertaining to the perception can just as easily correspond to a particular object as it can to the general idea of objects like it. In which case, the *eidos* must contain a multiplicity of essences in order to accommodate both the general essence which describes the class of object, and the specific essences which describe the particular object which is a member of that class. Furthermore, while the essences are inextricably linked to the object itself, the *eidos* is an intuitive apprehension of these essences, it is characterised entirely as intuition, so while the object itself may be said to actually *have* a certain essence, the *eidos* is only an intuition of this essence. Second, it is the *eidos* in its capacity as the product of intuitive consciousness which enables us to make firm judgements regarding the nature of objects in our perception and take them as ‘given’ in whatever particular determination is produced by the *eidos*. It enables us to take objects for granted and use them as the basis for new beliefs, saving us from being, at all times, consciously sceptical of everything we see.

The real strength of this account, to Husserl’s mind, is that the nature of an object’s essence as it appears in the *eidos*, in eidetic consciousness, entails no necessary assertions about the nature of factual existence, allowing us to understand fantasies, hallucinations, or even simple perceptual error in exactly the same way that we understand normal, unfettered perception. In each case it is only the object which changes, never the process by which they are

presented to consciousness. The presentative act is the same in each case, and in each case, the eidetic consciousness produces an intuition of essence such that the apparent object of perception is given in consciousness and can therefore be used as a foundation for empirical reasoning. From the scientific perspective, it does not matter very much if an individual happens to be mistaken about the nature of an object when they observe it, since such discrepancies, when they crop up in scientific data sets, can be easily averaged out by a sufficiently large range of samples⁴, and from the metaphysical point of view, it is very useful to know that the process by which individuals interpret their perceptions is consistent no matter what unique conditions any one person may be under which alter their own perceptions.

The precise mechanism of this eidetic intuition can be uncovered if we recall what we said in the previous section about ‘secondary determinations’. We saw how certain properties depend for their sense on more general properties, so for instance, in order to be able to say that an object is blue, we must first be able to say that it has a colour at all. It is meaningless for me to ask what colour my kitchen window is, because that question presupposes that the window *has* a colour in the first place, when in fact it is colourless. Thus we can see how essences like these; the essence of being blue and the essence of having a colour, exist in a kind of hierarchy, whereby more specific essences are subordinate to the more general essences on which they depend. So, while essences like ‘blue’ and ‘red’ are dependent upon ‘colour’, it is also the case that ‘loud’ and ‘quiet’ depend on ‘loudness’ (or ‘volume’, if you

⁴ And likewise, the individual treating their own numerous perceptions as a data set can pick out and dismiss aberrant perceptions whenever they are identified.

prefer), 'bright' and 'dim' depend on 'brightness', 'fast' and 'slow' depend on 'speed' and so on. In every case the specific depends on the general. We can go further than this however, because these general essences, of colour, of brightness, of loudness etc., are themselves dependent on more general essences. Colour, sound, and smell etc., are all examples of sensory phenomena, therefore in order to say that an object has any colour, any sound, or any smell whatever, never mind which particular colour, sound, or smell, it is first necessary for that object to be perceptible by sensory means in the first place. Extending this hierarchy to its extremes, we can see how it is possible to keep travelling up the tree until we encounter a maximally general essence, which must be that of 'any object of consciousness whatever', since nothing which is not a possible object of consciousness can ever be perceived. Conversely, travelling *down* the tree of essences we will arrive at what we may think of as maximally specific essences, which include such things as individual shades of colour, individual tones of sound etc. In theory, these essences are infinitely divisible into more and more particular essences, since the wavelengths of light and sound and other such continuous scales can be infinitely divided, though in practice this is only an academic distinction, since the capacity of ordinary human perception to distinguish between these essences is exhausted well before it becomes relevant. As such then, we can see how every particular essence that is apprehended by consciousness has a place on this hierarchy of essences, and every single one of them is ultimately dependent for its presentation within the mind as an *eidos*, on the maximally general essence of 'being a possible object of consciousness', thus demonstrating the methodological necessity for us as philosophers to take the subjective consciousness as the starting point of all epistemology.

That this eidetic hierarchy is intuitive will be obvious when we consider, as with the few examples outlined above, how nonsensical an expression becomes when it separates an object from the essences upon which it relies. Any questions concerning ‘the sound of silence’, ‘the colour of distance’, or ‘the texture of mass’ are intuitively understood to be meaningless, because these expressions have paired together essences which are not closely related to each other within the eidetic hierarchy. The only question of importance which remains concerning eidetic intuition then, is the source of this intuition and the answer, from the Husserlian perspective, is that it comes from the perception itself. Specifically, since every particular essence is, in and of itself, a member of the general essence above it and, by extension, of every more general essence above that, what is presented in a perception of a particular essence is in fact the entire chain of essences from the particular essence in question, to the maximally general essence designating it an object of consciousness in the first place. The eidetic hierarchy therefore, is not pieced together rationally by means of association, but given in its entirety within each individual perception as an immanent apodicticity.

We have by now demonstrated the methodological importance of taking the subjective genesis of our perceptions as our starting point for any concerted study of consciousness, both from a Humean and a Husserlian perspective. For Hume, the perceptual contents of our impressions and ideas are all that is ever present to the mind, they make up the entirety of our lived experience. As such, any question of innate knowledge or intuition is dismissed as a fiction which arises in the mind in order to smooth over any inconsistencies in our reasoning. For Husserl, Hume is very near the mark: first-person perceptual content is indeed the only thing which it is possible to perceive, but Hume fails to perceive that there *is* such a thing as

intuition, but it does not consist of innate ideas. It is simply the case that the eidetic relationships between essences are fixed as a matter of necessity. As a result, intuition of the eidetic hierarchy is derived from experience of these essential relationships. For Hume then, the correct methodology for a study of 'the science of human nature' consists in analysing the relations between ideas according to the principle of association. For Husserl, due to the relative similarity of his theory to Hume's, the method is also very similar, depending on seeking out an understanding not of ideas, but of *essences*. For Hume ideas are inextricably linked to their corresponding impressions, and must always be understood as copies of impressions, or else as being constructed from simpler ideas which are themselves copies of impressions. Husserl, on the other hand, holds that while essences may be originally presented to the mind within a certain perceptual act, a true understanding of essence requires that we temporarily remove the object to which the essence belongs, the 'object simpliciter' from consideration in order to gain an understanding of the essence in its essential purity, without any extraneous connotations it may receive from its situation-in-the-world (Ideas I, pp. 60-2). This removal of the object simpliciter is part of an aspect of Husserl's methodology that he calls the 'epoché'. Epoché is a term borrowed from the ancient Greek Pyrrhonists, literally meaning 'suspension'⁵. For them, it referred to the sceptical suspension

⁵ Historically speaking, there has been a tendency to associate Hume with the Pyrrhonists as well, though there is debate as to the extent of this association. Russell (2008) demonstrates that early Hume commentators had the strongest inclination for making this connection due to the atheistic consequences of Hume's scepticism (see Fieser, 2005 for examples), but later writers have re-evaluated this assumption. Smith (1941) took the view that Hume's naturalistic tendencies precluded a Pyrrhonistic view due to his insistence that reason was a functional faculty which served a definite psychological purpose despite its limitations. In a similar vein, Norton (1982) believes that Hume's scepticism extended only as far as metaphysical reasoning was concerned, due to

of judgement concerning the veracity of any given proposition, but for Husserl it refers to the suspension of all beliefs concerning the existence and/or nature of the external world in order to focus entirely on the world of pure essences. This notion is essential to Husserl's philosophical project due to the limitations of the natural sciences when trying to devise a theory of knowledge, as will be explained in section 2.4.

2.4 – Limitations of Natural Science

Despite having an enormous amount of respect for the scientific method itself, Husserl was very sceptical that the methodology of natural science could be successfully extended to the study of consciousness and theory of knowledge as a whole. Notably, he was rather disparaging of the tendency for some of his contemporaries to construe the study of logic as a part of the broader study of psychology. He writes in the prolegomena to his *Logical Investigations*, citing John-Stuart Mill and Theodore Lipps as proponents of this line of thought⁶. To Mill (who was offering his own thoughts on logic in comparison to those of William Hamilton), "*Logic is not the theory of thought as thought, but of valid thought; not of thinking, but of correct thinking. It is... a part, or branch of psychology* (Mill, 1865, p. 145). Husserl identifies that there is a confusion going on here that pollutes our understanding of what is meant by 'logic'. On the one hand, he concedes that at any time when we consider logic, we cannot separate it from psychology. Thought itself is a psychological process, so

his belief that we can have knowledge of morals. Husserl however, was less interested in the historical origin of Hume's scepticism than its theoretical foundations, so while it is interesting to note, the Pyrrhonic connection need not factor into our discussions very much. See also: Popkin, 1951; Fogelin, 2017.

⁶ In *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy* (1865) and *Grundzüge der Logik* (1893) respectively.

naturally logical thought is psychological also (LI, p. 41). On the other hand, logic, unlike all other psychological processes, is independently valid at all times, it does not depend on any particular psychological principles. The process of remembering, for instance, is dependent on there existing in the mind a certain psychological structure such that memories can be suitably encoded and recalled. Likewise, the process of perception requires that there be an existing mental apparatus which enables perceptual phenomena to be sensibly perceived. Logic however, requires no such thing. The axioms of logic are generally held to be true irrespective of whether someone thinks of them or not, and while it may be the case that the *apprehension* of a thought as logical is psychologically dependent, we cannot infer from this fact that logic as a whole must be so as well. As such, we may wish to conceive of logic rather as a set of *normative* laws for thought, rather than as *natural* laws of valid thought; or in other words, as a certain 'ethics' of thought determining how thought 'ought' to be carried out. If this is the case, then the study of logic must be sharply distinguished from the study of psychology, which has no normative character, but instead concerns itself only with how thinking *does* occur, and never how it *ought*. It can hence be seen that there has been a conflation of these two differing meanings of the word 'law', the natural and the normative, when conducting a study of the 'laws of logic'. As such, Husserl insists that psychology, even when we charitably accept that mental processes that happen to conform to normative laws of logic are realised within the natural laws governing thought, nevertheless cannot provide an ultimate foundation for logic. At most, we may permit that psychology *helps* to establish the foundation of logic, but if we wish to ground it absolutely, we may need to turn to the realm of 'pure logic' and disregard analyses of naturalistic mental processes altogether.

When human thought is considered only according to naturalistic terms, we inadvertently end up naturalising all absolute ideals and norms in this way (PRS, 1911, p. 80). By conflating norms or 'ethics' of thought and behaviour with natural laws concerning such, we run the risk of coming to very dubious conclusions concerning human understanding. If, as Mill suggests, logical thought is that variety of thought concerned with 'correct' thinking, do we then conclude that all other thought is 'wrong' thinking? I suspect some might be of the opinion that we do, but that is far too bold a claim for my taste. If, however, we let logic be a pure, apodictically certain set of principles, we can think of it as an entity, a body of knowledge which can itself be the intentional object of a mental act, or serve as a part of the chain of evident cognitions necessary to ground the sense of new ideas. In this way, we are able to account for our ability to produce and/or identify logical propositions without presuming that thoughts (which are of course, intentional acts) need to be divided into separate types according to their adherence to certain normative values. Indeed, the tendency to naturalise normative values and treat as necessary that which is only contingent is a fairly clear instance of the is-ought problem outlined by Hume in Book 3 of the *Treatise* (T 3.1.1.26). By conceiving of logic as exactly equivalent to logical *thought*, reducing it to nothing but a particular type of mental process as distinct from non-logical thought, there is a danger that a certain moral imperative will thereby be created, to use only the logical process of thought. This line of thinking would hold that since all logical reasoning is propositionally valid, and the truth value of non-logical thought is 'right' and therefore good, then non-logical thought should be avoided. Furthermore, if logical and non-logical thought are fundamentally different modes of thought, then it would be necessary to devise a separate set of principles to describe the operation of each mode, since a mind that worked according to logical principles should in theory be incapable of producing any thoughts which are not logical. At the very least we

should have to produce an account of how the mind is able to accommodate both a logical *and* a non-logical mode of thinking, when the former should annihilate the latter. If, however, we hold that logic is not merely a mental process, but a set of principles concerning the acquisition of apodictic knowledge, then we can avoid conceiving of logical and non-logical thought as distinct modes, and instead allow cognition to operate according to a single, consistent set of principles which can accommodate the full range of conscious mental states. Happily, it just so happens that Husserl has provided us with an excellent methodology for avoiding the error of naturalising normative values, by considering each possible object in essential purity rather than in its naturalistic context, as will be explained in section 1.4.2.

More generally though, this kind of error is representative of the fundamental drawbacks of natural science when attempting to analyse consciousness itself. Namely, that natural science is by its very nature naïve in the sense that “*The nature that it will investigate is for it simply there*” (PRS, p. 85). Put simply, it assumes that the object of its study can be described by means of a string of empirical judgements, and within the study of the natural sciences, this is absolutely true. Confusions concerning the nature of natural objects can be resolved by scientific empiricism, so long as one is willing to suspend any scepticism one might feel concerning the accuracy of the mind-world relation. Unfortunately, as metaphysicians we do not have the luxury of ignoring the sceptical arguments, so we must search for a foundation to ground the mind-world relation, and the scientific method is not capable of providing one for itself. If the principles on which empirical science depends are themselves determined by empirical investigation, then they cannot be foundational principles, since they depend on further validations. We are led either into a circle of reasoning, where a set of empirical principles are employed to ground the sense of the investigation which discovers those self-

same principles, or else into an infinite regress, where a new set of principles is required to ground each investigation into the principles which grounded the previous investigation (LI, p. 59-60). This being the case for all natural sciences, if we are to hold that psychology is a natural science (which, in the modern day, we do) then we must conclude that psychology cannot provide its own foundation either (PRS, p. 87).

To illustrate; as phenomenologists, we know by now that an object 'as it is perceived' can differ somewhat from its 'real' nature in objectivity. As such, when investigating the precise nature of one's consciousness of an object, it is fruitless to assume that one's consciousness of the object is identical to the object itself. If the object within consciousness is *not* the same as the object itself however, then empirical science has nothing which it can fix upon and study, since consciousness *is* subjectivity, and natural science cannot study subjectivity due to the lack of natural (which is to say, objective) phenomena involved. When empirical science does concern itself with the bare events of consciousness, with each mental act, it thinks of those events as belonging to nature, naturally opening it up to the questions: how can the subjective flow of consciousness make contact with the objective world? And how can it produce objectively valid statements about things that exist 'in and for themselves' which is to say, in objective reality (PRS, p. 87-77)? Of course, from both a Humean and a Husserlian perspective, we can't. Husserl's conclusion is therefore as follows:

"If knowledge theory will nevertheless investigate the problems of the relationship between consciousness and being, it can have before its eyes only being as the correlate of consciousness, as something 'intended' after the manner of consciousness" (PRS, p. 89).

What this means, is that in attempting to fix upon whatever it is that mediates between mind and world, we can never go further than the limits of the mind in order to see the world in actuality. This being the case, we are left only with ‘being as the correlate of consciousness’, which is to say, a perception of a worldly object, given thus and so.

“It is clear then, that the investigation must be directed towards a scientific essential knowledge of consciousness, toward that which consciousness ‘is’ according to its essence in all its distinguishable forms. At the same time, however, the investigation must be directed toward what consciousness ‘means’, as well as toward the different ways which – in accord with the essence of the aforementioned forms – it intends the objective” (PRS, p. 89).

Here we have possibly the clearest illustrations that Husserl ever gives of his requirements for a study of consciousness. I think we can extrapolate four conditions for such a study without controversy. First is the governing principle, that the study is of ‘essential’ knowledge, that which pertains to the ‘essence’ of objects as apprehended by consciousness, and no further. This means that any property that relates to any other natural body, any property that the object of consciousness could survive without and still be apprehended as the same object must be disqualified from our reflections. A red balloon, for instance, would not cease to be a balloon if it were suddenly turned green, or yellow or any other colour for that matter. As such, when trying to determine the essence of the concept of ‘balloon’, we can rule out the notion that a balloon has any essential colour. Second, the study extends to descriptions of what consciousness *is* in each form. This means that we must be able to identify each of

the essences individually belonging to a particular object within consciousness. Third, the study extends to descriptions of what consciousness *means*. This means that we must be able to give a description of what is signified by an object's being thus and so, in a particular mode of determination. Fourth, the study extends to the manner of intention. This means that we must be able to describe in what manner the object appears in consciousness, as a perception, a memory, an object of judgement etc. Fortunately for us, Husserl's thought includes a set of concepts which meet these conditions very nicely. First, the 'noesis', as a description of real objects in the manner in which they are perceived, is precisely a description of what consciousness *is*, or more precisely, of the content which is operative within the natural attitude. Second, the 'noema', constituted as a framework of *meanings*, as constituted by the object's essential character, is precisely a description of what consciousness *means*, which is what is uncovered in the phenomenological attitude. Third, the concept of 'thetic character' describes the intentional nature of the mental state, whether it is of a perception, a recollection, a judgement etc. These concepts will be explored in detail in chapter 6, but we can see that at the very least, Husserl's phenomenology seems to align very neatly with the conditions he laid out for himself. From this point, it only remains for us to expound more fully the precise method and functionality of the eidetic reduction, and to clear up some misinterpretations.

2.5 – Method and Functionality of the Phenomenological Epoché

Husserl makes the methodological purpose of the phenomenological epoché extremely clear in *Philosophy as a Rigorous Science*, as he summarises the nature of philosophy as he

understands it, given what is known about the requirements that any theory of knowledge must meet.

“To study any kind of objectivity whatever according to its general essence... means to concern oneself with objectivity’s modes of givenness and to exhaust its essential content in the processes of ‘clarification’ proper to it” (PRS, p. 90-91)

This statement should be pretty clear to us by now, but we shall unpack it nonetheless in order to stress how far-reaching Husserl’s philosophical endeavours become in light of this insight. When discussing the phrase ‘any kind of objectivity whatever’ for instance, we must be mindful that we are referring to the entire realm of possible subjects of study within the natural sciences. Any phenomenon that can be claimed to have an objective nature, which can be observed empirically, is naturally observed from a particular perspective and is therefore given only in a particular subjective mode, from which we must identify the ‘essential content’, that which exists ‘in and of itself’. As we can see, Husserl considers this process to be a process of ‘clarification’, a process which reveals the ‘absolute being’ of a positing act. This is in order to distinguish the essential core of an object’s being from the body of naïve suppositions that rests upon the naïve positing of the external world that occurs in the natural attitude. What this means is that:

“all the sorts of cultural formations, all works of the technical and fine arts, of sciences (in so far as they come into question as cultural facts rather than as accepted unities), aesthetic and practical values of every form... consequently all natural sciences and

cultural sciences, *with their total stock of cognition*, undergo exclusion *precisely as sciences which require the natural attitude.*" (Ideas I, p. 131-132)

We have removed entirely, everything which belongs exclusively to the realm of the natural attitude, everything that requires the external world to be naïvely posited thus and so, in the manner in which we are accustomed to perceiving it. In so doing, we remove the influence of culturally relative phenomena, and empirical assumptions concerning the natural world, leaving us with pure essence. The reduction pares away the assumption of the object simpliciter and all matters pertaining to its substance (what Husserl calls its 'hyletic content' (Ideas I, p. 203)), all those things from which our subjective understanding of the object in question is supposedly derived. In this regard, we suspend all judgement concerning the *accuracy* of the noetic perception, because such enquiries would require objective knowledge of the world in order to be settled, and that is a fruitless endeavour⁷. By concerning ourselves with the pure essence obtained within an act of perception, and not the object of perception itself, we find ourselves exiting the natural attitude and entering an attitude of phenomenological reflection from which a concerted study of consciousness can take place.

It will probably be useful here, to discuss the notion of 'essence' somewhat, since the term can be somewhat vague without strong context to define it, and yet it is clearly of great significance to Husserl, since it is what we are ultimately trying to discern in

⁷ Compare this to Hume's claim that "We may well ask, *What causes induce us to believe in the existence of body? but 'tis in vain to ask, Whether there be body or not?*" (T 1.4.2.1) Hume's study exercises a similar suspension of judgement concerning the nature of external bodies.

phenomenological reflection. We have established what 'essence' is in general terms, denoting the defining quality of a given perception or part of a perception, that without which it could not exist. For example, since the essence of 'red' is its 'redness', if we try to remove redness from red, we are left with nothingness. In general, essences are merely 'given' within eidetic intuition however, not all essences are presented to consciousness in so obvious a manner. For example, if I have an idea of what a 'perception' is, then it must have an essence, but in the natural attitude 'perception' is never the object of one of my mental states, it is a medium for objects to be presented to consciousness. As such, we should go further, and illustrate how such essences can be identified within phenomenological reflection once we have departed from the natural attitude. We can, for instance, with a small amount of reflection, identify the essence of 'perception' itself, by considering a number of different perceptions in turn, and reflecting on the commonality between them. A perception of a lamp is different to a perception of a tree in the respect that the subject of the perception is different, but it is alike in the sense that both perceptions *are* perceptions, the sense of which we understand intuitively. We all know what it is like to perceive something by means of sensory perception. By contrast, a perception of a lamp and a memory of the same lamp are identifiably different from one another, even though they share an object, because the means by which the lamp is fixed upon in consciousness is different. We all know what it is like to have a first-hand, sensory perception of something or other, and we all know what it is like to remember something, therefore we are all in a position to compare these experiences and realise that they are *essentially* different. Nobody is going to mistake a present sensory perception for a memory, or vice versa and so, by bracketing away the worldly subjects of these different mental acts, we are able to take the acts themselves as the object of study in

phenomenological reflection, something which is not possible in the natural attitude, and seize upon only the pure essences which describe them.

Having thus entered the phenomenological attitude and fixed upon an intentional object in pure essence, we can analyse it in its eidetic purity, with all of its essential determinations clearly picked out and unobscured by naturalistic concerns. We can identify the respect in which a perception of an object is differentiated from a memory of the same, we can work out what are the essential differences and similarities between multiple perceptions of the same object, and hence we can determine which features of an object are essential to its nature irrespective of when it is observed or the thetic character of the act that fixes upon it, and which were naturalistic assumptions which have since been bracketed away. Thus, we are able to explain to an exceptional degree of detail, the manner in which our experiences are processed and understood, how they are organised and interpreted, and filed away in our minds for use as intuitive reference at a later time. In short, we have discovered a method for identifying the essence of our *immanently given* objects. We still have not crossed over the perceptual horizon into objective truth of course, but we must remember that Husserl was never trying to do so. The purpose of the phenomenological method is only to describe the operating principles governing human consciousness, and if we recall the principles of eidetic science outlined above, we should see a cohesive theory of knowledge beginning to emerge. We have seen how human understanding is ultimately grounded in inward evidence, and how a series of intuitively given propositions can form a chain of evident cognitions which constitute an internally consistent model of whatever subject concerns us at the time. Now, by exercising the phenomenological epoché, we have a method of actually apprehending the pure essence of our subjective mental states in their particular mode of givenness; of seeing

what precise essences inhere in our new experiences, how they enter into intuition as essences, and that they are understood because of our already intuitive understanding of the eidetic hierarchy. This development allows our theory of knowledge to progress past the point of general knowledge about how subjective knowledge is grounded, to address more particular issues pertaining to how individual particular beliefs are formed, concerning individual objects or events. In other words, by particularising individual objects in essential purity, we have found a workable means of analysing individual intentional acts with regard to their essential purity, and can therefore come to conclusions regarding consciousness itself *also* in essential purity. All that remains for us to explore with regards to Husserl's theory of knowledge is to elaborate on the precise mechanism for exercising this kind of analysis, which we will do in the next section. For now though, it will be prudent to clear up some common misinterpretations of the phenomenological epoché.

2.6 – Misconceptions Concerning the Phenomenological Epoché

There has been an assumption amongst certain commentators that the epoché constitutes evidence for an endorsement on Husserl's part for a form of internalism, the view that the operation of the mind is a matter entirely independent of the goings-on of the external world. After all, if the proper method for understanding our perceptions is to bracket away the objective part, to make no assumptions about the nature or existence of the external world, then might we not assume that Husserl means to tell us that the external world has nothing at all to do with our perceptions? That all our particular mental states are just as compatible with an external world that bears no resemblance to them as they are to one that resembles them closely, as per the classic definition of internalism? In his book *Being-in-the-World*,

Dreyfus claims that *“In Ideas Husserl calls the entities which make intentionality possible, senses or noemata, and claims that phenomenologists can study them by performing the phenomenological reduction, i.e., by bracketing the world and reflecting directly on the senses”* (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 73) which is of course true and we will go into a more detailed exploration of sense and noemata in chapter 6, but the conclusion Dreyfus comes to on the basis of this observation is that Husserl takes the realm of consciousness and the real world to be totally independent from each other (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 74), and that Husserl must therefore believe that the conscious subject is related to its intentional object by virtue of some wholly mental content. The issue of internalism and externalism, and what position Husserl takes on them will be more appropriate to include when we come to discuss the concept of the noema later on, but quite aside from that, Dreyfus’ thoughts here betray a deep misunderstanding of Husserl’s entire project.

In order to interpret the epoché as evidence for an internalist perspective, one has to be reading Husserl with the belief that Husserl meant to address the issue of the mind-world relation, but I can see no evidence to that effect. It should be clear by now in light of everything we have discovered from Husserl’s writing, that his philosophical project concerned principally the matter of human understanding: the questions of how we establish ourselves in relation to the world, how we interpret objects and events around us, and how these interpretations contribute to the ongoing development of our sense of self and understanding. This being the case, what do we imagine Husserl could have hoped to achieve by establishing whether or not our subjective consciousness genuinely connects with external objects? In either case the conclusion – insofar as Husserl’s project is concerned – is the same. Whether the objects we fix upon in an intentional regard are mind-dependent or not, the

thetic character of the intentional act remains the same, as do the essences presented within the *eidos* pertaining to the object in question. As such, the manner in which we conceive of that *eidos* would be the same in either case, and so would all our reasonings predicated upon that understanding. As phenomenologists, we are not especially concerned with the *accuracy* of our perceptions, memories, judgements etc. since, as discussed, objective knowledge of such things is perceptually inaccessible to subjective consciousness. It is for this reason that we effect the epoché in the first place, not because we believe that intentional objects are internal representations, but because we *cannot assume* that they are mind-independent. Phenomenology is concerned only with *how* these objects are fixed upon, and since that is a matter confined to the realm of the psychic, that which concerns purely mental phenomena, we can happily ignore all questions of the mind-world relation and concentrate on the nature of things in essential purity instead.

Dreyfus is not, however, the only person to misunderstand Husserl's project and co-opt the epoché for their own endeavours. There are also those that have attempted to interpret the epoché in a way that can be generalised into the natural sciences as a means of guiding qualitative research methods. There is not *nothing* to this idea, as Husserl himself likens the reduction to the same sort of reduction that a physicist must employ in order to study elements of the natural world (Crisis, pp. 230-231). Similarly, when trying to work out, for example, how long it will take for a plane to fly from one place to another, we frequently reduce the problem to a matter of dividing distance by speed, when in reality there are a myriad of complex factors from the aerodynamic to the meteorological which affect the true outcome. We simply bracket these factors away and leave them out of consideration for the sake of simplicity. However, physical problems are predominantly quantitative affairs, so a

reduction of the natural world to just the relevant variables is plausibly useful, whereas thinkers like Giorgi for instance, are under the impression that the phenomenological reduction can be employed to improve the quality of qualitative research by bracketing away the prejudice of the researcher (Giorgi, 1994). Now, it is true that the practice of exercising the phenomenological epoché could conceivably benefit the natural sciences, in the sense that the epoché can be employed to distinguish between objects in their essential purity, and objects as they are viewed in the natural attitude. However, this is just as easily achieved by the use of quantitative research methods, by restricting the area of study to only those aspects of an object which can be measured. What Giorgi has done, is interpret the phenomenological reduction as bracketing away all *preconceptions* in order to achieve a disinterested scientific attitude to research (Giorgi, 1994, p. 205), but this is not what the epoché is for. As we know by now, the purpose of the epoché is to bracket away the natural world in order to focus purely on the object in question. The effect of this from the qualitative research standpoint is to remove any question of the world-relatedness of the object, but anything which is to be studied in essential purity can be studied either by quantitative scientific research, or else by the phenomenological reflection. The only phenomena which *must* be studied using qualitative research methods are those which are characterised exclusively according to their world-relatedness. As such, performing the phenomenological reduction during qualitative research serves only to bracket away the context which gives the object its relevance to research in the first place.

A similar mistake is made by Van Manen, who despite his rather dogmatic profession of faith in the science of phenomenology, misconstrues the epoché as a means of investigating the “*primal, eidetic, or inceptual meanings*” of human experience (Van Manen, 2017, p. 812) –

once more in the context of qualitative research. He conceives of the epoché as a means of investigating the sense of individual testimonies of an experience. Quite aside from the issues already mentioned in relation to Giorgi's work, Van Manen's idea of the epoché misunderstands the relation of the conscious subject to its intentional object, conceiving of it as a relation of mind to world, which we have already established is not the concern of phenomenology. As Zahavi points out in a recent critique of Van Manen, the epoché serves not to elucidate the worldly experience of an individual in a precise and detailed manner, but to elucidate the subjective experience of an intentional object in an eidetically pure manner (Zahavi, 2019). I may have given the impression at times that the reduction is merely for breaking down worldly objects into their essential parts, but Van Manen's mistake here serves as an opportunity to remind ourselves that in a phenomenological context, the word 'object' refers to anything at all that can be taken as the object of an intentional act, and that includes subjective perceptions of worldly objects, of oneself, one's feelings, or the relations between any number of such things. In the phenomenological attitude, appropriately reduced from the natural attitude by the epoché, these things are clear and available for examination, but for the kind of world-related experiences Van Manen wishes to examine, the epoché must be left out in order to preserve the experiential content of the experience. Possibly what Van Manen wants to do, is carry out *existential* analysis, which has its roots in phenomenology, but is explicitly concerned with the world-relatedness of experience and the place of individuals within their 'lifeworld', but that is a matter for a separate study. At present, I feel that we have addressed enough misconceptions concerning the epoché that we are able to more accurately comprehend its function as a methodological tool. All that remains in this chapter is to make evident where Husserl was actually going with this web of complex,

interconnecting theories, and explicate his account of how all of these factors contribute to the practical, everyday functions of subjective consciousness.

Chapter 3 – Problems in Hume

Having now established for ourselves a basic understanding of the principles underpinning Hume and Husserl's respective philosophical systems, our next task is to understand some of the shortcomings of Humean philosophy, so that we can begin to understand in greater detail how Hume falls into scepticism. In this chapter we will focus primarily on Hume's arguments concerning the matter of identity, as it is this matter which Hume identifies as the source of all the confusion which leads him into his labyrinth. We will also attempt to describe the circumstances which constitute the labyrinth itself, in the hope that articulating the precise relationship between all the different parts of Hume's philosophy will illuminate what the contradictions are which Hume perceived between his arguments.

Hume's ruminations concerning the issue of identity contain much of the same content as we have already seen regarding knowledge of the external world, which is to be expected given the consistency with which Hume adhered to his empirical principles, but nevertheless it bears repeating for the sake of the fresh perspective this new philosophical problem can lend to us. Very famously here, Hume identifies one particularly thorny central problem regarding notions of personal identity, which he describes thus:

"when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch myself at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception. When my perceptions are remov'd for any time, as by sound sleep; so long am I insensible of myself, and may truly be said not to exist."

(T 1.4.6.3)

The issue at hand here is, at its core, the same issue which plagues all our reasoning concerning the identity of things, that we never perceive any real connection between our different impressions, and can therefore never be said to perceive any entity as invariable and uninterrupted such that we could reasonably attribute to that entity a real *identity*. Despite what we may feel in vulgar consciousness, when we reflect on our perceptions as Hume has, we find that each impression has a distinct existence, which is to say that each impression can be considered on its own, with no necessary connection to any other impression. If this seems strange, it may be demonstrated if one recalls any particular event in one's past; for example, this morning I had cereal for breakfast, an event which I can recall quite vividly since it happened only a short time ago. When recalling that event, I am able to picture myself engaging in any number of the smaller actions which contribute to the process of eating cereal. I can remember pouring the milk, carrying the bowl to the table, eating the cereal etc. Importantly however, despite the fact that all of these actions *can* be strung together into a sequence, they do not *have* to be. Each impression can be remembered individually, nothing inherent to any of them connects it to the next. If there were any inherent connection between these impressions, it would be impossible for me to recall one without also remembering the next. Since no such necessary connection can be observed between any two impressions, each impression must be separate and distinct. Without any necessary connection between our various perceptions we are left to wonder, yet again, what *causes* us to believe that they are connected when it seems that they are quite manifestly not.

3.1 – Belief in the Unity of Distinct Existences

The answer, yet again, is that these successive perceptions, whilst distinct from one another, are nevertheless related by certain different species of relation such that the mind passes without difficulty from one to the next and makes them seem as though they were totally uninterrupted (T 1.4.6.6). Further, Hume asserts, in order to render this absurdity coherent we “*feign the continu’d existence of the perceptions of our senses, to remove the interruption and run into the notion of a soul, and self, and substance to disguise the variation*” (T 1.4.6.6). In order to demonstrate that this is the case, Hume goes on to provide a number of examples of occasions where an object is mistakenly attributed with an identity though in reality it is only a discontinuous assemblage of parts, and many of the ways in which this misattribution can be explained.

First, Hume draws our attention to the fact that the identity of physical objects should depend entirely on their physical properties, and the smallest change to the mass of an object is enough to change its identity entirely, in the sense that the object before the change is identifiably different than the object after the change, and *difference* is how we are to define diversity, as opposed to identity which is characterised by *sameness* (*ibid*). Nevertheless, we seldom acknowledge such minute changes as being sufficient to alter the identity of an object. Thus, we can see that sufficiently small changes are typically overlooked when considering the resemblance between two perceptions. Further though, Hume draws attention to the fact that the supposed smallness of a variation is determined by its proportion to the mass of the whole, so where a planet could lose the mass of a mountain without being regarded as having been significantly altered, a cubic centimetre of volume removed from something quite small, like a shoe, would be noticeable, and possibly regarded as destructive to the identity of the

whole (T 1.4.6.9). This can be further demonstrated by Hume's second example, that of an object which changes only gradually, so that the change in the object's physical properties between a number of successive perceptions is too small to be noticed. As such, something like an oak sapling, for instance, though it grows and changes almost constantly, will never be ascribed a different identity from one day to the next, because the change occurs so gradually that no meaningful difference is ever perceived all at once (T 1.4.6.10).

Nevertheless, once the tree has grown into a full-sized oak tree, one may cast one's mind back on the sapling which was planted and then perceive a difference in identity, of a sort. In this case, the difference is articulated for us by the names we give them, in the earlier case we call the plant a sapling, in the latter case we call it a tree, and despite holding that they are the same plant, we have an appropriately different view of the sapling than we do of the tree. Why though, if we are happy to overlook the gradual nature of a change in order to acknowledge a certain variation between an object's earlier and later stages, are we still happy to call it the same, and attribute to them a single unitary identity? Hume describes this propensity as an 'artifice' by which we 'produce a reference of the parts to each other' (T 1.4.6.11) and this reference is the common *end* of the changing object. So, for example, a ship which has had every part replaced over a matter of many years is still regarded as the same ship in light of the fact that every component which had ever been part of the ship played a part in the same common purpose, namely to convey people and/or goods over a body of water. In this way, so long as there continues to exist some object which conveys people and goods over a body of water, the minute details of its construction are easily overlooked when ascribing an identity to it (T 1.4.6.11). Further however, regarding more complex objects like the tree we described earlier, not only are the parts related to a common end but also,

according to Hume, they bear a mutual, sympathetic relationship to each other in *light* of their common end⁸. In living organisms after all, and in some complex machines, not only is the whole dependent on each part, but each part is equally dependent on any number of the other parts, and even though every part might be replaced over time, the enduring sympathy between all of the changing parts in relation to the object's common end ensures that common identity is perceived between every impression of that object (T 1.4.6.12). Important to remember here, though Hume neglects to remind us, is that this sympathy of parts is, of course, a *perceived* sympathy of parts, it is a certain type of resemblance whereby the fact that there is a system of parts which seem to be contributing to the same common end in the very same way at one time or another, is sufficient to convince us that the whole system of changing parts is really a single entity with unitary identity. As such, the mere fact that a sapling is growing at one time and in one place, and a tree is growing in the same place much later on, is enough reason for us to consider the sapling to be one and the same with the tree, despite the significant physical differences between the two.

Hume's fourth example serves to demonstrate that we are even able to overlook the normally obvious distinction between numerical and specific identity and conflate the identities of two obviously distinct existences into one, if the relations between them are strong enough. For example, if an alarm sounds by emitting regular, long blasts of sound separated by equal periods of silence, we would have a tendency to describe the whole set of sounds together as

⁸ It should be noted here that Hume's use of the term 'sympathy' means something different here than it does in his later discussion of the passions. Here it refers strictly to a mutual, reciprocal, causal relation between each of an object's parts and the *end* to which they all contribute.

being *an* alarm. We do not describe it as a series of alarms, despite the fact that each blast of sound is manifestly and obviously separated from the preceding and successive blasts by a period of silence, and therefore has a whole identity all of its own. In this case, we attribute common identity to them only by virtue of the fact that they share a common cause (T 1.4.6.13). In other words, each blast of noise shares a strong relation of causation to whatever device is emitting the sound, and a strong relation of resemblance to each other. A further example Hume offers us, is that of a church which had fallen to ruin, and been rebuilt out of completely different materials, in a completely different architectural style. This new church, Hume claims, would still be regarded by all who visit it as being the same as the old church, despite no part of it being the same, nor even resembling the old church in any meaningful sense. The account Hume gives for this is that the church still bears the same relationship to the parish and parishioners as the old church, that of 'being the parish church', and that the obvious difference in numerical identity between the two buildings is overlooked because the first church had been destroyed before the second church was built and as a result, the parishioners never had any impression of a numerical difference between the two churches presented to them, so never thought of the new church as numerically different to the old one (T 1.4.6.13). Perhaps they thought of the new church as being a restoration of the old one. One comment I would like to make regarding this example though, is that while it is possible that this new church would be thought of as being identical to the old one, I think it more likely that the identity or difference of the two churches may well vary by context. I can think of any number of scenarios where a parishioner might, in conversation, refer to 'the old church'. Possibly the rebuilding of the church could be a significant event by reference to which an anecdote could be dated, or located, as in "it was before they built the new church" or "it happened in the old church". I don't think examples such as these actually disprove

Hume's account, but I think they demonstrate that the perception of identity could involve a good deal more volition than Hume seems to give us credit for, and ordinary, vulgar changes in perspective may permit multiple different ways of interpreting the identity of objects in everyday life.

Regardless, Hume's final example concerns those occasions where a certain changeability is anticipated, and helps us overlook the fact that a change in parts entails a change in identity. For example, a river is constantly composed of different parts, each water molecule passing steadily downstream before being emptied into the ocean never to once again become a part of the river's body, and yet we do not consider the river to be continuously adopting a new identity as water is added or subtracted from it. Nor, interestingly, are we likely to attribute a new identity to a river if its course changes due to erosion or flooding or suchlike. Clearly then, Hume tells us, *"what is natural and essential to any thing is, in a manner, expected; and what is expected makes less impression, and appears of less moment, than what is unusual and extraordinary"* (T 1.4.6.13). In other words, if we expect a thing to change, then its change is less likely to be viewed as destructive to its identity. As such, the changing of water into wine is regarded as a miracle, and the changing of water into steam is not.

3.2 – Belief in the Notion of Self

With all of this in mind, we can now return to the problem at hand, which is that our notion of personal identity, the very idea that there is some entity which we can call our *self*, seems to be predicated on mistakes of these types. As Hume has already stressed, all of our impressions, everything we perceive to be constitutive of our person or pertaining to our

person, can be separated from each other and considered independently without the least change in their own nature. None of them can be shown to be necessary to the existence of any other when separated from the blurred succession of states which passes for continuous experience to our subjective minds. As such, Hume supposes, it must be the case that the idea we have of our own identity is a fictitious one, just like the idea that a sapling is identical to the tree into which it grows (T 1.4.6.14). After all, if the fully-grown tree is a different size, a different shape, and has not one single cell in common with its own sapling, then the two must be different entities whether or not we think otherwise. Equally then, if my own childhood self is a different size, a different shape, and has not one cell in common with me, nor even most of my memories, then clearly I am a different person to my childhood self, and while most people would accept this fact on some level once they reflect on it, almost all would forget this distinction and return to thinking of their childhood self as identical with themselves as soon as they return to vulgar consciousness. To suppose in this way, that our different selves throughout our life share an identity, is simply to reach into memory and compare a number of different past perceptions, and find the resemblances between them, which is very easy to do when we have such a wealth of successive past experiences to draw upon, each only very slightly different from those immediately before and after it. This being the case, we can easily see how we might falsely suppose that these perceptions which only *seem* to be linked, are *actually* linked, and attribute a common identity to them all (T 1.4.6.16).

Further, if we tried to comfort ourselves that all of our experiences are causal in nature, with a causative event naturally preceding the effect and that this being the case, our perception of our identities as persisting through a succession of related events must be grounded in

truth, we very quickly lose hope on this front when we recall Hume's thoughts about causation. The idea of causation is, according to Hume, never derived from a real impression of causation, but only ever an inference from the regular conjunction of certain events (T 1.4.6.15). If I drop an object and it falls, I might infer that my dropping the object is what *caused* it to fall, but in fact even this simple example demonstrates how flawed our idea of causation can be. I know perfectly well that it is not my releasing an object that causes it to fall, but the pull of gravity. However, the actual mechanism by which gravity causes an object to fall is so far from evident that any assertion to that effect could only be conjecture without significant investigation behind it. All that is ever actually observed, as far as subjective consciousness is concerned, is an impression of an object being released, followed by an impression of that same object falling. If I witness this same sequence of events several hundred times I will be utterly convinced that objects always fall when they are dropped, and for all that I may speculate as to the cause of this phenomenon, I am never genuinely conscious of the effect that the gravity of a massive object has on the mass of a less massive object, the only thing of which I am aware is that something has fallen down. Knowing this, the apparent causal relationship between our successive impressions has somewhat less explanatory power than we might have hoped. We might imagine that different parts of our identity have a causal influence on one another, that our moods, for example, have a causal influence on the judgements we make whilst influenced by that mood, and that those judgements influence our later beliefs, and so on and so forth until a whole complex system of personhood is established, which changes and develops as earlier states continue to influence newer states. However, the only evidence we have for the existence of any of these earlier states is our own memory, which is patently unreliable and incomplete. Quite aside from the issue that we may forget things which, as a consequence, cease to have any influence

on our present identity, we also must contend with the problem that we have virtually no memory of almost all of our existence. None of us could reliably give a detailed account of everything that has happened to us, what we thought about it, and how it affected us on any single arbitrary date within our lifetimes. Most days pass without incident and have no traceable influence on our identity into the future (T 1.4.6.18). If this is so, then surely we cannot possibly presume that those events which we do claim to recall are recalled *accurately* and *completely* such that the causal influence on our identity which we perceive them to have is guaranteed to be equally accurate and complete. Given the nature of subjective experience and its shaky empirical grounds, if we cannot guarantee by reason that these memories are *perfectly* accurate and complete, then we have no rational basis to suppose that they are even *slightly* accurate or complete.

The conclusion Hume reaches on this subject is that all questions concerning personal identity are really more grammatical in nature than they are philosophical, depending much more on the way in which we use language to describe our identities than any of the fictional bases on which we may imagine the notion of personal identity to depend. After all, the notion of identity which we have in our minds is dependent on the relations between certain ideas, which somehow 'produce' the idea of identity by virtue of the ease with which our perception of these relations enables us to pass from one disparate idea to the next without ever noticing the separation between them. Since there is no 'just standard' according to which we can judge whether a particular relation confers identity on the ideas which it relates together, there is nothing left to argue about except how to describe it (T 1.4.6.21). As decisive as this conclusion seems to be however, Hume is not quite as comfortable with it as he lets on. In

the Appendix to the *Treatise* there is a very famous passage wherein Hume describes certain misgivings he has with his theory.

“when I proceed to explain the principle of connexion, which binds [our perceptions] together, and makes us attribute to them a real simplicity and identity; I am sensible, that my account is very defective, and that nothing but the seeming evidence of the precedent reasonings cou’d have induc’d me to receive it ... in short there are two principles which I cannot render consistent; nor is it in my power to renounce either of them, vis. That all our distinct perceptions are distinct existences, and that the mind never perceives any real connexion among distinct existences” (T App. 20-1).

The first thing to note of course is that these principles are not remotely contradictory. They are in fact, two of the most essential parts of Hume’s metaphysics and they lead very naturally and rationally to the conclusions that Hume lists in the main body of the text, that there is no rational basis for believing that any object has an identity in the sense of an existence which is invariable and uninterrupted over time. What then, is Hume’s difficulty? In order to explain this, as has been noted by Ainslie (2001) among others, we must presume that Hume’s two principles imply one or more additional principles which render the theory as a whole irreconcilable when taken together. Fogelin (2009) suggests that Hume’s concern was that by accepting these two principles he eliminates any possibility of accounting for our propensity to produce and accept a fictional idea of identity. If this is the case, then the fact that Hume does not have such concerns regarding his ability to account for our belief in external objects means that Hume considers the issue of personal identity to be distinct from the issue of object identity in some key regard. For Fogelin, this difference is that Hume’s arguments

reduce the concept of the self to nothing more than the product of a bundle of perceptions, and an impossible product at that, by virtue of the fact that none of the perceptions within the bundle are at all really related, and so should never be able to produce any consciousness. This being the case, Fogelin supposes that Hume was troubled by the fact that, having reasoned away any possibility of the conscious self, there was no consciousness left to perceive the fiction (Fogelin, 2009, p. 123). With no consciousness, nothing can ever be perceived and Hume's account, which depends upon there being at least some kind of consciousness (usually vulgar), loses all its explanatory power. As persuasive as Fogelin's interpretation is, and I am certainly inclined to accept it, there remains a certain difficulty in discerning what it was about Hume's arguments that confused him. The fact that Hume attempted to correct himself in the Appendix suggests that he had somehow tricked himself into believing a faulty argument, and only discovered the error on reflection, but he never fully explains what he thought the error was. Instead, he simply stressed the point that none of our perceptions can ever be united⁹.

The difficulty of interpreting Hume here is derived, in part, from the fact that Hume's chapter on personal identity really contains two discussions, a metaphysical discussion, and a psychological one (Garrett, 2011). The metaphysical discussion is that which concerns the nature of personal perceptions in and of themselves; the assertion that different perceptions are distinct existences for instance, is a metaphysical statement. The psychological discussion is that which concerns the means by which we interpret our perceptions; Hume's discussion of the relations which cause us to associate disparate perceptions falls under this category.

⁹ Further material on Hume's Labyrinth can be found in: Fogelin, 1992; Ellis, 2006; Roth, 2000; Cottrell, 2015.

The task for interpreters of Hume is this: to determine whether Hume's problem lay in explaining what force binds our perceptions together when no such force seems to exist, or if it lay in explaining precisely how our perceptions contribute to the belief that they are united, even though no consciousness should exist to be able to mediate the perceptions in this fashion. Stroud (1977), conscious of this conflict, narrowly misses out on a meaningful insight when weighing up the merits of each interpretation. He notes that the metaphysical account would make more sense of Hume's comment in the Appendix that "*did our perceptions...inhere in something simple and individual...there wou'd be no difficulty in this case*", and that the psychological account would make more sense of the remark "*did the mind perceive some real connexion among them...there wou'd be no difficulty in this case*". What Stroud fails to remark upon is that each of these comments from the text pertains to one of Hume's two unrenounceable principles. What Stroud's observation tells us is that Hume's first principle is a metaphysical principle concerning the nature of perception, and that his second principle is a psychological principle concerning the nature of the mind. The nature of the conflict then is not logical, but naturalistic. Hume observes that *the nature of the mind is incompatible with the nature of perception*, but is unable to relinquish his stance on either, since both are derived from his own foundational principles. His lament that if either the mind or the perceptions were otherwise than they are then there would be no difficulty may in fact communicate his frustration with the fact that he cannot find anything wrong with his arguments on either count.

3.3 – Hume’s Labyrinth

Let us go over the essential parts of Hume’s philosophy again so as to get a clearer view of the problem. In the first instance, all of our knowledge is derived from our senses in the form of impressions. We know this because we know that we have no means of gathering information except from our sensory experience. Further, all of our simple ideas are copied from our impressions, and are less vivid than their corresponding impressions because they lack the sensuous quality which makes impressions so vivid. This principle is referred to as the copy principle and is very important because it lets us know that it is not possible to have any idea of something without first having an impression of it; quite simply, there is no idea that is derived from nothing, or as Hume puts it “*all ideas are derived from impressions, and are nothing but copies and representations of them*” (T 1.1.7.5). Given what we know about the copy principle, we can deduce that all our reasoning concerning objects in the external world is dependent on the ideas of external objects which we derive from our impressions of them. However, Hume stresses the importance of noting that all of our different perceptions are distinct from each other. As such, our propensity to unite multiple separate impressions into a single identity cannot be accounted for by the copy principle alone, and must be accounted for by some action of the imagination, which enables certain relations of resemblance, contiguity, or causation to produce in us a false impression of identity between separate impressions, which corresponds to a false idea of identity. The same principle as applied to our understanding the identity of external objects should also apply to our understanding of *personal* identity, and Hume says that it does. All of the perceptions which we take to belong to the self are also distinct from each other, and it is a similar act of the imagination which enables us to take the relations of resemblance and causation between them to be indicative of the existence of a self with a unitary identity which encompasses all of our different

perceptions, and hence gives rise to a false impression (and consequently a false idea) of self. This is where Hume starts to have a problem.

We have just deduced that the self is really nothing more than a set of perceptions with no necessary relations between them, seemingly united by the imagination. However, the relations which the imagination uses to unite these perceptions are merely empirical relations, they represent the 'seeming' relationship between perceptions, and are not indicative of any real metaphysical relationship between them. As such, we have no genuine impression of any necessary connection between our differing perceptions. If we have no impression of any such connection, then where does the idea of this connection come from? When we were discussing our understanding of the identity of *external* objects Hume's recourse to the imagination was perfectly sufficient, we could be quite happy with the explanation that while no *real* connection between our impressions is ever observed, we nevertheless *imagine* such a connection because our minds are predisposed to do so. When trying to apply this same argument to our understanding of the identity of our own selves however, it ends up being circular because, presuming as we well might that the imagination is dependent on the existence of a mind, the imagination is required to produce the mind on which it depends. To put it another way, the argument goes as follows: (1) The mind is nothing but the apparent union of a bundle of separate perceptions. (2) It is an action of the imagination which produces the apparent union amongst these separate perceptions. Given (1) and (2) it must therefore be the case that (3) It is an action of the imagination which produces the mind. However, if it is also the case that (4) The imagination is a part of the mind; then it must be the case that (5) It is an action of the mind which produces the mind;

and this is clearly absurd since nothing gives rise to itself¹⁰. Since we cannot use the imagination to explain the apparent union of our otherwise entirely separate impressions, we must find some other means of explanation, but here Hume is at a loss. The only means he has of justifying any of his philosophy is empirical observation, and all his empirical observations lead to the conclusion that we never perceive any real connection between our separate impressions, nor are there any such connections to find in the first place, and his last recourse – the imagination – has just been disqualified.

The problem I have outlined here is one shared in large parts by Galen Strawson in his article ‘All My Hopes Vanish’: Hume on the Mind’ (2012), though Strawson approaches the issue by discussing what Hume is ‘warranted’ to believe. This is a good analytical device, I think, as it helps us to process Hume’s own possible train of thought regarding this muddled problem. Hume, according to Strawson, believes that he is not warranted to believe that there is any real connection between his distinct impressions, because each impression is, upon empirical reflection, found to have no necessary connection to any other. Neither, says Strawson, does Hume think himself warranted to believe that he *perceives* any connection between his different perceptions, because he has no impression of any such connection and according to

¹⁰ While rather glossed over here for the sake of brevity, it is worth noting that the principle that nothing produces itself is a principle which Hume seems to endorse. In *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, Hume puts this principle in the mouth of his character Demea when describing the *a priori* argument for the existence of God (DNR, 9.3). Furthermore, in the *Dialogues*, Demea is almost never Hume’s mouthpiece, and primarily exists for the other characters to criticise, so it is noteworthy that this principle is one of the few parts of Demea’s argument which Hume does not have either of his other characters criticise, so it seems as though Hume would be happy to accept the problem I have raised here.

the copy principle he can therefore have no idea of it. Nevertheless, Strawson points out, Hume describes that we *do* perceive a connection, if only a false one, by virtue of some function of the imagination, which acts according to its own indiscernible principles (Strawson calls these 'I-Principles'). It is these I-principles which I have already criticised Hume for leaving unexplained, and I have demonstrated in the paragraph above why the argument from imagination is inadequate. Strawson, for his part, shares many of my concerns, that given the rest of Hume's account, these I-principles must be the key to its coherence, but without justifying how the imagination produces an idea of which it has had no impression, Hume will fall victim to the absurd circle of reasoning outlined above. Garrett (1997) anticipates this criticism to a certain extent and seeks to defend Hume by reminding us of a key principle of empiricism, that absence of evidence is no evidence of absence. For Garrett, it is not necessary for Hume to explain *how* the imagination unites our perceptions, he only needs to be able to observe that it does. Ultimately, the I-principles which govern the process of uniting our perceptions in the imagination can remain indiscernible with no injury to Hume's system. Neither Strawson nor I find this rebuttal particularly persuasive. It is true that Hume does at times claim 'the privilege of a sceptic' (T App. 21), and claim that as a sceptic, he is not required to find a solution to the problems his sceptical philosophy identifies, and as such, the lack of a detailed explanation for some observed phenomenon in no way precludes reference to that phenomenon in his reasoning. However, notwithstanding that the existence of the self-sceptical passage in the Appendix casts some doubt on Hume's satisfaction with his theory, the main problem here is that, ironically, Hume's system is too perfect to permit any such sceptical escapes. He simply does not leave room to claim the privilege of a sceptic on this count. In detailing to such a degree of precision the nature of perceptions and of the mind, Hume has ended up in a position where the I-principles can only operate according to

one or the other of his untenable escape routes. Strawson characterises these as ‘maximally general positive metaphysical characteristics of the mind’s nature’ (2012, p. 192), because between them they are an exhaustive, mutually exclusive set of options for explaining the relation of the mind to its perceptions. Either perceptions are necessarily connected, or they are not. Either the mind perceives a connection, or it does not. As such, there are only four possibilities.

- 1) Perceptions are really connected, and the mind perceives a connection.
- 2) Perceptions are really connected, but the mind perceives no connection.
- 3) Perceptions are not really connected, but the mind perceives a connection.
- 4) Perceptions are not really connected, and the mind perceives no connection.

Options 1 and 2 are instantly disqualified because our perceptions simply are not really connected. Option 3 is the option offered to us by the introduction of the imagination, but we can only accept it if we are willing to believe that (a) the imagination is not dependent on the mind, and/or (b) the I-principles are non-empirical principles. We are required to show (a) in order to escape the circular argument which holds that the mind gives rise to itself, and we are required to show (b) in order to hold that the imagination has the capacity to produce ideas of which the mind has had no impression. I do not believe that Hume would be willing to accept either of these things. As a result, claiming the privilege of a sceptic does not help him very much, because the nature of the principles which he claims not to need to explain are already determined by the metaphysical principles of his theory. All that is left then, is option 4, and this is the least satisfying option, because without the imagination to give us the impression that all our distinct perceptions are united into a single unitary mind, we have

no way to account for the impression of self, nor any reason to believe that there is any such thing as the mind since no impression of the mind is even possible. This argument is not acceptable to Hume for fairly obvious reasons, namely that we manifestly *do* have minds, as evidenced by all the thinking that we do with them. So here, at length, we are led to the labyrinth where Hume languishes at the end of the Appendix. It *should* be possible to explain the seemingly plain fact of our own consciousness by empirical means, and yet every avenue is closed. If it were the case that there was some simple, irreducible thing, such as a soul, or a central Ego by virtue of which our perceptions arise, then there would be no problem, we could make the argument that all our perceptions, while distinct from each other, are nevertheless united in us by virtue of their common reference to the same Ego, our own self, but Hume has already precluded this possibility. When he tries to find an Ego, all he can perceive is a bundle of unrelated perceptions, and his empiricism will not permit him to attempt an explanation beyond the remit of his own perceptions. If, instead, we could perceive some connection between our perceptions, even a false connection, that might also solve our problems. In that case, we could make the argument that the mind arises when a sufficiently complex organism acquires enough impressions to produce the ideas necessary for consciousness, but Hume has precluded this possibility too. When we get right down to it, all our impressions can only ever be apprehended individually. No necessary connection between them can be perceived because no such connection exists, and we have shown how the imagination cannot be relied upon to produce even a false impression of connection either. All of this being the case, we come to the ultimate conclusion that there is no such thing as a mind, and with this conclusion, all our reasonings which depend on empirical observation come undone, because without a mind there can be no perceptions and without

any perceptions there are no impressions in the first place, and Hume's entire system of philosophy comes crashing down around him.

There is perhaps one last objection that one could make on Hume's behalf to rescue him from the version of the labyrinth which we have proposed. The objection derives from a passage in the *Treatise* which we discussed in the last chapter, in the section 'Of scepticism with regard to the senses' wherein Hume discusses the separability principle, which establishes the fact which we have acknowledged, that every perception is a distinct existence, separable from every other perception. Hume writes:

"as every perception is distinguishable from another, and may be consider'd as separately existence; it evidently follows, that there is no absurdity in separating any particular perception from the mind; that is, in breaking off all its relations, with that connected mass of perceptions which constitute a thinking being" (T 1.4.2.39).

Hume's point here, is that any one singular perception can be removed from the bundle which makes up the self without any destructive effect on the identity of either the self or the individual perception. The individual perception remains unchanged because it had an independent existence anyway, and while in the strictest sense the self would be entirely changed as a result of the loss of a single perception, such a change would be too small to make a difference that is appreciable to vulgar consciousness. Indeed, so small a change as that easily falls within the ordinary degrees of change that affect us on a daily basis as perceptions enter and exit conscious apprehension. The objection that could be levelled against us then, is that our interpretation of Hume's problem depends on the assumption that

Hume believed that the mind is necessary to any perception, that every perception requires a perceiver, and clearly this is not what Hume believed. Since every perception has its own separable existence, then the mind (which is of course, merely a bundle of certain other perceptions) is not necessary to the existence of any one perception in particular. As such, the mind need not exist prior to its perceptions in order to ground them. This argument has a certain merit to it, and of course we can take it further to get a clearer picture of what our erstwhile critic is getting at. For instance, while it may be true that mind does not need to precede perception, it is also true that perceptions do not precede mind. In Hume's view perceptions *are* mind. Naturally then, we are led to the following argument: that since each perception has its own distinct existence, losing nothing of its distinctiveness by being part of a mind-bundle, and losing nothing by leaving the bundle either, it follows that if a bundle of perceptions together possesses consciousness, then each perception individually must also possess consciousness, else the consciousness exhibited by the mind-bundle must have come from nothing. This is all very well, and certainly consistent with Hume's philosophy, but in addressing some of our concerns, it does raise others.

First, there is a problem inherent to the fact that we need to know exactly how extensive a measure of consciousness is possessed by each perception, and how to characterise such an entity. Hume does entertain the possibility of such an entity in the Appendix when he proposes the existence of a being "*even below the life of an oyster*" (T. App. 16), an entity so simple that it experiences only a single perception over its whole life, that of hunger, or thirst or suchlike. Strawson discusses this issue at some length while exploring the possible metaphysical relationships of conscious subjects to the content of their experience, and ultimately comes to the conclusion that even this 'sub-oyster'-type entity is a conscious,

thinking being, on the basis that experience is metaphysically inextricable from the experiencing subject (Strawson, 2022). Strawson's contention in this article is that Hume did not in fact reject outright the existence of an experiencing subject, but only that one does not encounter the experiencing subject when 'entering intimately into oneself', and that the existence of the subject is always known on some level, by virtue of the metaphysical necessity of an experiencing subject for every experience. Where does this leave us though, with Hume's sub-oyster, and more importantly, where does it leave us with our own selves? If the sub-oyster is a thinking being, does that mean that every individual instance of experience is experienced by a different subject? If so, then a human being is simply a succession of a great many different people, each possessing its own unique instance of perception, but if we grant that this is the case, this succession of perceiving-beings is *still* not bound together by any necessary connection, such that we could have an impression of it and hence gain the idea of a continuous self. Supposing then, that each perception is not a complete perceiving-being, at the very least we could assume that each perception contains the consciousness of itself, otherwise the bundle of perceptions constituting the mind would have a mass of perceptions, but no consciousness of any of them. However, it is not clear, even under this model, where the imagination comes from, which is necessary if the indiscernible I-principles are going to unite these perceptions into an apparent unity of self. Does each perception contain a fragment of imagination which is amalgamated into a full faculty of imagination when it comes into proximity with other perceptions? This seems far-fetched. Indeed, it seems difficult to imagine how Hume's system could allow a perception to consist of anything *but* the impression or idea of a thing, and possibly the consciousness of such, since nothing else is available to the empirical faculty. With this seemingly insurmountable problem facing us, we are still unable to find a satisfying characterisation of

the mind which allows for the I-principles to take their supposed place within Hume's metaphysics, as the means of uniting all of our separable perceptions. Even conceiving of perceptions as possessing the consciousness of their own selves, we still have no acceptable means of accounting for the impression of their unity.

There is one final reason why I do not believe that Hume could use the separability principle in this way to evade the problems I have identified, and that is that Hume's system is as coherent as it is going to be regardless of whether or not our perceptions can exist independently of consciousness. As I have already pointed out, the use of this device does not enable us to accept the use of indiscernible I-principles as Garrett would have us do, and it only barely ameliorates the circularity of the mind-perception primacy problem. It is generally accepted that the separability principle was introduced to Hume's philosophy as a rebuttal to Berkeley's assertion that *esse est percipi*, to be is to be perceived, and the idealist consequences it brings with it¹¹. Unfortunately, as noted by Allison (2008), the principle does not even really constitute an answer to Berkeley. The separability principle establishes that perceptions can be considered as separate from any one particular mind, but it does nothing to challenge the idea that perceptions must exist in at least *a* mind. This being the case, Hume

¹¹ Berkeley's general argument is that since a) we perceive ordinary objects and b) all that we are strictly able to perceive are ideas, then ordinary objects are in fact nothing but ideas. Since we certainly *do* perceive ordinary objects in some sense or another, and Berkeley's contemporaries were more or less in agreement that all that is strictly perceptible are ideas. Berkeley however, denies the possibility of mediate, representational perception on the grounds that an idea can resemble only another idea, in the same way that a colour resembles only another colour, and shape resembles only another shape. See Winkler, 1989 or Bettcher, 2008 for in-depth explanation of Berkeley's philosophy.

leaves open the possibility that the being of all perceptions is guaranteed by an omniscient observer, such as God, as Berkeley would have contended. Obviously, this solution would have been unacceptable to Hume, but the point is that the contention that perceptions can exist apart from the mind-bundle neither adds to, nor subtracts from Hume's philosophy. It is not necessary to the coherence of the principles upon which the theory rests that perceptions be mind-independent, only that they be separable from each other, nor does Hume's theory suffer from any more problems if we accept that contention, it simply fails to address the problems that already exist. As such, the status of Hume's theories stay more or less the same, he is still lost in a labyrinth, still trapped by the restrictions of his own core principles.

Chapter 4 – Intentionality in Phenomenology

Having now explored how our most immediate cognitions are shaped by intuitive interpretation of our immediate perceptions, it will now be beneficial to discuss how these cognitions fit into the sphere of consciousness of any particular individual or, put more succinctly, how these cognitions translate into mental states. Husserl gets his account of mental states from his teacher, Franz Brentano, and for Brentano the defining characteristic of a mental state is that it contains within it a particular object, something which it is 'about'.

“Every mental phenomenon includes something as object within itself, although they do not all do so in the same way. In presentation something is presented, in judgement something is affirmed or denied, in love loved, in hate hated, in desire desired and so on. This intentional in-existence is characteristic exclusively of mental phenomena.”

(Brentano, 1874, p. 68)

This notion, that every mental state contains an object that defines it, is known in philosophy as 'intentionality' due to the fact that each mental state is hence characterised in terms of how it *intends towards* its particular object. For example, if I experience love, there is some particular thing which I love, and that thing fulfils the role of object within my mental state. Were there no object available for me to love, then no love could exist, therefore the mental state requires an object for its existence. So it goes that if I feel hate, there is a thing which I hate, if I am in pain there is a thing which is hurt, and if I am greedy there is a thing which I desire. Likewise, for Brentano at least, the intentional character of mental states extends also to mental states with more abstract objects, the only thing that changes is the precise way in

which the mind intends towards each object. For example, if I possess the mental state of 'journeying', the conscious apprehension of being on a journey, then my mind intends towards the abstract object which is represented by the concept of 'my destination'. I must imagine that there is some destination towards which I am journeying in order that my mental state be characterised by the idea of journeying at all, because a journey requires both a start and an end. This is to be contrasted with the idea of 'wandering' for instance, which is characterised precisely by the lack of any destination. The mental state representing a conscious apprehension of wandering would have as its object something entirely different, most likely this object would be 'the act of travelling with no expectation of arriving anywhere in particular'. Examples such as these latter two are not unchallenged, and there are those who dispute whether *all* mental states must have an object, but in order to get to these criticisms we need to expand on the concept more generally.

4.1 – Intentional In-existence

The concept of intentional in-existence has generated considerable controversy over the years, so it will be a good idea for us to engage with the problem in order to better understand the context behind Husserl's contribution. First, to the term itself; the expression 'in-existence' reads very ambiguously, but fortunately we can clear that up very easily. Brentano borrowed the expression from scholastic thinkers who used it to describe the manner in which accidental properties exist 'in' their respective substances. The term itself is Brentano's translation of the Latin '*in-esse*', literally 'to be in' (Moran, 2000, p. 48). However, if we are to understand that Brentano conceives of objects that exist within our mental states, we are left to wonder in what manner these objects exist there. Does he mean that the object itself is

literally ‘in’ our minds? Or does he perhaps mean that the object of our mental state is a representative copy of an object within conscious apprehension? Both of these answers have problems, so we will need to investigate further.

We can confidently assume that Brentano did not think that objects existed *inside* the mind, as pure bundles of sense data in the Berkeleyan sense, as that is exactly the kind of idealist belief that he was so ardently against (Janoušek & Zahavi, 2019, p. 5), so we must only concern ourselves with ideas that present the mind-object relation as an internal-external relation. This has led many writers, including many of Brentano’s own students, to suppose that the intentional objects of our mental states are best described in terms of a ‘thought of’ object which represents the real external object. Thus described, if I perceive a horse, then the intentional object of the mental state characterised by the perception of a horse is the *thought* of a horse. This account has the advantage of accommodating mental states which concern things which do not exist, such as unicorns, or the character of Hamlet etc., which otherwise lack a referent to ground the mental state concerned with them. This might be a compelling notion were it not for the fact that Brentano explicitly disavowed it in a letter to his student Anton Marty sent in 1905. In the letter he writes:

“It has never been my view that the immanent object is identical with ‘object of thought’. What we think about is the object or thing and not the ‘object of thought’. If, in our thought, we contemplate a horse, our thought has as its immanent object – not a ‘contemplated horse’, but a horse. And strictly speaking only the horse – not the ‘contemplated horse’ – can be called an object” (Brentano, 1905, p. 52).

So, we can see that in no uncertain terms Brentano resolutely rejects the idea that the immanent object is the mere thought *of* an object, as such a notion would lead to absurd conclusions. To conceive of an '*ens rationis*', a 'thing of reason' as being the immanent object of a mental state would be to suggest such things as that in proposing marriage, I am making a promise to marry one entity – the *ens rationis* – but standing at the altar with an entirely separate entity, a person as a real external object. Following McAlister (1970, p. 425), I think it is inappropriate to attribute to Brentano an idea which he personally rejected, therefore we must try to understand the sense in which Brentano conceived of real objects existing with intentional in-existence. Dummett (1988) attempts a common-sense explanation, wherein mental states are simply intended towards an external object, plain and simple, but this is a very defective account. As Smith (1989, p. 161) points out, Brentano's concept of a 'real thing', an '*ens reale*' is to be sharply distinguished from external objects in the everyday sense, in the same way as Kant (1781) distinguishes between phenomenal and noumenal objects, and for the same reason. The precise nature of external objects is difficult to pin down using only empirical observations, so the external object entire and of itself cannot be the immanent object of a mental state because we cannot perceive an external object entire and of itself all at one time, only those parts which are present to us.

For his own part, Brentano considers his position to resemble that of Aristotle, when the latter speaks of how the soul adopts the 'form' of an object towards which the consciousness is directed, where 'form' is to be taken in a sort of Platonic sense to mean the 'sense' of an object, or alternately, to describe its 'properties' (Brentano, 1905, pp. 52-3). In Aristotle's view, 'knowable and thinkable things' have only a relative existence by virtue of the fact that there must be something to which they refer, but a thought cannot be relative to what is

thought of, that would be to suggest that a thought in and of itself refers only to its own content, and if this is the case, where does the content come from if not from outside the thought (McAlister, 1970)? This argument certainly resembles Brentano's own assessment, and helps put pay to the idea that the immanent object might itself be only a thought. However, we are still confused as to what the 'immanent object' actually *is*. With regards to this, I think it is possible that Brentano has misled us somewhat. He admits in his letter to Marty that the use of the term 'immanent object' was ambiguous. He writes:

"I allowed myself the term 'immanent object' in order to say, not that the object exists, but that it is an object whether or not there is anything that corresponds to it" (1905, p. 52).

I think that what we can learn from this excerpt is that we have been mistaken in imagining that Brentano believed in a kind of real psychical object with some determinable form of existence, and in actual fact, all he meant to convey with the phrase was the sense of his core thesis which we have understood all along. By using the term 'immanent object' I believe he meant to convey to us only the idea that every mental act is directed towards some *thing*, and this *thing* is only a part of the act to the extent that it is necessary in order for the act to take place. *"It's being an object"* he goes on to say, *"is merely the linguistic correlate of the person experiencing having it as object, i.e., his thinking of it in his experience"* (Brentano, 1905, p. 52.). By this we can infer that the notion of an immanent object being a type of *psychical* object is a misnomer. The object to which a mental state refers is not the immanent object (Brentano only says that the immanent object is *within* the mental state, not that it is the primary object), but the object which the mental state is *about*. The immanent object is

the *product* of the mental state, immanent in the mind by way of a psychical *relation* between consciousness and object, a relation which Brentano tells us all mental states must have. Therefore, the immanent object can be described in common parlance as being in the mind, but this says nothing more than that the object is taken for granted by consciousness as an object of inner perception (Brentano, 1905, p. 53). In other words, once the mental act has produced an immanent object relative to its intentional object, the immanent object is from then on, merely *given* in consciousness.

4.2 – The Content/Object Distinction

Brentano's intentionality then, does not prove to be such an ontological puzzle as it may hitherto have seemed, but there is still the problem of reference to contend with. If every mental state has some object which is simply 'given' as immanent to the mind, then what do we do to explain abstract objects with no tangible referent in the world? Moreover, what do we do about fictional things like Hamlet, or the Pegasus, or with impossible things like a rounded square? It seems that if we can think about these things, if we can make the judgement that x has no tangible existence, or that it is fictional, or is impossible, there must be some x to function as the object of such a judgement, but if we make the judgement that x does not exist, then we have just judged that there was nothing to have been judged in the first place, but if this were true it would not be possible for us to have made that self-same judgement. Fortunately, another of Brentano's students is able to provide us with an answer. Kasimierz Twardowski's paper 'On the Content and Object of Presentations' (1894) dedicates itself to cleaning up the ambiguities in Brentano's thought in order that we might have a clear idea of what is happening when we engage in a mental act.

In discussions of intentionality contemporaneous with Brentano and his students, it was common to talk about an object being ‘presented’ to consciousness, and it is the notion of presentation that Twardowski focuses on to establish his position. It was his belief that there is an ambiguity in the sense of certain descriptions that led to philosophers conflating the presentation of an object with the presentation of its content. Twardowski explains that adjectives can have one of two functions within a sentence: an attributive function, or a modifying function. Adjectives with an attributive sense provide additional information about the noun to which they are attached – for example, a *small* diamond, or a *happy* man. Adjectives with a modifying sense however, negate the sense of the noun to which they are attached, radically modifying the sense in which we understand them – for example, a *fake* diamond, or a *dead* man. In these latter two cases the sense of the noun is completely changed. When we understand a diamond to be fake, we understand that it is *not a diamond*. The word ‘diamond’ then, does not refer to a ‘diamond’ in the normal sense, but instead to something which formally *resembles* a diamond even though it is not. Equally, the word ‘man’ which usually refers to a living thing, once we understand that the man in question is dead, now refers only to a male corpse, bereft of most of the qualities exhibited by living men which the term ‘man’ tends to imply.

It is for this reason that Twardowski suggests that philosophers have tended to conflate objects and their respective content. When an object is presented, it is presented in an attributive sense (P^A), it is simply an object exhibiting the property of being presented to consciousness. When the content of the object is presented however, this presentation occurs in a modifying sense (P^M), because the content on its own is not the object itself.

Importantly though, both of these presentations occur as the result of the same mental act. When an object is presented (P^A), there occurs at the same time a separate presentation (P^M) which conveys the actual sense of the object. In this way we can say that the content is that which is presented (P^A) *in* a presentation, and the object is that which is presented (P^M) *through* the same presentation. In understanding this distinction, it is helpful to recall Frege's (1892) distinction between sense and reference. An object in the world has a concrete existence which functions as the reference for the word that describes it, but the word itself does not communicate the concrete existence of the thing, but only the sense of it. In essence, the word relates the sense of an object to the mind in the form of a linguistic presentation, but for the word to have any meaning, there must be a real thing to which it refers. Similarly, but on a more fundamental level, a perceptual act relates the content of an object to consciousness in the form of a perceptual presentation, but for the perceptual act to have any meaning, there must equally be a real thing to which it refers. As such, says Twardowski, we can be confident that every mental state has an object.

4.3 – The Nature of Objects

When considering abstract or fictional things, we can go about describing the intentional relation to consciousness in much the same way as we do with tangible items, we simply need to establish how to take such items as objects in the first place when they have no tangible referent to which to refer. We can accomplish this by considering more precisely *how* content and object are related to one another. It seems clear enough that objects such as these must at least possess some content in order that we can think about them at all, so we are merely left to establish the nature of their corresponding object. Fortunately, Twardowski provides

a complete mereology of objects which encompasses all possible objects of mental states. An excellent description of this mereology is found in Tienson's paper 'Kasimir Twardowski on the Content of Presentations' (2013), wherein he makes clear that there are a few key relations between objects and their content which have the added benefit of describing the nature of objects quite well.

The first principle to bear in mind is that all objects are comprised of what Twardowski called 'material constituents'. These are the 'parts' of each object; so a bicycle's material constituents, for instance, are its wheels, its frame, its chain etc., and each of these material constituents has its own material constituents (the spokes on the wheel, the links in the chain etc.) which, to the bicycle, are considered to be material constituents of the 'second order'. Each of these second order parts may have its own constituents as well, and so on until we reach irreducibly small parts, but all of these are still united by their common nature of being material constituents of the bicycle as a whole. More interesting than these material constituents, are the certain relations that exist between each object and its material constituents. These relations fall into a number of categories, each designated as a kind of 'formal constituent' relation.

The first of these is a relation which Twardowski calls the relation of 'primary formal constituents', and this, in Twardowski's mereology, is how we describe the nature of properties belonging to an object. Instead of saying that "the bicycle is red", implying that 'red' on its own is a property of the bicycle, instead we say something like "the bicycle has the property of being red", thus distinguishing between the material constituent (red) and the property relation. We do this because, according to Twardowski, material constituents are

not themselves properties of their respective objects. The bike's wheels, for instance, are material constituents of the bike, but they are not in and of themselves *properties* of the bike. If we wanted to describe the property relation of the bike to its wheels, we would never say "this bike has the property of wheels"; such phrasing is incredibly awkward because 'wheels' are not a property. Instead, we say "this bike has the property of *having* wheels" because it is the *having* of wheels, not the wheels themselves that can reasonably be called a property. By virtue of this relation then, when we think of a bicycle's wheel, we are able to think of it as being a single part of a whole bicycle, rather than an independent part.

On top of these relations of primary formal constituents, we can identify the ordinary relation between a whole object and its individual parts (a wheel is smaller than the bike, a minute is briefer than an hour etc.) which are the 'primary formal relations in an extended sense'. Furthermore, we can identify the ordinary relations between multiple different parts of an object (the different pressure of a bike's tyres, the different lengths of a triangle's sides etc.) which are the 'secondary formal constituents in the figurative sense' (Twardowski, 1894, p. 58). More important though, is the relation of 'secondary formal constituents in the strict sense', wherein different parts of the object constitute the structure of the object in a strictly determinative sense; it is these relations which describe *how* they constitute the object. For example, the bike has the property of having wheels, but equally, the wheels each have the property of belonging to that particular bike. It is the reciprocal nature of relation between an object and its material constituents that define its nature and its extent, and which therefore make it distinct from any other object. If it is a property of the wheels that they belong to *this* bike, it means that they cannot belong to any *other* bike, thus revealing that

the bike is a discrete object, metaphysically distinct both from any other particular examples of bikes, and also from the abstract concept of 'bike' in general.

4.4 – 'Objectless' Presentations

It should by now be clear how the content of objects is defined, and how such content enters consciousness, so before we move on to the matter of how Husserl incorporates these themes into his own work, we are just left to sketch out an answer to the question we have posed numerous times already – how do we conceive of objects with no tangible referent? For that matter, how certain are we that *every* mental state has an intentional object at all? Twardowski does not seem to think there is much difficulty in answering the first question. He gives several examples of 'objectless' presentations in his work and describes how each is to be explained.

First is the case of presentations that appear to be of 'nothing', as in the presentation of an absence or non-existence of something. Quite simply, Twardowski explains that such presentations are not really presentations of nothing, as 'nothing' is not a categorematic term and cannot be used as the basis of a proposition. They are at best, presentations of a particular object in a modified sense. For example, in the presentation of an imaginary friend, the intentional object is a friend, presented in a modified sense as being non-existent, a figment of someone's imagination. As such, the presentation is not of nothing, it is merely an elaboration on the nature of the supposed 'friend'. Second is the case of presentations which involve contradictions or logical impossibilities, such as that of a rounded square. For these, he describes how the functions of descriptions produce certain images in the mind. In the

presentation of a round square for instance, there is the presentation of a square, and the modification of that square into a rounded shape, a shape that is not a square. As a result of the simultaneous apprehension of these mutually exclusive presentations, the mind immediately denies the existence of a synthesised whole, but we will recall that in order to deny the existence of something, there must really be something for us to deny. The thing that is posited then by the words 'rounded square' is an object that one knows must be denied even as one thinks of it; it is a positum that can ultimately *only* be denied, can *only* exist in the negated sense, but it is a positum nonetheless, and therefore a real intentional object.

As for the secondary question mentioned above, regarding whether *all* mental states are intentional, there is still considerable debate, and a significant body of opinion exists which holds that not all mental states possess the quality of intentionality. Notably, John Searle, in his book *Intentionality*, describes as a matter of course that only *some* mental states are intentional. "*Beliefs, fears, hopes and desires are Intentional*" he says, "*but there are forms of nervousness, elation and undirected anxiety that are not intentional*" (Searle, 1983). He considers this point so uncontroversial that he does not consider it necessary to offer any support, for him it is to be taken as given. We are left to consider though, that if it is so obvious that not *all* our mental states are intentional, what could have possessed so distinguished a philosopher as Brentano to claim otherwise? It is supposed to be the work of but a moment to reflect on the nature of joy, or anxiety, and realise that these sensations do not require an object, it is perfectly possible for them to be no more than pure, objectless sensations, merely felt, without being necessarily directed towards anything. But if this is true, then it should also have been immediately obvious to Brentano, and everyone who based their own philosophies

on his thought, and yet there is a large body of esteemed literature predicated on the assumption that intentionality is *the* mark of the mental.

It seems therefore, that we need to properly consider the nature of this second kind of 'objectless presentation', the kind where an object does not seem to be necessary, as opposed to the former kind, where the object was simply abstract instead of physical. To start with, we will look at physical sensations. Colin McGinn for instance, claims that we can tell that physical sensations such as pain or hunger or suchlike do not have any intentional object by comparing such sensations to ordinary perceptions. When we consider our perceptions, he says, we make a distinction between an object within our perceptual field, and our actual perception of it, but we make no such distinction between our sensations and our experience of them, we consider sensation to be exactly equivalent to experience (McGinn, 1982). This much is true, and it would certainly be unusual for us to express that we are in pain by saying "I have a pain about my arm" or suchlike. If, however, McGinn's criticism rested only on the oddness of such phrases, it would be easily repelled, as it would rest far too heavily on the common shorthand for intentionality to which we have grown accustomed in modern philosophy – the 'aboutness', describing the quality of there being something which the mental state concerns. In point of fact, the word 'about' *can* express very similar meanings as the words 'in' or 'near' in certain antiquated uses, so the expression is only odd to the modern English ear. Brentano does not characterise intentionality as 'aboutness' however, he speaks of intentional in-existence, and if we consider McGinn to be attacking the notion that bodily sensations exhibit intentional in-existence then we have a much more interesting discussion at hand.

As established, the concept of intentional in-existence describes the notion that every mental state has an object, or more specifically, that every mental state produces its content from a psychical relation between consciousness and some primary object. According to McGinn, this does not occur in sensations because sensations arrive in consciousness without us needing to direct our attention towards any object or concept. We can, however, make an argument that there *is* a distinction between a sensation and our experience of it if we reassess what a sensation really is, and if we accept that an intentional object need not be an external object. Imagine, for example, that I feel the pain of a cramp in my left arm. What the cramp *is*, is an involuntary contraction of certain muscles in my arm, and what I experience is a clenching pain in those muscles. By McGinn's account, the cramp itself is the cause of the pain, and consequently, should be described as actually *being* the pain. In this way we would understand the cramp in the sense that "a cramp is a clenching pain in a certain muscle". However, we can easily understand that the cramp and the pain are separate phenomena if we consider that muscles may be made to contract by electrical stimulation even if those muscles do not belong to a living, conscious being, but in such cases the contraction cannot be said to be producing a corresponding sensation of pain. So we can see that physical trauma is not, in and of itself, capable of producing a sensation of pain in a non-conscious entity, but such injuries would almost invariably cause pain to a conscious entity. Furthermore, we know that the inverse is true, and that pain can occur without a corresponding physical cause, as in the case of phantom limbs, where the mind takes a pain in a non-existent limb as its object and thus deceives itself into feeling a pain, which should not be possible if each sensation of pain exactly corresponds to its cause. Thus considered, we can fit sensations of pain into the model of intentionality proposed by Brentano. In such cases, the intentional object is a specific case of physical trauma in the body which is related to consciousness by way of the

perceptual faculty of feeling (or the sense of 'touch' if you prefer), and thus produces the sensation of pain, and relates that sensation to the affected area, such that we can extend the form of Brentano's thesis and say that just as in love something is loved, and in judgement judged, equally 'in pain, something is hurt'.

More challenging perhaps, are the more abstract sensations like those of emotions, of joy, anger, or anxiety etc. Certainly, it is possible for such sensations to have intentional objects, to be happy, or nervous, or anxious 'about' something, but it is also possible to feel these things more abstractly, to simply *be* happy, or nervous, or anxious. There are ways out of this problem for the intentionalist however. For instance, the intentionalist may describe how a state of emotion affects them, how it makes them see the world, and this will help to demonstrate the intentional quality of the emotional state (Crane, 1998). If I am anxious, for instance, I may describe how I worry about events, how I imagine that the consequences will be unpleasant. So, if I am filling in a form, I may worry that I will make a mistake and the form will be rejected, possibly resulting in a delay with significant consequences for me. Likewise, in taking a test I may worry that I will fail, and even in simply walking around I may worry that someone will pick a fight with me for no reason, and I will be injured. Each of these cases depicts the mental state of the anxious person as perceiving the world to be a threatening environment, constituting a threat to their person or to the intended course of their life. Thus it is revealed that the object about which one is anxious is oneself. We can generalise this principle to other emotional states as well – if I am happy, but my happiness is not directed towards any external thing like my house, or my work, or my family etc., then the thing that I am happy about is myself, or my general situation in life. In fact, it would not be unusual when such feelings occur to answer the question "what are you so happy about?" with the

response, "life", because we understand that the cause of our happiness is the state of our own existence at that time. In recognising such an emotional state, our consciousness is directed towards our own person or personal circumstance, and takes it as its object in order to produce, by the same psychical intentional relation as always, a consciousness of the emotive quality of the circumstance, such that it can be taken as immanently given, in the manner that all mental states produce their immanent objects.

Chapter 5 – Intentionality in Hume

When discussing the possibility of intentionality being displayed within the views Hume expresses in the *Treatise*, we are hampered somewhat by the fact that Hume, writing in the first half of the eighteenth century, comfortably misses both of the main time periods wherein intentionality was a salient point of discussion. The *Treatise* is well removed from the medieval scholastic discussion of intentionality, and precedes Brentano's revival of the concept by over a hundred years. As such, evidence for intentionality within the *Treatise* is only ever acquired by imposing a certain model of intentionality onto the text, and searching for parallels between the *Treatise* itself and the model of intentionality preferred by the interpreter. With this problem in mind, I am going to explore the views of a few select Hume interpreters in order to give an idea of the ways in which intentionality is commonly understood by modern Hume scholars, before comparing their readings of Hume with Husserl's own, conducted according to his own ideas of intentionality. In general, there are two topics within Hume that contemporary commentators consider to provide some insight into the possibility of intentionality in the *Treatise*, the so-called 'copy theory of representation', which is the view that ideas are representations of objects in the world by virtue of their being copied from impressions of such objects; and Hume's arguments concerning the passions, whereby he asserts that every passion is in some sense directed towards an object.

5.1 – The Basis of the Argument

In the context of Humean metaphysics, the discussion of representation concerns the manner in which ideas correspond to their objects. Early in the *Treatise*, Hume tells us that “...all our simple ideas in their first appearance are deriv’d from simple impressions, which are correspondent to them, and which they exactly represent” (T 1.1.1.7), which should sound perfectly familiar to us by now, but what precisely is meant by ‘representation’ in this context depends considerably on what is meant by ‘perception’. We already know that for Hume, a perception is either an idea or an impression, but what type of things are these? Cottrell (2018) identifies three different perspectives on this issue. The first, called the Act View, proposes that a perception is an act, and that therefore its essence as a perception is contained within the act of perceiving, as opposed to the thing perceived. The second, called the Object View, is the opposite. It proposes that a perception is really just an object that is subject to conscious apprehension. The third, a synthetic approach, is called the Dual-Aspect View, and suggests that the act of perceiving is inseparable from the object thus perceived. Ultimately, Cottrell comes down on the side of the Object View, and gives in evidence a significant amount of textual evidence, demonstrating Hume’s tendency to equate an idea of an object with the object itself. Personally, I find Cottrell’s view unconvincing, but we will discuss my reservations in detail once his case is laid out.

There are three main reasons why Cottrell takes Hume to be proposing that a perception is equivalent to its object. First, that Hume routinely talks about ideas and impressions being ‘present to the mind’ (T 1.1.3.1, T 1.2.6.7), a turn of phrase which suggests a distinction between the mind and its perceptions which mirrors the distinction between the mind and external objects. Second, Hume seems to think that there is no distinction between our

tendency to attribute an identity to “*the very things [we] feel or see*” (T 1.4.2.14), and our tendency to attribute an identity to our “impressions” (T 1.4.2.15). This equivalence again suggests an equivalence between the objects of sensation (the real objects in the world), and the sensation itself (the impression). Third, in a more complex point, Cottrell takes the view that the purpose of Hume’s theorising in general, is to “naturalize the intentionality involved in perceiving” (Cottrell, 2018, p. 3). In other words, Hume is attempting to explain the fact that acts of perceiving seem to be directed onto objects, by appealing to naturalistic, empirical principles. In this way, Hume explains that:

“External objects are seen, and felt, and become present to the mind; that is, they acquire such a relation to the connected heap of perceptions, as to influence them very considerably in augmenting their number by present reflections and passions, and in storing the memory with ideas” (T 1.4.2.40).

What this means is that to Hume, external objects (referred to later in the paragraph also as ‘sensible objects’, or perceptions) become present to the mind in such a way as to modify the person-bundle that makes up the perceiver, such that the new perception is added to the bundle by means of the copy principle. If this is indeed what Hume thinks, then naturally it would imply an initial separation of perceiver and perception, and a functional equality between a perception and its object, in the sense that the object/perception is capable of being perceived only by virtue of its causal relationship with the person-bundle. This causal account, whereby objects are taken to be the cause of their corresponding impressions, and by extension, their corresponding ideas is fairly commonplace among contemporary scholars of Hume and has significantly influenced how Hume has been interpreted on this issue.

Before we get to that though, let us return to the top of the list and address Cottrell's arguments here one at a time. The first argument, that Hume refers to perceptions as 'present to the mind' and therefore, by inference, as 'things perceived' as distinct from 'acts of perception' can easily be challenged by drawing from one of the same passages Cottrell gives us in support of his view. Hume writes that:

"We may observe, that 'tis universally allow'd by philosophers, and is besides pretty obvious of itself, that nothing is ever really present with the mind but its perceptions or impressions and ideas, and that external objects become known to us only by those perceptions they occasion." (T 1.2.6.7)

Cottrell uses this passage as an example of those occasions where Hume describes perceptions as 'present to the mind', but immediately afterwards we can see Hume distinguish between 'external objects' and 'those perceptions they occasion'. This distinction suggests a certain causal relationship between objects and perceptions, which we could quite happily accept without fear of controversy, but falls short of drawing any strict equivalence between them. Cottrell's second argument can be challenged in a very similar way. Cottrell makes the claim that Hume treats as equivalent the facts that we attribute an identity to the objects of our sensation, and that we attribute an identity to our impressions. The passages to which he refers are as follows:

"...the vulgar confound perceptions and objects, and attribute a distinct continu'd existence to the very things they feel or see" (T 1.4.2.14)

And:

“Since all impressions are internal and perishing existences, and appear as such, the notion of their distinct and continu’d existence must arise from a concurrence of some of their qualities with the qualities of the imagination...” (T 1.4.2.15).

We can see from this pair of quotations that Hume does indeed use the term ‘impressions’ in the latter passage as though it were synonymous with ‘objects’ from the former. We ought to note however, that Hume’s point, stated very clearly in the former quotation here, is that ‘the vulgar confound perceptions and objects’, or in other words, when thinking normally and not philosophically, we are prone to making the mistake of believing that perceptions and objects are the same thing. Moreover, Hume goes on to say that *“This sentiment, then, as it is entirely unreasonable, must proceed from some other faculty than the understanding”* (T1.4.2.14), which tells us in no uncertain terms that Hume categorically rejected the notion that a perception is the same thing as its object. What we are left with then, is only the strongest of Cottrell’s points, as illustrated by his third argument, that Hume conceived of external objects as exerting some kind of causal influence on the mind, and hence we can interpret Hume’s theories on perception as an attempt to naturalise the act of perception according to empirical principles. There are, however, a number of issues with this point too which will need discussion, foremost of which is the pervasive problem we have in distinguishing Hume’s account of ‘Human Nature’, as it were, with all of the falsities and fallacies to which he tells us we repeatedly fall prey, and his account of genuine metaphysical reality. We have already observed that Hume often fails to make this distinction clear, and I do not think it appropriate to infer anything about Hume’s metaphysical beliefs from his

attempt at naturalising human thought, unless we can find a firmer foundation for those inferences within his three foundational principles. If proceeding with this cautious attitude then, I think we can separate the causal theory of perception from the Object View as described by Cottrell, at least provisionally, since we can only interpret the passage Cottrell quotes to us as demonstrating a commitment to the Object View if we take it to be demonstrative of a view concerning what perceptions *are*, but if it is demonstrative only of a view concerning what perceptions *seem to be* then naturally we cannot infer the Object View from this subjective causal interaction.

Much of the difficulty in this case is derived from Hume's apparent indecision concerning whether or not perceptions are to be treated identically to objects, or whether they serve the same purpose within his philosophy. To be clear, I do not think Cottrell was being at all disingenuous with his citations, all the passages he mentions do indeed give the impression that Hume believed that objects and perceptions are much the same thing. However, I do think it was remiss of him to omit sections such as those I have quoted, which seem to say the opposite, that perceptions and objects only *seem* to be the same thing, and only from the vulgar perspective. Since there is such a wealth of compelling textual evidence to support either position, I think it best now for me to give my arguments in favour of the latter view. There are two main reasons, I think, to believe that Hume recognised a distinction between perceptions and their objects, and that the identification of the two only occurs in vulgar consciousness. First, as we may recall, Hume outright rejects any knowledge of what he calls the 'double existence' of the external body and its correlative impression, on the basis that our senses never offer to us anything but the impression, and to suppose oneself to have knowledge of the external body is to go beyond the evidence of the senses (T 1.4.2.4). If Hume

were of the opinion that the impression was exactly equivalent to its object, then surely knowledge of an impression could comfortably be taken to be equivalent to knowledge of its object. Instead, Hume cautions us to remain sceptical about the nature of external bodies. *"If our senses, therefore, suggest any kind of existences"* he writes, *"they must convey the impressions as those very existences, by a kind of fallacy and illusion"* (T 1.4.2.5). Secondly, and perhaps more tellingly, we are capable of distinguishing between perceptions and their corresponding bodies in philosophical reflection. According to the separability principle, which Hume maintained was essential to his theory, all perceptions are distinguishable from one another, and may therefore be considered as separately existent (T 1.4.2.39). If objects and perceptions really were one and the same, I should not be able to conceive of one without the other, but I can readily understand that there are things in the world of which I have no experience, and this understanding can be accounted for using Humean principles. Since I am accustomed to discovering things of which I had previously had no knowledge, I can see that there is a regular conjunction of circumstances, whereby I initially have no knowledge of a thing, I subsequently encounter that thing, and as a consequence, I gain knowledge of that thing. This sequence of events has happened with enough regularity that I can easily imagine that there do exist objects of which I have had no perception. Even easier to explain is the reverse, the existence of perceptions which do not correspond to objects. These happen all the time, and are called hallucinations, mirages, or simply mistakes. So we can see that by Hume's own principles, it is very easy to demonstrate the distinction between perceptions and their objects at a metaphysical level. As such, I think we have to interpret Hume as holding that objects and perceptions only *seem* to be equivalent to one another.

In contrast to the Object View, Cottrell claims that the Act view and Dual-Aspect View, by virtue of holding that perceptions are equivalent to, or contain, an act of perceiving, are contradictory to Hume's purpose of 'naturalizing the intentionality involved in perceiving' (Cottrell, 2018, p. 3). The reason he gives for this allegation is the fact that for a perception to be conceived of, in whole or part, as an act of perceiving implies an explanatorily basic kind of intentionality, characterised by its being directed upon an external body, either as an object in the case of the Act View, or as the object-aspect of a full perception in the case of the Dual-Aspect View. For Cottrell, this kind of intentionality is a purely mental phenomenon, and therefore cannot be accounted for by a naturalistic theory such as Hume's (Cottrell, 2018, note 15). It is not entirely clear to me why Cottrell thinks this has to be the case. Certainly, I can see how Hume's argument can be called naturalistic if we take him to be espousing the Object View, since he accounts for the directedness of consciousness by referring to the causal relationship between object and subject, which is an account predicated upon naturalistic, empirical observations. I am not convinced however, that Hume could not have an equally naturalistic account of perception under the Act View. Mental phenomena can be explained psychologically, which is a naturalistic field of study, and an argument to this effect would be comfortably within the remit of Hume's introspective empiricism. Nevertheless, for now, we need to understand how Cottrell supposes that the Object View illustrates intentionality in Hume's work.

Cottrell is actually very careful not to commit himself to a view on the intentionality of Hume's philosophy, but he does provide a useful guide to some of the more prominent arguments which will benefit us in our further analysis. Naturally, he goes over the basic principles of Hume's philosophy, and how they lead themselves to an intentionalist reading of Hume. The

copy principle, according to such a reading, means that objects are copied from the world into consciousness by virtue of the senses, which means every one of our ideas either is a representation of an external body, or is comprised of representations of external bodies, as in the case of complex ideas which are made up of more simple ideas. This being the case, perceptions must be an intentional phenomenon, since all ideas must be 'about' some object or other. Hume says as much when he tells us that; *"To form an idea of an object, and to form an idea simply is the same thing"* (T 1.1.7.6). In this way Hume is able to explain how we form ideas about objects in the world, but also why we fail to form ideas about things of which have no experience.

There are however, two reasons which Cottrell gives us why we might doubt that Hume would accept a Copy Theory of Representation (CTR). First, Hume holds that multiple separate ideas can be copied from the same object/set of impressions. Looking at a piece of gold for instance, can give one the idea of gold in and of itself, the idea of metals in general, the idea of the colour gold in particular, and so on and so forth (T 1.1.6.2). If ideas are supposed to 'exactly represent' their objects, we would expect that each object should have only one idea copied from it, but instead it seems that we are somehow able to be selective about which ideas we choose to copy from the objects within our apprehension. If, as Hume suggests, all of our ideas must be copied from objects, it is not clear how we are able to separate our impressions of objects into parts in order to focus solely on one aspect, the colour, the material, the shape etc. Since Hume recognises this faculty, we may be able to interpret him as rejecting the notion of strict representationalism. The second reason we might not take Hume to accept CTR is that just as one object can be the basis for a multitude of different ideas, so too can a single idea represent multiple different things as long as some regular association exists

between them. For example, the idea of the colour red can represent red in general, a particular shade of red, or colour in general, depending on the context in which the idea of 'red' is brought to mind (T 1.1.7.7). This phenomenon too conflicts with CTR, which would hold that an idea can be representative only of its object. Cottrell naturally does not propose a solution to this problem, focusing on providing an introduction to the views of others which we will discuss in sections 5.2 and 5.3. What he *does* stress, is that all of the various theories concerning Hume's attitude to this issue characterise Hume as 'naturalising the concept of mental representation' (Cottrell, 2018). Broadly speaking, these arguments fall into two categories; those which assert some harmonising principle which allows Hume to accept CTR by reconciling the copy principle with the apparently contradictory ideas already mentioned, and those which assert that Hume would eschew CTR in favour of the argument from causal roles.

Besides all this, there is one more issue related to intentionality in the *Treatise* we wish to discuss, and which Cottrell introduces in his paper. There are, in the *Treatise*, points where Hume discusses impressions of reflection, as contrasted with impressions of sensation, and the way he conceives of these impressions of reflection can cause problems for some interpretations of a potentially Humean intentionality. The key issue is contained in what is called the 'representation argument'.

"A passion is an original existence, or, if you will, modification of existence, and contains not any representative quality, which renders it a copy of any other existence or modification" (T 2.3.3.5).

This passage presents a number of interpretive problems. First of all, the implication of the twinned statements that ‘passions contain not any representative quality’, and that ‘passions are not copies of anything’ is that being a copy of something is the same thing as being a representation, reinforcing CTR and threatening the interpretations of any causal role theorists. After all, if Hume considers representation and copying to be the same thing then, given how fundamental he considers the copy principle to be to his philosophy, then whatever else he says he must surely believe that all ideas, by virtue of being copied from impressions of objects, must really be representations of objects. However, the argument continues thus;

“When I am angry, I am actually possest with the passion, and in that emotion have no more a reference to any other object, than when I am thirsty, or sick, or more than five foot high”. (T 2.3.3.5)

This passage very clearly treats the passion as a causal power, as the motivating force behind the emotive mental state. To be ‘possest’ by the passion is to be ruled by it, which demonstrates a distinctly causal relationship between the passions and the self. This account of the passions would harmonise well with the view that intentionality is a matter determined by the causal relationship between objects and the self, provided we can navigate the issue that passions are not really objects, but somehow original existences, not copied from any external body¹².

¹² As it happens, this can in fact be accounted for by Hume’s account of sympathy, but a discussion of Humean sympathy would extend this chapter far too long, so we will confine ourselves to this issue of representation.

5.2 – Extrinsic Intentionality – The ‘Causal Role’ Account

It may be prudent at this juncture to elaborate on the notion of the ‘causal role’ account of representation, as we have now mentioned it on a number of occasions without really explaining its meaning. There is, fortunately enough, a very compelling version of this theory in Garrett’s paper, ‘Hume’s Naturalistic Theory of Representation’ (2006) which we can use to examine the argument. In this paper, Garrett goes to great lengths to acknowledge and define the differences between impressions and ideas, due to the ambiguity of Hume’s use of the term ‘perception’ to refer to both kinds of mental content. Clearly, as Garrett notes, there is a difference in the behaviour of these two different species of perception, of which we must take account if we are to give the subject its due consideration. Notably, Garrett takes account of the fact that Hume seems ostensibly to deny the possibility of representation due to the limitations of human sensory faculties. Hume writes:

“Since nothing is ever present to the mind but perceptions, and since all ideas are deriv’d from something antecedently present to the mind; it follows, that ’tis impossible for us so much as to conceive or form an idea specifically different from ideas and impressions” (T 1.2.6.8)

Now, if Hume is of the opinion that objects themselves are counted among those things which are ‘specifically different from ideas and impressions’ which I have already demonstrated that I think he does, then the implication of this paragraph is that it is impossible for us to conceive or form an idea of any external object. If this is the case, we might be rightfully perplexed as to what our ideas and impressions actually are, if not some kind of conception of an external object. Owen and Cohon (1997) take the view that Hume’s meaning in this passage is that

while we, as philosophers, can exercise our philosophical reflection and deduce that impressions are caused by, and hence represent, external objects, it is an error of the vulgar consciousness to presume that impressions are exactly representative of their objects. Under this view, ideas can be considered to be representative, since they represent to the mind their corresponding impressions in the perceptual absence of the object which was the cause of the impression in the first place. The impression itself however, while *caused* by an external object, cannot exactly represent it.

Garrett objects to this interpretation. He points out that all Hume claims is that we cannot conceive of anything which is 'specifically different' from ideas and impressions (Garrett, 2006, p. 305). To Garrett, this is merely another way of expressing what has already been expressed many times over, that vulgar consciousness does not differentiate between perceptions and their objects, even though the two must be distinct from one another. Naturally we have the same difficulty in philosophical reflection, but since we are, when adopting this reflective attitude, actively engaged with this very puzzle, that of whether or not objects are the same as perceptions, we are able to conceive of the existence of external bodies by means of what Garrett calls 'relative ideas' (Garrett, 2006, p. 305). It is in this way that we imagine the existence of objects or qualities of which we have had no impression. So for instance, I could imagine the existence of a substance which is not a solid, liquid, or gas, or of a creature which is not a carbon-based life form, or of a colour which is not in the visible range of electromagnetic frequencies. This type of relative idea thus enables us to account for our ability to conceive of phenomena which we may never have observed such as plasma, sentient artificial life, and ultraviolet light respectively, all of which are readily conceivable, but which few if any of us have ever personally perceived. Important to remember however,

is that this argument, while adequately accounting for the fact that we are able to form specific beliefs about external bodies of which we have had, or can have had no impression, it does not help us escape the problem of the 'double existence' of impression and object. Even if we conceive of an object's real existence in relative terms as described, we still have no real knowledge of the object itself. Instead, we simply attribute to each object, the same qualities which we observe in their corresponding impressions, and presume each object to persist despite the frequent interruption of its appearances to the mind, as we saw earlier. How then, are we to speak of representation? If all the objects of our perception are perceptually inaccessible, and are only presumed even to exist because we have perceptions which we presume to correspond to objects, where do we get the idea that our perceptions represent anything?

Even if we allow that impressions might not be strictly representational, we might still cling to the notion that ideas at least, could still be, except that Hume seems to reject the notion that there is any intrinsically representational quality in ideas either. "*the reference of the idea to the object is an extraneous denomination, of which in itself it bears no mark or character*" (T 1.1.7.6). This rather puzzling turn of phrase seems to indicate that ideas are somehow irrelevant to their objects, which stands in a very stark contrast to the copy principle, according to which one would expect that ideas must refer to objects by virtue of being ideas *of* something. If ideas do not refer to their objects, just what precisely are they ideas of? At this juncture we might imagine that Hume has closed off all avenues for a representationalist reading of his work, having blocked a representationalist account of impressions with his remarks concerning the double existence of impressions and objects, and having blocked a representationalist account of ideas with the above quoted remark,

rejecting the necessity of ideas bearing a strictly representational relationship with any object-reference. However, it is very clear that Hume does endorse some version of representation, simply due to the regularity with which he uses the word. What we need to work out then, is what exactly he *does* mean by it.

Garrett returns us to the core principles of Hume's philosophy and focuses on what Hume describes as the 'seven different kinds of philosophical relation' (Garrett, 2006, p. 308; T 1.1.5). Naturally, if there is any relation at all between perceptions and their objects, and these are the only seven kinds of relation that exist, then the answer must lie with one of these. We can happily rule out the relations of time and place since perceptions cannot be beside, above, behind their objects etc., nor can they bear any temporal relation to an object. We can rule out proportion in quantity or number since the relation of quantity can be representative of nothing but itself; degrees in any quality, since the fact that perceptions share qualities with their objects is a trivial fact; and contrariety since, by definition, no perception can be contrary to its object. We can also, based on the reasoning that has already taken place in this section, rule out the relation of identity, since we have already established that perceptions and their objects do not share an identity. We are therefore left with either the relation of resemblance, or the relation of causation. Hume himself seems to have placed great stock in the relation of resemblance. The great resemblance between impressions and their corresponding ideas is one of the first details he notes in the entire *Treatise* (T1.1.1.3) and later on, while questioning the wisdom of making arguments concerning the substance of the mind, he tells us that:

“Had we any idea of the substance of our minds, we must also have an impression of it; which is very difficult, if not impossible, to be conceiv’d. For how can an impression represent a substance otherwise than resembling it? And how can an impression resemble a substance since, according to this philosophy, it is not a substance, and has none of the peculiar qualities or characteristics of a substance?” (T 1.4.5.3)

While not explicitly referring to the issue of representation here, this passage does give us useful insight into Hume’s perspective on the issue. Namely, that in order to represent an object, an impression must, in some respect, resemble it. Nevertheless, Hume cannot be taken to believe that representation is a matter of *exact* representation since, as mentioned, an idea can represent many more things than just one object (like how the idea of a horse derived from the impression of a single horse can represent any horse at all insofar as it is a horse), a simple idea can represent a more complex idea (like how an idea of the Eiffel tower can represent the whole of Paris, or even the whole of France), and a complex idea might be represented by any number of simpler ideas, none of which exactly resemble it (like with the idea of a chimera, which is a creature made of parts from other creatures which have never been observed to exist in such a hybrid form). Further, as Garrett points out, things can resemble each other without representing each other at all. Identical twins may perfectly resemble each other, but do not *represent* each other in the least (Garrett, 2006, pp. 308-9). What we can draw from this is that while resemblance may be *necessary* for representation (as Hume himself seems to think), it is not in itself *sufficient* for representation. Fortunately, Hume also places great stock in the relation of causation, or more specifically, ‘causal derivation’.

“Ideas always represent the objects or impressions from which they are derived, and can never, without a fiction, represent or be applied to any other” (T 1.2.3.11, emphasis added).

By appealing to the relation of causation then, we can explain how representation occurs in terms of an ordinary causal chain, in the same way that Hume accounts for much of our learned knowledge. Each object in the world, when coming into contact with a mind (or mind-bundle, if you prefer), becomes the ultimate *cause* of its own corresponding impressions, which then joins to the mind-bundle in such a way as to incorporate itself into the bundle. From there, the impression becomes the cause of its own corresponding idea, which lives in the mind-bundle as a less vivid copy of the impression, which can be called upon by the mind at any time to revive the idea of the object and bring it once more to conscious apprehension, even in the absence of the original object. This argument seems to make intuitive sense, and seems very clearly to harmonise with Hume’s naturalistic aims, providing an account of perception with no recourse to an immaterial soul or ego, or any process beyond our own empirical understanding. Very simply, ideas are caused by impressions, and impressions by objects. This causal relationship is so regular that we implicitly rely on it in every aspect of cognition within the vulgar consciousness, despite the ever-present Humean caveat that these relations are only ever contingent, and never necessary. To the mind, every idea and impression seems to have been caused by an object, so we presume that if the object did not exist, then it would be impossible to perceive it, so anything which we can perceive must exist in some form or another, and since different objects cause different impressions, it is presumed that our perceptions are representative of the objects to which they refer. In terms of causal derivation, this means that impressions are *derived* from objects, and ideas are

derived from impressions, all by virtue of causal relationships. From this chain of derivations we can further conclude that one impression, of a match for instance, can revive the idea of a causally related but non-resembling idea, such as that of a flame, since we can observe a general conjunction between the impression of a match and the ensuing impression of a flame, of which we have a corresponding idea. As a result, the mind passes easily from the impression of the match to the idea of a flame without the need for the intervening impression of a flame, due to the regularity with which we observe these ideas to be causally linked.

Naturally, there are a few difficulties with this conception of representation, notably some very straightforward examples of cases where representation can occur without recourse to either resemblance or causation. For instance, an improvised map might use a twig to represent a wall, which naturally neither resembles a wall, nor is the causal product of a wall, yet nevertheless is able to produce the idea of a wall in the mind of the perceiver. Of course, this is not a case of mental representation, but for Hume, there is really no difference. The mind is, after all, considered by Hume to be a part of the natural world, and stands in the same relations to it as does any other thing. Fortunately, even in cases such as these, we can find some causal influence. As stated, the twig in the map representing a wall may not have been caused by the wall, but it is the cause of the mind's idea of a wall, and stands in the same relation of causal derivation to the mind as would the wall itself. So too, in each case of non-mental representations, be it the set of a play representing a real place, the representation of the public by the House of Commons, or the representation of value by a quantity of money, the representing object remains the causal origin of the idea, thus filling the same role in determining further mental states, or personal attitudes/passions, as any impression

copied from an object which it resembles (Garrett, 2006, p. 310). The causal relationship between object and the mind then, is characterised primarily by the effect that the object has on the mind.

This model seems as though it should suit Hume quite well. In this way, we can characterise 'copying' in Hume's work as a kind of representation characterised by resemblance via causal derivation. In this way, a perception may be considered to be representative of its object if it resembles its own object in form and/or function, meaning that resemblance need not pertain only to physical properties, but can extend easily to include similarities in the effect that each perception might have on the mind as a whole. In this way, the impression of a line on a map or blueprint can represent a wall as easily as an impression of a wall itself due to the fact that for many purposes, there is no functional difference between these two impressions. Either impression can give one an idea of certain of the wall's properties (it's length, width, position relative to other objects etc.), and hence either impression can serve as the basis for reasoning concerning the wall, insofar as that reasoning concerns those properties which the two impressions equally represent.

This interpretation of the copy principle is bolstered by Hume's writing on belief (T 1.3.10). For Hume, beliefs are simply ideas with sufficient force and vivacity to influence the will, as demonstrated by the following pair of quotations:

"Impressions always actuate the soul, and that in the highest degree" (T 1.3.10.2)

And:

“Belief...since it causes an idea to imitate the effects of the impressions, must make it resemble them in [force and vivacity], and is nothing but a more vivid and intense conception of any idea” (T 1.3.10.3)

Now, clearly not all ideas are capable of influencing the will, since we are able to conceive of things which are not true. For example, though I may be able to form an idea of myself as being on the ground floor, this is not true, so will never be a sufficiently forceful idea that I would judge it safe to jump out of the nearest window. In short, the less forceful an idea, the less causal influence it has over us. This is a very attractive idea. It means that we are more apt to be influenced by reality than by fantasy, and still more likely to be influenced by those ideas which have been reinforced by regular experience than by those which are derived only from limited experience. Still further, we can find evidence that Hume took this view in his account of ideas which lack any causal influence of their own, but still possess a degree of force and vivacity by virtue of their coherence with stronger ideas.

Hume emphasises the role of ideas such as these within the study of history. He notes that since historians tend not to have the benefit of any first-hand experience of the events which they study, they often rely on contemporary accounts of those events. While not sufficient grounds alone on which to form a historical account of those events, such contemporary accounts can be used as part of a process of *hypothetical* reasoning concerning those events, depending on how well they cohere with whatever evidence is available which *does* form a strong foundation for belief (T 1.3.4.2). It is in this same sense which all hypothetical thought takes place. Nobody hypothesises as truth something which they suspect to be false, so

hypothesising must take place on the basis of ideas which seem *plausible*, which are those ideas which in some sense resemble or cohere with stronger, better-grounded ideas.

Without the model of causal derivation, such aspects of Humean thought as this, regarding hypothetical reasoning, would be difficult to explain. However, with the causal theory available to explain hypothetical thought, we are also able to comfortably handle the notion of predicate reasoning, opening up Humean theory into a realm of much more complicated thought, not restricted to only those thoughts which pertain to immediately perceptible objects. Garrett thus stresses, while resemblance and causal derivation are always *conducive* to representation, they are nearly essential to it when considering ideas. After all, an object can represent another without resembling or being caused by it, and so an impression can represent an object by being copied from any such non-causal, non-resembling object. An idea however, *must* resemble its impression in some respect, and *must* be causally derived from it, because for ideas, being copied from impressions, causal derivation is the root source of their resemblance to those impressions (Garrett, 2006, p. 312). If ideas were not causally derived from impressions, they could not be said to resemble any impression, and vice versa, if an idea does not resemble a particular impression, it cannot have been derived from that impression. This insight has, at some length, solved the puzzle we introduced earlier concerning Hume's remark that *"the reference of the idea to the object is an extraneous denomination, of which in itself it bears no mark or character"*. We have discovered that it is extraneous inasmuch as the idea itself genuinely does bear no immediate relation to the object, but is related to it only by the mediating impression, and since the impression need not resemble or be caused by its object, its corresponding idea quite naturally cannot bear

any necessary 'mark or character' of the object. So while the idea *does* refer to an object, that fact is so inconsequential that Hume scarcely judges it worth the effort to say so.

There is one last topic within Humean thought wherein we can see this principle of causal derivation at work, namely his discussion of abstract ideas (T 1.1.7). Specifically, we are referring to the discussion about particulars and general kinds of things, whereby Hume explains that a single idea can represent both a particular example of a thing, and also the general idea of all things which correspond to that idea. For example, if I see a triangle printed on a piece of paper in front of me, naturally I have an impression of that triangle, and so consequently I have an idea of it. This idea, of course, is of only the specific triangle which I can see, this *particular* triangle. However, the idea I have of this particular triangle includes within its description the idea of 'a three-sided figure, each side joined by its ends to each of the other two sides, such that the interior angles of the figure add up to 180 degrees'. While this particular triangle I can see might also be further described in terms of its own unique relations to other objects on my desk, or to me myself, nevertheless it is a triangle and hence my idea of it must include this description. This idea may have been copied from only this single impression of this particular triangle, but the description of a triangle which it represents adequately encompasses all possible triangles as well. By virtue of this capacity, the idea of a triangle, though derived from only a single impression, is called an abstract idea, and possesses a unique causal function, whereby it is able to revive other, related ideas in the mind, by virtue of its regular causal association with them. In much the same way as a match can revive the idea of a flame, the abstract idea of a triangle puts the mind in such a disposition as to easily recall the idea of anything at all which is triangular. Seeing a triangle therefore has the potential to put one in mind of, for example, a tortilla chip, the pyramids of

Giza, a set-square, a slice of pizza etc., since all of these things resemble the abstract idea of a triangle, and their presence to the mind, if recalled in this way, is the causal product of the abstract idea of a triangle. Which of these or other triangular objects actually comes to mind depends on which idea flows most naturally and easily into one's train of thought at the time, so it may be more likely that one would be put in mind of a tortilla chip if one sees a triangle in one's own kitchen at home, but the pyramids of Giza may be more likely if one happens to be on holiday in Cairo at the time. It should be fairly easy to see, on this basis, how ideas are able to run indefinitely from one to the next, each idea possessing some abstract quality which disposes the mind to recall some other idea which resembles it, and so on and so forth until one gets distracted or bored. From this nice, naturalistic, causal account then, which so naturally fits into Hume's style, we are able to account not only for the ability to perceive objects, but also for the whole continuity of thought, by appealing to the two related factors of a) causal derivation, accounting for the perceptual faculty, and b) causal influence, accounting for the continuity of thought, and the mind's tendency to be influenced by strong ideas rather than weak ones.

5.3 – Intrinsic Intentionality

There is one final problem presented to Hume interpreters when trying to ascertain Hume's possible attitudes to intentionality, and that is his attitude to representation with regards to the passions. Notably, Hume asserts that passions, in and of themselves, are simple impressions, and cannot be broken into more basic parts (T 2.2.1.1). However, there arises a problem when we read further and try to understand more fully Hume's characterisation of the passions. Notably, there are a number of passages where Hume attributes a certain phenomenological quality to the passions, the particular 'felt' quality which we experience

when affected by each passion, and by which we differentiate one passion from another. Broadly, we are led to believe this by passages which show Hume to be categorising passions as ‘impressions of reflection’, which Hume must hold means they have some qualitative ‘feel’, since he has already told us, right at the beginning of the *Treatise*, that ideas equate to ‘thinking’, and impressions to ‘feeling’ (T 1.1.1.1). As such, when Hume writes that:

“reflective impressions are such as proceed from ... original ones, either immediately or by the interposition of its idea ... of [these] are the passions, and other emotions resembling them” (T 2.1.1.1)

we are to infer that passions are, at their root, feelings rather than thoughts. However, there are also a number of passages where Hume seems also to attribute some quality of intentionality, or directedness to the passions. For example:

“’Tis evident, that pride and humility, tho’ directly contrary, have yet the same object”
(T 2.1.2.2 emphasis added)

And,

“we must ... make a distinction betwixt the cause and the object of these passions”
(T 2.1.2.4)

Also,

“As the immediate object of pride and humility is the self ... so the object of love and hatred is some other person” (T 2.2.1.2)

In all of these cases, Hume uses the term ‘object’ in such a way as to imply that a passion is directed *onto* some object. If this is true, then it would seem that each passion contains within it some quality of directedness, but if this is indeed the case, then a passion is comprised of two parts, a qualitative sensory component, and an intentional, directional component, which undermines Hume’s very basic claim that passions are simple impressions.

Further complicating the issue is another passage concerning the passions wherein Hume seems to outright deny that the passions possess any intentional quality, despite how heavily he seems to lean on the assumption that they do. We have in fact already quoted the passage in question, albeit in fragments. The full passage goes thus:

“A passion is an original existence, or, if you will, modification of existence which contains not any representative quality, which renders it a copy of any other existence or modification. When I am angry, I am actually possest with the passion, and in that emotion have no more reference to any other object, than when I am thirsty, or sick, or more than five foot high. ’Tis impossible therefore, that this passion can be oppos’d by, or be contradictory to truth and reason; since this contradiction consists in the disagreement of ideas, consider’d as copies, with those objects, which they represent”
(T 2.3.3.5).

This feels expressly contrary to everything else Hume says about the passions, and many commentators choose to simply ignore this passage when formulating their interpretations, viewing it as a strangely aberrant argument in the otherwise perfectly comprehensible

arguments Hume makes which take for granted the fairly plain fact that feelings are always either caused by something, or else are *about* something.

Qu, however, favours a different approach. In his paper, 'The Simple Duality: Humean Passions' (2012), he chooses to focus on this apparent contradiction, and he finds what could be a strong interpretive solution. For Qu, the way to navigate this issue is to suppose that since Hume repeatedly takes for granted the directedness of passions, but denies any representational quality, perhaps Hume distinguishes between the two. If intentionality is, as in this hypothesis, different to representation, then there should be no issue, except that we would then have to find a new way of defining Humean intentionality, since all our arguments on this topic thus far have leant heavily on the assumption that intentionality is, for Hume at least, equivalent to representation. If we take Qu's advice and interpret intentionality to mean only the *directedness* which Hume takes for granted, and not representation as may hitherto have been assumed, Hume's claim that passions are not representational can be interpreted much more clearly, and is much more explicitly relevant to the paragraph in which it appears. Hume is trying to make the point that passions can never be contrary to reason, a point he makes very vividly in only the next paragraph:

"Tis not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger. 'Tis not contrary to reason for me to chuse my total ruin, to prevent the least uneasiness of an Indian or person wholly unknown to me. 'Tis as little contrary to reason to prefer even my own acknowledge'd lesser good to my greater, and have more ardent affection for the former than the latter" (T 2.3.3.6)

The reason for this, he says, is that a contradiction of reason necessarily inheres in the conflict between two or more contradictory ideas, and passions are not ideas, but merely existences, facts as dispassionate to reason as whether or not one is thirsty, or sick. For Hume, ideas are *certainly* representative because they *must* be copied from impressions. Passions, being impressions and hence not necessarily representative of anything in the way in which ideas are, are further distinguished from ideas in their capacity as 'original existences', by virtue of not even being copied from anything, instead arising originally from the self in response to some stimulus, and so are definitely not representational.

We may have satisfied ourselves on this front for the time being, but still we have the problem that Hume's passions are supposed to be simple and individual impressions, but nevertheless possess both a felt quality and the quality of intentionality which, according to the separability principle, must themselves be separable since they can be conceived of independently of one another (T 1.1.7.3). For this we might once again appeal to our causal theory, as indeed many commentators do. For instance, Garrett argues that Hume claims only that passions in and of themselves are non-representational, but that representational (and therefore intentional) content is conferred on the passion by extrinsic causal influences according to ordinary causal association (Garrett, 2006, p. 303). On this view then, Humean intentionality is still characterised by representation, but the quality of being representative need not be intrinsic to the perception. As such, if we believe this, we can hold that Humean passions genuinely *are* simple and individual impressions in and of themselves, and that the intentional component which Hume seems to ascribe to them is acquired from an extrinsic source by some association with the mind. However, Qu is unconvinced by this argument, and gives three reasons for his scepticism, which we shall explain. First, the causal derivation argument

fails to address the apparently essential directedness of the passions of pride and humility; second, if passions are causally derived impressions, they cannot be original qualities as Hume claims; and third, Hume himself seems to portray the intentionality of pride and humility as inherent to the passions, rather than conferred upon them.

As for the first of these criticisms, we know that Hume considered pride and humility to belong to a special kind of passion, characterised by a certain double-relation, both to an object in the world, and to the self, which is the primary object of the passion (T 2.1.2.2). The way Hume refers to these passions throughout his discussion of them makes it very clear that he views their self-directedness as an essential facet of their being. For instance:

“’tis absolutely impossible...that these passions shou’d ever look beyond self”

(T 2.1.5.3)

Or:

“’tis always self, which is the object of pride and humility; and whenever the passions look beyond, ’tis still with a view to ourselves...” (T 2.1.3.2)

And also:

“When the self enters not into the consideration, there is no room either for pride or humility” (T 2.1.2.2)

It should seem very clear from these, that for Hume, intentionality is an essential part of pride and humility, and indeed any potential passions which bear the same double-relation of self and external object. Were pride to have its intentionality conferred on it from an extrinsic source, we would only have accounted for the relations between pride and the external object from which the passion is derived, but the relation between pride and the self would be unaccounted for. To properly account for this, causal derivation theorists would need to appeal to some associative relation between the passion and the self, and the only relations available in this instance are those of resemblance, contiguity and causation. Now, pride does not *resemble* the self in any sense, so surely we cannot appeal to resemblance, nor to contiguity since pride is a passion *within* the self, not *contiguous* with it. Presumably then, the causal theorist would appeal to the relation of causation to explain the double relation, and explain that just as the external object is the cause of the passion, the passion is the cause of the idea of self. Certainly, there is very strong evidence to suggest Hume may have supported this interpretation. For instance:

“The first idea, that is presented to the mind, is that of the cause or productive principle. This excites the passion, connected with it; and that passion, when excited, turns our view to another idea, which is that of self. Here there is a passion plac’d betwixt two ideas, of which the one produces it, and the other is produc’d by it. The first idea, therefore, represents the cause, the second the object of the passion”

(T 2.1.2.4)

However, even if the passion is related to the self in this way, such a relation would only be contingent, never necessary, since the passion and the self are separable and therefore

distinct, so we still cannot interpret Hume's account of pride and humility causally in a way that coheres with Hume's stated belief in their *essential* directedness. Davidson (1976) argues that even though this is the case, Hume might still hold that the precise relationship between pride and the idea of self is still necessary, in the way that the relationship between an object and its reflection is a necessary one, despite the fact that a reflection is the causal product of its object, via the causal process of light bouncing from the object to the reflective surface. This argument is a little suspect, however. On this line of reasoning, Hume's claim that pride causes the idea of self becomes a good deal more trivial than the manner in which it is presented seems to suggest. Further, we might question how it should be possible to feel pride or humility at all if the very idea of self is not understood until *after* one has experienced them? If self is the object of these passions, then the passions are apparently responsible for producing their own object, but as Hume describes them, this should be impossible. For Hume, pride is felt due to the apprehension of the existence of some praiseworthy thing which bears a personal relation to oneself. If the idea of self could not be conceived until it has been revealed by pride or humility, then the idea that any object could bear a relation to oneself, and thereby confer shame or prestige on one, should be equally impossible, rendering the passions of pride and humility entirely unattainable.

These problems aside, it could also be argued that pride and humility cannot be essentially directed towards the self because Hume does not permit the idea that there are any necessary relations between any one perception and its object, so a passion that bears a necessary relation to the self falls outside of the boundaries of Hume's philosophical system. Qu retorts however, that the fact that pride is essentially directed towards the self does not necessarily imply the real existence of a self at all. After all, we do occasionally have

perceptions which fail to refer to any object whatsoever, in the case of mirages, or hallucinations and suchlike. In such cases, the perception is still *essentially* a perception of something or other, but there is no essential relationship between a perception and an object, because no real object exists. By the same token, just because pride has an essential relationship with the *idea* of self does not mean that it has an essential relationship with any self-object. Qu goes even further than this though and maintains that in actual fact, pride's essential self-directedness does not even entail a necessary *idea* of self, since pride and self are separable, and therefore capable of independent existence. According to Qu, Hume would have recognised that there is a resemblance between the passion of pride and the idea of the self, namely the common reference to the self, and could therefore have maintained the existence of a regular, contingent relation between the two on the basis of this associative principle. In fact, we can identify this same association between any two correlated impressions, since every pair of impressions and ideas refer to the same thing, they are associated not only by the causal derivations of the copy principle, but also by this *intentional resemblance*, or same-directedness if you prefer¹³.

Moving onto the second of Qu's arguments, that the causal derivation model fails to accommodate the requirement that passions are original qualities, we are able to object to the causal role theorists that a causal explanation of the passions contradicts Hume's account of what an original quality actually is. There are, Qu notes, two main ways of interpreting Hume on this front. Either a quality is original because it cannot be explained by appeal to any

¹³ For further discussion of Hume's conception of pride, see Chazan, 1992; Rorty, 1990; McIntyre, 1989; Purviance, 1997; Lecalano, 2002.

antecedent cause (T 1.1.4.6; T 1.4.7.5; T App 3), or else it is original because it cannot be explained by appeal to *any* kind of explanation, causal or otherwise (T 3.3.1.27). In either case though, an original quality is one which has no causal explanation, so while a passion may arise as the causal result of some act of perception, its own particular quality is entirely original. In other words, while I may be made happy because I see something which *makes* me happy (in a causal sense), the quality of happiness which I perceive in the passion is entirely original. Thus, since pride and humility are passions and hence have original qualities, the extrinsic causal model of intentionality cannot be taken to cohere with Hume's writing. By contrast, Qu's intrinsic, directional account of Humean intentionality can accommodate the originality of these passions, since the passions on this view do not necessarily need to be explained. We can, if we choose, simply accept their existence as original qualities. What happens if we choose not to accept this will be discussed momentarily.

First however, we have Qu's third argument to deal with, that the causal account is even more severely threatened than has already been shown, because Hume seems to suggest that the intentionality of the passions is an intrinsic quality of the passions, thereby directly contradicting any assertion that these passions can be derived from extrinsic causal factors. Specifically, Hume writes:

"First, I find, that the peculiar object of pride and humility is determin'd by an original and natural instinct, and that 'tis absolutely impossible, from the primary constitution of the mind, that these passions shou'd ever look beyond self..."

(T 2.1.5.3)

In this passage Hume is asserting the self-directedness of the passions, stipulating that this self-directedness is an original quality in and of itself. Further though, he says this:

“The second quality, which I discover in these passions, and which I likewise consider as an original quality, is their sensations...” (T 2.1.5.4)

Besides also asserting that the sensations of the passions are original qualities, the wording of the passage makes clear that the original qualities of self-directedness *and* sensation are both qualities which he ‘discover[s] in these passions’, and both are intrinsic to the passions, neatly dismissing any claim that extrinsic intentionality theories may have had to being authentically Humean accounts of the intentionality of the passions. Of course, causal derivation remains a very compelling reading of large parts of Hume’s writing, still adequately explaining much of our everyday cognition in a style well in accordance with Hume’s reliance on empirically observable relations to explain such phenomena. However, Qu’s three objections seem to put to bed the idea that Hume saw the passions as causally derived phenomena, and I think it would require some very inventive arguments to claim otherwise.

Intrinsic intentionality then, must be our reading of Hume if we wish to hold that he had any model of intentionality at all, but how are we to understand the notion that intentionality is an intrinsic quality of the passions when the passions already possess their own qualitative character, and yet are supposedly only simple impressions? To answer, Qu indicates a section of the *Treatise* which seems to suggest the existence of certain exceptions to the separability principle, specifically the section where Hume discusses so-called ‘distinctions of reason’.

“The difficulty of explaining this distinction arises from the principle above explain’d, that all ideas, which are different, are separable. For it follows from thence, that if the figure be different from the body, their ideas must be separable as well as distinguishable; if they not be different, their ideas can neither be separable nor distinguishable. What then is meant by a distinction of reason, since it implies neither a difference nor a separation?”

(T 1.1.7.16)

In this passage, Hume puzzles over the apparent counterexample to the separability principle presented by ‘figure and body’. Hume gamely accepts that the mind will not imagine that there is any difference between a ‘figure and the body figur’d’ (T 1.1.7.17), but that nevertheless we can conceive of a difference between the two. To illustrate his solution to this problem however, he gives the example of a white marble sphere. Strictly speaking, the colour of the sphere is not separable from the body of the sphere itself since, if we try and conceive of the sphere without its colour, we do not in fact picture a colourless sphere, since every object must have some colour. Even if we try to imagine a transparent sphere, we cannot manage that since the white sphere obscures our vision of whatever is behind it, meaning that we cannot even form an idea of what it would be like to be able to see through the sphere. It is in fact, impossible to conceive of a sphere without some colour, despite the fact that there is an easily conceivable distinction between the concepts of shape and of colour, therefore the idea of a white sphere is a simple idea. However, when comparing the idea of a white sphere to that of a black sphere, or a white cube, we can see that even this simple idea can bear multiple separate relations to other objects even though it cannot itself be resolved into multiple separate parts. The distinction between shape and colour then, is a

distinction of reason, and does not imply any separability between a particular object's shape and its colour, even though shape and colour themselves are separable ideas, and as such, for each particular object of which we could actually conceive, it is necessary that there exist a *particular* union of these properties despite the lack of any *universal* union between them.

For Qu, this argument concerning distinctions of reason, taken straight from the horse's mouth no less, is the solution to our problem, and a very compelling solution it is too. Using this framework, we can take passions to be simple impressions by claiming that the distinction between their qualitative character and their intentional directedness is one of these distinctions of reason, and while they are distinct in principle such that they can be thought about and considered separately, they cannot actually be separated from each other within the experience of a particular passion. This solves a lot of problems for us. Conceiving of the passions in this way allows us to view Hume's apparently conflicting statements about the passions as perfectly coherent, both with each other and with most of the rest of his system of philosophy. Construed this way, the passions are able to operate much like all our other impressions in terms of how they drive cognition, with resemblances between passions helping the mind pass from one thought to the next. For example, a person experiencing grief over something, such as the loss of a loved one, might find their thoughts passing naturally onto grief for a different thing, some other loss perhaps, by virtue of the resemblance of qualitative character shared by the differently directed passions. Likewise, such a person might just as easily find their mind moving from grief for the loss of a loved one, onto fond remembrance of that same person, by virtue of the common intentional reference between these two passions. Which of these outcomes occurs will depend, Hume would tell us, on the force and vivacity of the passions involved. In this way we can see how this account of the

passions proceeds as we would expect according to Humean thought as it is commonly understood, and how the supposed simplicity of the passions is not in the least undermined by the conjunction of both their intentional and qualitative character. Turning this framework onto the matter of pride and humility then to finish, we can comfortably maintain that whilst these passions are in a sense ‘induced’ by some external object according to the normal causal schema, they nevertheless possess both an essential and original qualitative character of their own, and an essential and original intentional quality which directs the passion onto the self.

In light of this apparently satisfying solution, it can be easy to lose sight of the fact that there are still a number of holes in Hume’s theory that are not adequately filled either by the causal derivation account, or the intrinsic model of the passions. A little earlier, I mentioned that we might choose not to accept simply that the passions have original qualities, and now is a good time to expand on that. To be clear, this possibility in no way diminishes the efficacy of Qu’s arguments, as Qu was only trying to provide an interpretation of the passions which was consistent with Hume’s own writing, and to be sure, Hume *does* claim that passions have original qualities, but this should not necessarily satisfy us, since we could still ask Hume a number of important questions. For instance, if all of our impressions are copied from things we have experienced, then from what are our passions, which are themselves simple impressions, copied? There is nothing in the world which resembles joy, or hatred etc., except abstractly, and so the passions seem to arise in us spontaneously, with all of their unique original qualities fully realised at the moment of experience. Curiously, Hume does claim that certain impressions “*without any introduction make their appearance in the soul*” (T 2.1.1.2), but these are those impressions which he calls ‘original impressions’, a term which denotes bodily sensations. In fact, Hume claims that the passions “*proceed from some of those original*

[impressions] either immediately or by the interposition of its idea" (T 2.1.1.1). It is important to remember at this point that an original impression is not the same as an original quality. An original impression is equated to a bodily sensation because even though such sensations are caused by something, they are experienced entirely originally, unmediated or influenced by any prior experience or mental state. Secondary impressions like the passions however, can only be experienced by virtue of some antecedent original impression, which is simply another way of expressing that passions have to be *about* something.

In this way we can understand that all impressions have an original quality since there is something that it is like to have that impression. When discussing the origin of the qualities of original impressions we can see how the impression appears to the mind in an original sense, but that the precise quality which is experienced is dependent on the object of the impression. For example, different objects appear to be different colours because there is a real difference between the objects themselves, in the sense that they reflect different wavelengths of light in different proportions. Likewise, different surfaces feel different to the touch because they *are* different in physical composition, and different bodily pains hurt in different ways depending on the origin of the pain, so a pinprick feels sharper than a bruise, and a bruise aches more than a pinprick. Regarding the passions though, how do we account for the differing qualitative characters of the different passions if the quality of the passion depends not on its causal object, but is apparently original in itself? We cannot argue that the unique causal object of each passion produces its own modification of the passion, because we have already established that the qualitative character of each passion is the same regardless of its object. Pride-in-home may feel somewhat different to pride-in-family, but upon close inspection the passion itself is qualitatively identical in either case, and the

difference in objects only changes the degree to which the passion is felt, according to the corresponding sympathy one feels with the similar values of others. This being the case, why should we simply accept that the passions spontaneously generate their own qualitative character at the very instant that they are experienced? Hume offers very little in the way of explanation for this problem, taking the originality of the passions for granted.

This problem becomes ever more troubling when taken together with a secondary issue. Since the idea of self is supposedly a product (or possibly a component, depending on your view) of the passion of pride, we can revive that omnipresent difficulty in Humean thought and ask how exactly the idea of self arises from nothing. Qu's version of the passions holds that the idea of self is related to the idea of pride by the common reference to the self as an object, but if we apply this account in justifying Hume's idea of self rather than only his idea of pride, we are putting the cart before the horse. Qu's system justifies Hume's account of pride and humility from an intrinsically intentional standpoint, but it depends upon the initial assumption that the idea of self already exists in some sense or another, so the mind is able to produce the idea of pride by moving its consciousness from self, to the indirect object of pride (which is the cause of the passion), and back to self (which is the object of the passion). This system however, requires the subject in question to recognise an existing relation between themselves and the indirect object in the first place, something which cannot be done until *after* the idea of self is revealed by the passion.

If, alternatively, we try and explain the origin of the idea of self by appealing to the causal account, we run into a different problem. Namely, that the idea of self is the product of an impression which it does not resemble. As already established, an idea *must* resemble its

impressions precisely *because* it is a copy of it. By this account the causal chain would go thusly; the object produces two concurrent impressions in the mind, related by their common cause. The first impression is the impression of the object itself and is an original impression. The second impression is the impression of pride, which is a secondary impression and therefore proceeds from the original impression by the intercession of ideas derived from our sympathy with the ideals of others concerning what objects are prideworthy. Naturally, the original impression of the object itself is copied into a resembling idea, and stored as such, as an idea of a house, or a family member, or a car, or anything else of which one might be proud. The secondary impression of pride however, is somehow supposed to do two things here. The first is the obvious one, it gets copied into an idea of pride and stored in the same way as the original idea. The other though, is much more difficult to justify. In some respect, the impression of pride is also supposed to produce the idea of self, and while pride and self may share the same object, the idea of self in no way resembles the impression of pride, so cannot have been copied from it. This difficulty would not be so bad if we could find a way to show that an impression of self is produced by the intercession of additional, antecedent ideas in the same way that the impression of pride is produced. Unfortunately though, as keeps being a barrier to us, Hume has rejected the very possibility of any impression of self at all, never mind one derived in this way, so alas, with our last option denied, we cannot accept any solution to this problem. Once more, we are turned back into Hume's labyrinth and trapped there by the limitations of Hume's system. Between them, the analyses of the intrinsic and extrinsic readings of Hume have made much of his meaning clearer, but ultimately, the search for intentionality in the *Treatise* only leads us back into our own recurring difficulties. I think it fairly safe to conclude that if Hume did have any clear sense of intentionality, it certainly didn't help him much.

Chapter 6 – Noesis and Noema

Hopefully we have enough of an understanding of intentionality by now to see that it can be a workable model for describing mental states, but I have not yet explained how Husserl himself navigates the various issues outlined above. The best way to approach this matter, I think, will be to discuss the topics in Husserl's phenomenology that are integral to his philosophical project. In this section, I will address the interrelated concepts of Noesis and Noema, which constitute an integral part of Husserl's model of intentionality, and which Husserl believed to have solved many of the problems apparent in the intentionalist model. The precise nature of the noema has been a subject of some debate in Husserl scholarship for some time. While the concept of 'noesis' had existed before Husserl, the concept of 'noema' was an entirely original addition to the philosophical lexicon, and much about its nature has remained obscure. One matter of note regarding the interpretation of the noema, is that it has consistently been employed as evidence by those wishing to demonstrate that Husserl was either an internalist or an externalist regarding the philosophy of mind, using various interpretations of the noema as evidence that Husserl believed that the contents of our mental states are either dependent upon or *independent* from the external world. Both of these views will be touched on in this chapter, although we will not find in favour of either view. In fact, our view will be that questions of this kind are wholly irrelevant to Husserl's project. After this, in the next chapter, we will explore how these uniquely Husserlian concepts relate to Hume's own concepts of impressions and ideas.

6.1 – Noesis

In section 2.2, I introduced the concept of the existence-essence distinction, the idea that an object's raw existence and its 'essence' are to be sharply distinguished. This distinction enables us to some extent, to conceive of how we apprehend objects, as bundles of essence content retrieved from the object by virtue of a simple presentation of that content. In this way we do not have to believe that a perception of an object needs to be complete or perfect in order to be broadly representative of its corresponding object. We can therefore begin forming beliefs about the world we see on the basis of our perceptions, and thanks to the grounding nature of inward evidence, these bundles of essence are sufficient to establish an internally consistent worldview. This essence is 'noetic' in character, meaning that it is explicitly related to the mind, and it is worth bearing that clarification in mind. While it is convenient to think that an object's 'redness' for instance is a really inherent property of its existence, the really inherent property is not 'redness' as we would understand it in the natural attitude, but rather the property of predominantly reflecting only electromagnetic waves that oscillate within a particular range of frequencies. This is not a property that we can detect in such objective terms without the assistance of scientific instruments and, having done so, we still do not *see* the wavelength, we see only 'red'. The actual essence, or 'noetic content' of an object is therefore that which is present to our consciousness by virtue of our own perceptual faculties. It is in terms of this noetic content that we think whenever we think about the world, it is this noetic content that we take as 'given', and it is by virtue of this that we can define the phenomenon of noesis as a whole, as the intentional direction of consciousness towards an object.

We have now condensed the whole issue of intentionality as we have understood it so far into a single word, 'noesis', which denotes the process of directing a mental state onto an object in a general sense or, in other words, that noesis is the essence of intentionality. For clarity however, and to make our future comparisons with Hume more striking, it will be useful to make some clarifications regarding the more precise operations of this faculty, because noetic consciousness, the 'apprehension of essences' can behave differently depending on the object in question. When fixed on a mental object, for instance, noetic consciousness is very straightforward, because mental objects are always presented as finished essences, already immanently given in a particular determination and therefore apprehended in full, as far as the subjective mind is concerned¹⁴ (Ideas I, p. 96). Nothing is hidden, or can be hidden, because the object is already within the mind, not obscured, as objects in the world can be, but fixed in its meanings by virtue of being bounded by the perceptual and intuitive faculties of the individual. Put simply, whatever experience I have of a given phenomenon defines the precise nature and extent of the corresponding mental object given in noetic consciousness. As a result, no amount of inward reflection on the nature of the object will cause it to change, unless new experiences occur in order to recontextualise one's understanding of it.

¹⁴ It is probably worth clarifying here that the stipulation 'as far as the subjective mind is concerned' is a very important one. That mental objects are always perceived in totality does not mean that introspection is an infallible faculty, as Descartes (1641) believed, it merely means that mental objects are individuated with respect to the body of inward evidence already possessed by the subjective consciousness, so whatever has been deemed by the individual to be a single mental object is thus apprehended as such and in its totality, with no obscuration, as described above.

When viewing physical objects however, noetic consciousness has a greater challenge, namely that each particular noesis is derived from only a single perception unique to it and if, while viewing an object, one changes position and views it from a different perspective, one is presented with a wholly new perception with a distinct set of noetic contents. Move from the lit side of an object to the unlit side for example, and the object's colour now seems to be duller, the detail on the surface may be lost or, depending on how striking the difference in lighting is, whole parts of the object may seem to be lost in shadow, giving the impression that the object is an entirely different shape. In such cases, it is necessary for us to describe the faculty by which we are able to recognise that these very distinctive noeses each correspond to the same object. Fortunately, Husserl has an answer for this problem as well. Quite simply, when I view a physical object, though I can only see one side of it, nevertheless I *know* that I can only see one side of it, so included in the noetic content of a one-sided impression like this is the sense of incompleteness inherent to the perception, a sense which implies that many other possible perceptions may relate to this same core object (Ideas I, p. 94). When moving around the object and gaining access to some of these possible other perceptions, the mutual relation of all these impressions to the same core object causes the impressions to become 'adumbrated', merged, into a single posited object. All the noetic content has been, in effect, aggregated, to produce a new, more complete mental object, an object corresponding to the object in a complete sense rather than the limited sense of a one-sided perception. It should be made clear here that both the one-sided and the adumbrated images correspond to the core object in a real and noetic sense, it is merely the case that the process of adumbration enables us to build up the sense of the object as immanently given by means of a process of discovery.

6.2 – Noema

The noema, unfortunately, is not so easy to explain. While the nature of noesis is a relatively uncontroversial topic, having existed as a concept for some time before Husserl, the noema was a novel concept when he introduced it. Even more unfortunately, it is of central importance to his theory of intentionality, and no one has yet fully agreed on what it means. There are two main theories on the noema at the moment; the first originates in a 1969 paper by Dagfinn Føllesdal, and is referred to more generally as the ‘West Coast’ school, and the second, pioneered by Robert Sokolowski is referred to as the ‘East Coast’ interpretation. We will discuss both of these in turn, though personally I am not totally convinced by either account, so I will explain my own thoughts towards the end of this section.

6.2.1 – Føllesdal

Føllesdal’s 1969 paper takes as its starting point the notion that Brentano’s model of intentionality is overly simplistic in terms of its mind-object relations, and considers that such problems leave open the issue of objectless presentations. It subsequently posits that Husserl’s invention of the noema was an attempt at solving these problems. This much I do not have an issue with. While I am reasonably confident that Brentano’s model of intentionality has been consistently misinterpreted, I am also reasonably confident that Husserl was himself one of the many who misinterpreted Brentano in this way. After all, Brentano’s letter to Marty, which contains the clearest rejection of all the various hypotheses surrounding Brentano’s theory, was sent a full thirty-one years after the publication of *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* and in private, so it seems unlikely that Husserl can have had the benefit of that clarification when he was developing his own philosophy. Hence, I think we can believe that Husserl saw his own work as a solution to the problems he

perceived in Brentano. What I struggle to believe however, is what Føllesdal says is the core of his solution, namely that:

"...although every act is directed, this does not mean that there always is some object toward which it is directed. According to Husserl, there is associated with every act a noema, in virtue of which the act is directed towards its object... To be directed simply is to have noema." (Føllesdal, 1969, p. 681)

Immediately here I wish to register my objection to the Idea that Husserl believed that intentional mental states did *not* require an object. Husserl regularly reiterates the necessity of there being a real object throughout his works. Most notably, right at the start of §90 of *Ideas I* he tells us:

"Like perception, every mental process – just this makes up the fundamental part of intentionality – has its 'intentional object,' i.e., its objective sense. Or in other words: to have sense or 'to intend to' something, is the fundamental characteristic of all consciousness which, therefore, is not just any mental living whatever, but is rather a mental living having sense, which is noetic" (*Ideas I*, p. 217)

This passage seems to clearly contradict Føllesdal's core assumption, but I will save the discussion of why he makes it for later because, barring this strange aberration, Føllesdal's paper contains some interesting insights into the noema which I believe have strong explanatory value.

The main thesis which Føllesdal seeks to demonstrate is that *"The noema is an intensional entity, a generalization of the notion of meaning (Sinn, Bedeutung)"* (1969, p. 681), and he gives in evidence Husserl's own words, which state that *"The noema is nothing but a generalization of the idea of meaning to the field of all acts"* (Ideas III, p. 89). This seems fairly unequivocal in terms of supporting evidence, but it still remains to clarify what precisely is meant by this. Ultimately what it means is that the noema is the element of a mental act (hence 'intensional') which enables noetic content to be organised into comprehensible forms. This description however is still too obtuse, so let us clarify by continuing to Føllesdal's second thesis, that *"A noema has two components: (1) one which is common to all acts that have the same object, with exactly the same properties, oriented in the same way, etc., regardless of the 'thetic' character of the act, i.e., whether it be perception, remembering, imagining etc. and (2) one which is different in acts with different thetic character"* (p. 682). Now, by 'thetic character', Føllesdal refers to the nature of a mental act, its determination as a perception, a remembering, a judgement, etc., it means the precise way in which a mental state posits its object. With this in mind, we can decode the language of these remarks to find that Føllesdal means to tell us that each noema has a component which is common to all mental acts that share an object regardless of the different natures of each mental act, and a component which is determined by the particular nature of each mental act. The first of these components, we are told, is referred to by Husserl as 'noematischer Sinn' (noematic sense), or 'gegenständlicher Sinn' (representational sense), and the second is the noematic correlate of the 'Gegebenheitsweise' (the 'given') of the object. We can thus learn something very useful about the noema, namely that under Føllesdal's interpretation (with which I am inclined to agree here), the structure provided by the noema, through which sense is bestowed on the objects of our mental acts, is comprised partly by facts inherent to the object

itself, and partly by facts inherent to the mental state. This is well borne out by Husserl's writing. In *Ideas I* Husserl defines the noematic sense thusly:

"Corresponding in every case to the multiplicity of Data pertaining to the really inherent noetic content, there is a multiplicity of Data, demonstrable in actual pure intuition, in a correlative 'noematic content' or, in short, in the 'noema'" (Ideas I, p. 214)

And later clarifies:

"In every case the noematic correlate, which is called 'sense' here (in a very extended signification) is to be taken precisely as it inheres 'immanently' in the mental process of perceiving, judging, of liking; and so forth; that is, just as it is offered to us when we inquire purely into the mental process itself." (Ideas I, p. 214)

What we gather from these passages is that corresponding to the implicitly noetic (sense-bestowing) mental states is a noematic (sense-making) correlate, a structural component which is partly determinative in shaping the structure into which noetic content fits, distinguishing different mental states from one another, and clarifying the precise intentional nature of each. In perceiving I *intend* to perceive, in remembering I *intend* to recall, and in judging I *intend* to judge. As such, when my mental states find their objects, those objects are bestowed with the corresponding sense, of a perception, a memory, an object of judgement etc. What this means is that I can never mistake my present perception of an object for a memory of such, because the thetic character of an act of perception is fundamentally

different to the thetic character of an act of remembering, a difference which is expressed as a difference in the noematic correlate of each act. As for the noematic *sense*, there is something inherent to the noetic content derived from each object that determines the rest of the structure into which noetic content fits. For example, inherent to the noetic content of birdsong, is the noematic property of only being able to be interpreted as a sound. Equally, inherent to the noetic content of redness is the property of only being able to be interpreted as a colour, and so on. Such properties are structural elements of the objects' representational qualities that can only be accessed by an observing consciousness. As such, the adumbrated 'core' of an object, which we can now refer to as its 'noematic core' due to the fact that each noetic moment which contributes to the singularly posited noesis has its corresponding noematic sense, is established and developed with reference to its particular structural elements, elucidating the eidetic region to which each object belongs. Between these two components then, a full noematic structure emerges according to which objects of our mental states receive their fullest sense.

Using this model, Føllesdal deduces a number of further theses, expanding what we know about the intentional relation between consciousness and object. For instance, we can deduce that *"To one and the same Noema corresponds only one object"* (Føllesdal, 1969, p. 683). This is clear from the fact that the noematic sense which contributes to the construction of the noema can only come from a single object – that which is the present object of an intentional act. To introduce noematic sense from a second object, it would be necessary to initiate a new intentional act in order to properly systematise the relations between each of the two objects to which the act refers. In doing so however, one would in actual fact be positing these two objects as a single but complex object, a system of parts, to which there

would naturally correspond only a single noema, as each part of the system is apprehended within the same intentional act. It is the difference between perceiving a single grain of sugar, or a single bag; a single brick, or a single cathedral. In every case, a complex object is apprehended as a unity of parts rather than a plurality, and is hence individuated as such within the intentional act. Next, we can deduce that *“To one and the same object, there may correspond several different Noemata”* (Føllesdal, 1969, p. 683). This is true in two separate senses. First, in the sense that each noema is determined in part by thethetic character of a mental state so, naturally, a perception of a bicycle for example, and a memory of the same bicycle will produce different noemata despite being directed towards the same object. Second though, we must remember that a noematic core is built up out of an adumbration of the noematic components of several successive perceptions, and therefore any discontinuity in those perceptions may result in the false differentiation of an object from itself. For instance, if at one time, I see an object from only one side, and at another time, I see it from the other side, but *mistake it for a different object*, then I have formed two separate noemata pertaining in actuality to the same object, but in consciousness, I falsely perceive two separate things. In such a case, I have performed two separate mental acts, which therefore have separate noematic correlates, and each perception presented me with a different, or at least differentiated set of noetic content, which therefore have separate noematic sense, so to each act of perceiving, there must correspond a different noema. The final deduction we can make is this; that *“Each act has one and only one noema”* (Føllesdal, 1969, p. 683). The reason for this should be apparent by now. Since thethetic character of the act is a necessary determinant in the construction of the noema, each mental act can correspondingly have only one noema. Interestingly, Føllesdal claims that the reverse is not true, and that one and the same noema can have different acts, which is to say, acts that are differentiated by time, that

occur on separate occasions, but nevertheless have the same thetic character and are directed towards the same object. There may well be an argument to be had on whether a temporal distinction is sufficient to differentiate mental acts in this way, or whether a temporal distinction necessarily entails some other kind of change such that the noema must also change, but that is not a discussion for us to have here. Føllesdal has told us everything we need to know about the noema for the time being.

The next few of Føllesdal's theses all concern the manner in which the noema is presented to the mind, so I have grouped them all together. They are that "*Noemata are abstract entities*" (Føllesdal, 1969, p. 684), that "*Noemata are not perceived through the senses*" (Føllesdal, 1969, p. 684), and that "*Noemata are known through a special reflection, the phenomenological reflection*" (Føllesdal, 1969, p. 685). This last one in particular bears a little explanation, if just for the sake of clarity. When we say that the noemata are known through the phenomenological reflection, we mean to say that in order to discern from what the noema is comprised, we must adopt Husserl's 'phenomenological attitude', which is to say, the attitude whereby we think not about the objects of our consciousness themselves as we would in the natural attitude, but about the mental acts which refer to them, we think about *how* we perceive the world, rather than *what* we perceive. The phenomenological attitude will be better elucidated across the next couple of sections. Finally, the last of Føllesdal's theses is that "*The phenomenological reflection can be iterated*" (Føllesdal, 1969, p. 685). This means that the 'Sinn' (sense) of an object can itself be an object of consciousness when reflected upon in the phenomenological attitude, with its own corresponding Sinn which can itself be an object, and so on and so forth. This thesis has the effect of clarifying that the Sinn is not an inherent part of the object, since if it were, then taking the Sinn as the object of

consciousness would be equivalent to taking the object to which the Sinn belongs as the object, but this is not the case. When we regard the Sinn as object of consciousness, the object to which said Sinn belongs is out of the picture, it no longer matters what the object actually *is* as long as there is one. Instead, we are now thinking about how we perceive this particular Sinn, rather than how we perceive its object.

I mentioned earlier that Føllesdal makes the unusual claim that Husserl believed that it was not essential for an intentional mental state to have an object, and before we move on to Sokolowski and the East Coast interpretation it will be useful to return to this issue, because the conflict between the two schools rests on this point. To put it simply, both the East and West Coast interpretations of the noema are assessing the noema in terms of the dichotomy between internalist and externalist models of reference. It has been a point of considerable discourse in the study of Husserl which of these ideas he commits to, whether he considers perception and reference to be a purely mental affair, or whether he requires that at least some objects be externally located. Føllesdal takes the view that Husserl is an internalist (Zahavi, 2004), or rather, his view on the noema, that it is a mediating entity that facilitates the representation of an object to the mind with a particular sense, has the effect of making Husserl out to be an internalist. Sokolowski on the other hand, and his East Coast compatriots take issue with this view, and they propose a very different view of the noema which places Husserl more squarely in the externalist camp.

6.2.2 – Sokolowski

Sokolowski stresses that the whole notion of ‘intentionality’ is frequently discussed with too narrow an interpretation of the term. Specifically, he argues that the term ‘intentionality’

implies emptiness, that an intentional mental state is *only* an intention, and nothing more, and that attempting to substitute the word intention for 'presentation' as sometimes happens, results in a similar problem, it refers only to fulfilled intentions, and not to empty ones (Sokolowski, 1984, p. 114). While this may seem to be a bit of a pedantic clarification to make, it does communicate the core of Sokolowski's opinion, that intentionality refers to all kinds of intentions, both empty *and* fulfilled. What this means is that an act can be intentional even if it fails to refer. If I ask someone to fetch me the book on my desk, but the book I am thinking of is actually on my shelf, then the mental act characterised by the reporting of the book's particular location fails to refer to its object. However, Sokolowski would insist that such acts are still intentional, and that the very technical epistemological approach taken by Føllesdal fails to adequately account for them. After all, what is the noematic Sinn of an object that is not there? In referring to the book which is absent from my desk, to what exactly am I referring? I cannot be referring to 'the book on my desk' because no such thing exists. I cannot be referring to the book on the shelf, because the thetic character of my mental act is defined in part by concern for the being-on-desk-ness of the book in question; as I describe the book, I do not imagine it in isolation, I am imagining it on my desk, therefore the desk-located-ness of the book is an integral part of the full noema which I intend. It is for similar reasons that I also cannot simply be remembering the book as being on my desk, since the act of describing to another person that the book *is* on my desk implies that the temporality of the description, the being-now of the book-being-on-desk is an equally essential component of the full noema. By Føllesdal's own principles, each act can have one and only one noema, so the act with the thetic character of reporting the book's particular location cannot also have the noema of a memory of the book's location, or a speculative judgement concerning the book's location etc. A report is its own type of mental act, characterised by the intent to relay information to

another entity. It is a reportorial act, and is thus distinct from declarative, memorial, speculative, judgemental acts etc.

For Sokolowski, both fulfilled and unfulfilled intentional forms are essential to the understanding of an intentional object (Sokolowski, 1984, p. 115). Fulfilled intentions tell us something about the identity of an object in and of itself, but unfulfilled intentions are necessary for other kinds of identifications. For example, to understand if an object is identical in type to another object which is not immediately present it is necessary to refer to that other object in its absence, as an unfulfilled intention. Equally, to hypothesise about whether an object's present identity is permanent or changeable, it is necessary to refer to one of a range of possible future objects which, by their very nature, are presently unfulfilled intentions. Empty intentions are, to Sokolowski, a large part of intentional consciousness, and therefore an indispensable aspect of phenomenology, indicating that an interpretation of the concept of noema that neglects to account for empty intentions is fundamentally flawed (Sokolowski, 1984, p. 127). Of course, there is a certain degree of difficulty in establishing the manner in which an object is referred to in an unfulfilled presentational sense, but Sokolowski navigates this issue by stressing that of all the various presentational forms by virtue of which we intend towards our intentional objects, one of the most prominent forms is that of predication (Sokolowski, 1984, p. 118).

To Sokolowski, predication is a presentational form that allows an individual to both 'display' an object, in a concrete presentational form, and to 'articulate' it, in terms of its properties or parts. He tells us, *"Predication is a separation and assembly that does not just generate structures, and does not just generate meaning, but lets identification occur in the*

presentation of things" (Sokolowski. 1984, p. 118). This is to say that an object which is individuated predicatively is identifiable as 'that' object, as opposed to just 'any' object with the same general structure and meaning. For instance, all bicycles have the same general structure, and the word 'bicycle' means the same thing in all cases, but the individuation of 'the broken bicycle in the garage' depends on a predicative presentation. In order to make sense of the idea of a 'broken' bicycle, it is necessary for us first to understand what a bike is, what it is supposed to do, and what factors might contribute to its failure to do so. In order to understand the idea of such a bike being in 'the garage', it is necessary for us first to understand what a garage is, that it is a place where bikes are often stored, and where the particular garage referred to is located.

To explain this more thoroughly I shall illustrate the issue in terms of what Sokolowski calls 'registration', which is really just 'noting'. Registration is, in Sokolowski's terms, a predication *in the physical presence* of the object with which the predicating act is concerned, in which something about the object is 'noticed'. So, I am looking at a bike, and I note that its chain has snapped. This act of registration, of registering a defect in the bike, consists of the attribution of this defect to the object which was originally the object of my perception. The defect is thus apprehended as being 'of the bike', it is 'the bike's defect', a defect which belongs to the bike. We can see then, that predication in this sense describes an attributive relationship between two objects. In one articulation, "the bike is broken", the nature of the subject, the predicative relationship, and the attributive relationship are all made clear. Further, since identification is itself a cognitive process, the subject is illuminated as taking cognitive responsibility for the identification. If the identification is false, it is because the subject has made an error in their attribution.

To take this further, Sokolowski tells us that it is also possible to predicate in the perceptual absence of the referent of an intentional act, a process which he calls 'reporting' (Sokolowski, 1984, p. 118). Notably, Sokolowski points out that reporting is by far the most common way to obtain information; *"we live far more in hearsay than finding out for ourselves, but the ability in principle to find out for ourselves, to register, gives stability and control to reporting"* (Sokolowski, 1984, p. 118). We can recognise this as a new way of articulating Husserl's belief in the primacy of inward evidence. Even though much of what we know is learned from second-hand sources, the capacity of an individual to investigate for themselves produces a degree of consistency between new and existing beliefs, since a report which appears to contradict some existing belief is suspended until further discovery can be undertaken in order to confirm or deny the facts presented by the report. In reporting then, the subject's cognitive responsibility is exaggerated, since the object itself is not present to stand testament to its *real* nature. As such, when receiving a report, the listener may recognise that the report is predicative and therefore subject to possible modifications which alter significantly the content of the report, though the sense and reference of the object thus referred remains the same. Sokolowski lists three possible modifications to predicative presentations; nominalisation, vagueness, and the apprehension of a report as a proposition rather than a fact.

Nominalisation is the simplest of these forms, and the smallest in scope. It is quite simply the capacity for us to phrase the whole predicative presentation as a single object. We can, for instance, talk of 'the house's being large', or 'the bike's being broken'. We use this predicative form in order to place the initial predicative relationship in a certain context within a broader presentation. For instance, one might hear that 'in the context of international diplomacy,

the breakaway group's being so militant presents a significant barrier to communication'. In this example, the predicative relationship between 'the breakaway group' and 'militancy' has been nominalised in order to predicate further that diplomatic efforts have been hampered by the militancy of said group. Thus, we can see that by nominalising a predicative presentation, we are able to nestle one predication within another in order to report increasingly complex predicative-attributive relationships. Such nominalisations allow us to articulate many different concepts in a single utterance, and to posit them as bearing such and such a relationship to one another.

Vagueness is described by Sokolowski as *"to be unable to execute categoriality even though we are attempting to do so"* (Sokolowski, 1984, p. 119). In short, it is to be unable to establish anything definite about the predicated object, and can occur for any number of reasons, in moments of confusion, inattention, overstimulation, ignorance etc. It should be noted here that vagueness can of course occur in *any* act of presentation, both in reporting *and* in registration. In reporting, a lack of adequate memory or comprehension of what is being reported can result in vagueness. Equally, in registration, inattention or ignorance can lead to vague descriptions of objects manifestly present, thus leading to similarly vague predications. This is a particularly interesting modification. What the existence of vagueness as a modification of predication tells us, is that it is not necessary to have a particularly full understanding of that to which one refers when one engages in an intentional act concerning an object. All that is necessary for us to predicate upon an object is for that object to be a valid positum, that is to say, for its existence in such and such a manner to be hypothetically viable. As long as this is the case, any number of predications can occur, all of which occur on the basis of this essential supposition. Of course, these suppositions need not bear any

relation to any real facts, it is only necessary that it be possible to ground the supposed object in its hypothetical mode of determination according to inward evidence.

The final modification is that which occurs *“when we shift from simply accepting an articulated state of affairs to accepting it as a proposed state of affairs”* (Sokolowski, 1984, p. 120). This modification illustrates the distinction between facts and mere propositions. A fact is, as we know, a true state of affairs, but a proposition is a state of affairs which has been asserted, but whose truth has not yet been verified. Of course facts do not, in and of themselves, require verification in order to *be* facts, so how does a predication come to be modified into a propositional state? Sokolowski says that this occurrence inheres in a change of attitude towards that which has been articulated in the act of predication. This modification can be clearly observed when we consider that famous series of statements in the old superman comics, “It’s a bird! It’s a plane! It’s Superman!”. We know that in context, the characters making these statements cannot clearly see Superman flying above them, and so they make assertions regarding the nature of the object which they can see. These statements are not at all vague, as they each describe a very particular object, and yet we never take the first two statements at face value, we understand that they are speculative assertions, and so we allow them to be propositions, but not conclusive facts. Once Superman arrives, and everyone can clearly identify him, they give the third statement, “It’s Superman!”, and this time we accept the assertion as fact. What is interesting about this example, is that each of the three speakers has the same object as the referent of their remarks. In the former two cases, the respective speakers also have roughly the same perspective from which to observe Superman’s flight, and yet they produce different propositions as to his nature. Were it the case that only fulfilled intentions had phenomenological legitimacy, one would expect that

the same object, viewed from the same perspective, would produce the same propositions, but since one can predicate in the absence of certain knowledge, we can infer from the propositional validity of these former two assertions that unfulfilled intentions are just as intentional and just as valid.

What we gather from these variations on the predicative form, and the viability of unfulfilled intentions, is that the nature of intentional acts is not always a matter of very clear sense-reference relations, but sometimes – most of the time, even – it is a matter of propositions, each predicated upon a set of assumptions grounded by the body of inward evidence belonging to the subject in question. When I refer to ‘the book on my desk’ and the book in fact turns out to be on my shelf, I am not referring to a purely fictitious entity, and I don’t think anyone would think that I am. Instead, I am *positing* the location of the book as being on my desk, I am *proposing* a probable location, and that proposition is predicated on the body of knowledge that I possess pertaining to the book; that there is such a book, that I keep it in an office, that I left it on the desk last time I read it. The book is still the referent of the reportorial act, but in order to intend an act towards it, I must posit the book’s existence, and predicate upon that positum in order to fully articulate where I believe the book to be.

The matter of positing and predicating will be picked up more fully later in the thesis, as Husserl has much to say on the matter and I am confident that it resolves several problems that commentators have had with the noema. For now though, I wish to highlight Sokolowski’s key concern regarding the identification of the noema, namely that an analytical treatment of the concept like that seen in Føllesdal’s work belies a confusion of the difference between propositional and phenomenological forms of reflection (Sokolowski, 1984, p. 127).

Propositional reflection is that which occurs in conversation, when an interlocutor makes a propositional statement, and one reflects on the veracity of the statement. In propositional reflection we are able to determine whether the proposition in question is an assertion of fact or an expression of opinion, whether it is possible to verify the proposition first-hand or if additional second-hand sources are required; we can even assess the cognitive authority of the speaker in order to gauge how much faith to place in their propositions. In this regard, propositional reflection is usefully distinguished both from first-hand involvement with things in the natural attitude, and from phenomenological reflection. In the natural attitude, objects are taken at face value, as they are perceived, unless some perception conflicts with an intuition derived from inward evidence, prompting a reflection of some kind. In phenomenological reflection, one reflects on the nature of one's own relationship with the intentional object in order to learn something about *how* it is perceived. In propositional reflection however, we learn nothing about how the object is perceived, instead we learn how it is *posited*, and the circumstances under which the proposition is made. As Sokolowski explains, *"It is in such propositional reflection that we run into 'senses.' A sense is part of a proposition, part of an articulated thing taken as proposed by someone"* (Sokolowski, 1984, p. 127).

There is a chance that we might fall into some confusion here, as Sokolowski's use of the word 'sense' is clearly meant to be taken somewhat differently to Føllesdal's 'noematic sense', since Sokolowski tells us that sense is only propositional, and never noematic. However, what Sokolowski says the noema *is*, is defined in very similar terms as those which Føllesdal uses to describe noematic sense. Specifically, Sokolowski takes as his evidence the epistemic limitations of intentional objects which Føllesdal claims constitute their noematic sense. A

word can only be taken to be a word, a colour can only be taken to be a colour etc. However, Sokolowski stresses that there are myriad different ways that an object can be posited within these limitations. A word can be stated, spelled, read, translated, used in a sentence etc., and these acts are of course predicated upon the positing of a word *as a word*. To Sokolowski, this 'word as word' is indicative of what Husserl means when he says that in the phenomenological reflection we reflect on the 'perceived as perceived', the 'remembered as remembered', the 'judged as judged' etc. Within this framework, the actual 'sense' of the object is found only within the proposition, and the noema is the object itself, existing independently of the mind or any predicative propositions, in a form determined by objective facts. It is "*the objective correlate of an intentional act or state*" (Sokolowski, 1984, p. 128) viewed from the phenomenological perspective, which is to say, viewed from as objective a perspective as we can manage.

By and large, I feel that Sokolowski's analysis raises a number of key issues into the discussion which are neglected by Føllesdal's account, an absence made all the more conspicuous by their presence within Husserl's work itself. The issue of propositional forms adequately addresses the issue of unfulfilled intentional forms and makes speculative intentional acts possible on the basis of predication. However, I am less convinced by his characterisation of the noema as the intentional object *itself* in objectivity. Besides the nagging feeling that if Husserl had meant the noema to be exactly equivalent to the object, he would probably have just said so, I also have some more serious concerns regarding the treatment of the noema in the theory if Sokolowski is correct.

There are a couple of passages which I would like to highlight in order to show that Sokolowski has been working from somewhat outside Husserl's original text. Firstly, from §90, Husserl makes this point about the noema:

"what has become prominent as 'sense' in the analysis of our examples does not exhaust the full noema... It will be shown directly that the full noema consists of a complex of noematic moments..." (Ideas I, pp. 217-18)

We can see here that Husserl's choice of language – 'does not exhaust the *full* noema' – suggests that 'sense' constitutes at least *some* of the noema, as we saw from Føllesdal. We can also see that Husserl saw the noema as comprised of a whole complex of 'noematic moments', a phrase that feels very unusual if it is being used to describe what Husserl has already taken to calling the 'object simpliciter'. To be fair to Sokolowski, Husserl does distinguish between an object simpliciter and its corresponding *sense* which aligns well enough with Sokolowski's distinction between propositional and phenomenological reflection, but it is pretty clear from this passage that Husserl does not separate sense from noema. If we wish for further evidence we can take this similarly blatant passage from slightly earlier in the *Ideas* in §89:

"Thus one can make clear here... how the phenomenological reduction can acquire for psychologists the useful methodic function of fixing the noematic sense by sharply distinguishing it from the object simpliciter, and recognizing it as something belonging inseparably to the psychological essence of the intensive mental process" (Ideas I, p. 217).

From this too we can see very clearly that Sokolowski's interpretation of the noema falls short of describing Husserl's own interpretation of the idea, a rather damning deficit when considering that Husserl originated the idea of the noema in the first place. To be fair, Sokolowski's idea of the noema *does* resemble what we have already identified as the 'noematic core', in that both describe an object viewed from a holistic rather than a narrow perspective, but the noematic core is still not the same as the object simpliciter. It is conceivable however, that when Sokolowski says that the noema is 'the objective correlate of an intentional act' *viewed from the phenomenological perspective*, he means to describe something like the noematic core as we understand it, as an adumbration of multiple perspectives forming a concrete determination of an object. To me this interpretation seems to be somewhat likely, but before we get into that, I feel that we should take a close look at both of the interpretations we have seen so far and see what we can learn from each of them.

6.2.3 – Synthesis

We should, I think, be able to see the point of contention between these two theories. Since both arguments originate in a discussion of whether Husserl's theories place him within the ranks of internalists or externalists, the implications of each theory place them starkly opposite each other in terms of that discussion. Føllesdal's account detaches the intentional act from any necessary intentional object and therefore leads to a very strong internalist reading of the concept of noema, whereby the intentional act is directed not towards a really existing object directly, but by means of a noema which is composed, in part, of sense derived from an external object. In cases where no real object exists, we are therefore still able to characterise the act as intentional and thus conscious, because the act still has a noema, even

if its object is absent or the perception is otherwise mistaken. This enables us to circumnavigate many of the issues which have been supposed to exist in the theory of intentionality regarding objectless presentations or perceptual errors etc. Rather than requiring a real object to serve as object for our intentional acts, we can merely claim that we direct our attention towards the apparent object, perceived thus and so. For Sokolowski though, this assessment is intolerable. It allows the reality of the external world to remain in doubt and characterises the noema as a purely psychological or conceptual entity, a characterisation which, even if it accounts for fictions and errors, fails to account properly for unfulfilled presentations and thus leaves unaccounted a large portion of intentional mental activity. He chooses to resolve these issues by appealing to the propositional and therefore predicative nature of intentional acts, characterising each act as a proposition pertaining to an object, predicated upon its objective noema, handily resolving problems of non-entities, errors, and all other kinds of unfulfilled intentions. Naturally, neither of these perspectives would be accepted by its opponents, but if we reflect for a moment, we may realise that these perspectives are not remotely incompatible.

I do not wish to spend too much time discussing the merits of the internalist and externalist theories as they are, to my mind, entirely besides the point. Husserl did not concern himself with the matter too closely, and in fact remarks in the *Logical Investigations* that “*It is absolutely clear that the conceptual pairs of inner and outer, and of evident and non-evident perception, need not coincide at all.*” (LI, p. 401). In other words, concerning oneself with the matter of connecting the intuitively given (inner, evident) with the externally real (outer, non-evident) is the wrong way of constructing a theory of human understanding. Instead, I wish to draw attention to the principles raised in each theory which *do* contribute to a useful

understanding of Husserl's work, and hopefully by the end of this section it will be clear why I prefer a more agnostic reading of the noema.

First of all, let us consider what is supposed to be the problem with Føllesdal's theory, namely that he makes the noema out to be a psychological entity on account of its being constructed from noematic sense shaped by the thetic character of the intentional act that acquires said noematic sense. All of this takes place in the mind of course, since noematic sense is comprised of general intuitions corresponding to the particular essences presented by a given perception, and the thetic character of an intentional act is shaped by the body of inward evidence hitherto accumulated, in the sense that it shapes what one expects to get out of any given intentional act. However, the perceptual data that shapes the noematic sense must come from somewhere, usually presumed to be a real external object, but as we discovered earlier, conceiving of the noema in this way leaves unfulfilled intentions, those that mean to refer to real external objects but fail to do so, unaccounted for. What then, is the noema in such cases? Sokolowski tells us that it is the object itself, but we have already established that this cannot be the case, or at least that Husserl didn't think so. However, I believe the solution can be found somewhere between Sokolowski and Føllesdal's interpretations if we put aside their conclusions and focus instead on their methods. In Sokolowski's case, this is that of establishing a propositional attitude, and in Føllesdal's case, that of building a noema which serves as a framework for the full meaning of intentional acts.

For a start, what is there to say that Sokolowski's notion of the propositional attitude actually precludes Føllesdal's noema interpretation, given that we have already dismissed Sokolowski's own? Let us work through the process of building a noema as Føllesdal described

it, and see if we can make it work just as easily in the propositional attitude as Føllesdal claims it does in the natural attitude. First of all, in order to build a noema we require a means of obtaining noetic (sense) content from an external object, and a corresponding noematic sense delimited by the object's nature *simpliciter*, all contained within a single intentional act characterised by some specific thetic character. Now, Sokolowski has already told us that we can predicate either in the perceptual presence *or* the absence of our intentional object, and this means we can obtain noetic content from an object even if we cannot directly see it. We can see how this works if we recall the concept of inward evidence. Intuition, the faculty characterised by its roots in inward evidence is, like the empirical faculties, an evidentiary faculty, and it serves to provide us with noetic sense pertaining to objects we have already experienced empirically, by the process of recollection. By recalling the noetic sense of an object, what it looks, sounds, feels like etc., I am able to derive the corresponding noematic sense of the object in the usual way, by intuiting the perceptual limitations of the object as delimited by its nature *simpliciter*. The noetic-noematic synthesis thus created can then be posited thus and so, in such and such a determination, and since the act of positing such an object is intentional, this act of positing has a particular thetic character which completes the noema. In this way, even unfulfilled presentations can have a noema, so long as the requisite noetic data is available in inward evidence. Usually, this means that one needs to have experienced the object, or something like it before, but could just as easily be accomplished by imaginatively assembling pieces of many disparate past experiences into a new, hypothetical entity, much in the same way that Hume describes the process of building complex ideas from simple ones.

We can understand better what is going on here if we recall that from Husserl's point of view, the eidetic relations between different essences are necessary, and given with apodictic certainty within the presentation of any object to consciousness. As such, we can see that what Føllesdal is talking about when he identifies the noema as providing a certain structural framework, is the a priori certainty that accompanies every noetic form that the essences apprehended within the intentional act *could not be arranged otherwise than they are* and still retain the same meaning. Or to put it another way, the noema does not *provide structure* to the essences, so much as it is the *intuition* of the general essences and the structural relations between them. In this regard, Føllesdal has identified a vitally important part of Husserl's philosophy, that every intentional performance in the form of a noesis is accompanied by a certainty of this kind, derived from the a priori validity of intuitive presentational forms. The mistake Føllesdal makes is in thinking that the noema is that by virtue of which an act may be said to be directed, and hence can be called intentional. As we have seen, the intentional constitution of essences within a subjective mental state is an essentially noetic process. It would be more accurate to say that the noema is that by virtue of which an intentional mental state is validated. It consists of the intuitive grasp of the general essences contained within the noesis and by extension, of the knowledge that *this* particular noesis is a valid thought, which is to say, it conforms to the general structure of essences.

The effect of the noema then, is to *objectivate* the sense of the noesis which is, by its very nature, purely subjective content, and by virtue of the apodictic certainty which we have of the eidetic relations between essences, we are thus convinced of the objective validity of our perceptions. After all, if the essence of 'red' depends on the essence of 'colour' which itself

depends on a more general essence and so on until we reach the maximally general essence of 'any object of consciousness whatever', then there must be something that really exists which actually *has* this essence on which all other essences depend. Whether this is true or not is another matter entirely, but at any rate this is what is taken to be intuitively given within the natural attitude. It is this functional aspect of the noema which Sokolowski has fixed upon in his interpretation, and understanding this makes it easier for us to see why he mistakenly believed that the noema was itself objective. To be entirely clear, the noema is not an objective phenomenon, it is inextricably linked to the fundamentally subjective noesis, and is hypothetically just as vulnerable to errors of perception or cognition, though such errors would be more fundamental since they would affect our intuition of essence. In its functional sense, the noema is merely the objectivation of meaning, the *positing* of objectivity, predicated on the immanent intuition of immanently given essences. In all other respects however, Sokolowski gives quite an accurate interpretation of the functional aspect of the noema, and once we excise the question of internalism vs externalism from our understanding, it is easy enough to connect Sokolowski's functional analysis to Føllesdal's structural analysis to create a detailed and practical account of the noema which accommodates both a static and a genetic phenomenological analysis.

I think it is clear enough to see from this, that the propositional attitude, whilst an essentially brilliant innovation from Sokolowski, serves the Fregean approach of Føllesdal just as well if not better than it does Sokolowski himself, if we are willing to abandon the goal of proving Husserl to be an externalist. If we are willing to accept that Husserl had no opinion on the internalism-externalism debate, and no intention of forming one in his philosophy, then we arrive at this very exciting development, of a theory which suspends judgement concerning

the exact nature of the external world in favour of describing how humans go about seizing upon and interpreting objects, and how we iterate upon these interpretations to form cohesive beliefs about ourselves and our environments. It is this notion, that human consciousness is fundamentally propositional in nature, and extends towards the world by means of a process of positing and re-positing objects thus and so, which I want us to keep in mind as we progress through the remainder of this chapter, as I believe that as we discuss the methodological aspects of Husserl's theory, it will become apparent that this notion is very close to what he believed.

6.3 – Noesis & Noema compared to Impressions & Ideas

Before we finish this chapter, now would be a good time to explore the relationship between the noesis and noema, and the equivalent concepts in Humean philosophy, impressions and ideas. It should be no surprise to us by now that there are clear parallels between these two schools of thought. After all, both Hume and Husserl take *experience* rather than knowledge per se as the focus of their investigations, so both men are attempting to describe the same faculties of cognition, and by very similar methodologies, namely different kinds of reflection. Broadly speaking, we can say that the noesis corresponds somewhat to Hume's 'impressions', and the noema to Hume's 'ideas', which I will explain here.

Let us begin with impressions. We will remember that for Hume, impressions are the most basic part of experience, the perception from which all of our ideas are copied, and it is on this basis that we can suggest that they correspond to the noesis, which is for Husserl, the apprehension of a particular essence, the object encountered by the mind when it takes a

certain object as its intentional object. We can go further than this however. We can show that the noesis performs many of the same functions as those which Hume attributes to impressions. For instance, Hume distinguishes between two different types of impression; impressions of sensation, and impressions of reflection, and we can find close parallels in Husserl's description of the noesis. A counterpart to impressions of sensation should be easy to find within the noesis, since it is this kind of impression to which we generally refer when discussing 'impressions'. What Hume describes as an impression which "*arises in the soul originally, from unknown causes*" (T 1.1.2.1), is really what we would call an immanent, phenomenologically *given* experience. More precisely, each individual impression is in fact a 'noetic moment', a single instant of immanent experience with its own fixed eidetic content. As such, the fully adumbrated series of noetic moments which contribute to our fully posited noesis can be understood in a very Humean fashion. Namely, we can interpret this notion as similar (if not identical) to a series of impressions related by contiguity which, by virtue of this relation, contribute to the apparent impression of a united whole.

For both Hume and Husserl then, external objects are conceived of as whole, individual identities by virtue of a cascade of related impressions/noetic moments. Even more interesting however, is what we find when we move on to the matter of impressions of reflection. For Hume, an impression of reflection is the product of reflection upon an idea copied from an impression of sensation. He writes:

"This idea... when it returns upon the soul, produces the new impressions of desire and aversion, hope and fear, which may properly be called impressions of reflexion, because derived from [reflexion]" (T 1.1.2.1).

This kind of impression is much more complicated than a simple impression of sensation, but we can still find a parallel in Husserl's work, especially given what we learned in the last section. What is noteworthy about impressions of reflection as Hume describes them, is that they depend upon the mind taking something *else* as the object of its consciousness. To explain, an intentional act, we have already established, can have only one object as its intentional object, and if more objects are introduced to a single intentional act then they are regarded as a unity rather than a multiplicity of parts. In the act of reflection which Hume describes, the intentional object is not any distinct identity of which the mind forms an impression, it is an *idea*. So, if I once burnt myself on a candle, and I bring to mind the idea of a candle, the intentional object of this act of recollection is the idea of a candle and yet, Hume tells us that I am also experiencing an impression of reflection, the aversion I feel to candles due to my associating them with the pain of being burned. How though, can I simultaneously have the idea of a candle *and* the impression of aversion to candles as the intentional objects of the same mental act? Does this mean that impressions of reflection constitute non-intentional mental states? I think not. Clearly an intentional mental state can have only one intentional object, but these impressions of reflection are not experienced as individuated impressions when they occur, they are merely *felt* as part of the stream of vulgar consciousness. More properly, by traditional Humean terminology, they should be called 'passions'. However, Hume was not mistaken in calling them impressions, he correctly identified that passions too can be apprehended as individual impressions, *in philosophical reflection*.

What Hume has done here, quite unintentionally it seems, is perform a phenomenological reduction on the act of reflection in order to individuate the impression of reflection, and

describe it in terms of its own unique existence rather than as part of the natural stream of consciousness. In our example, with the epoché thus effected and the actual candle bracketed away, all that remains of the intentional act is the attitude with which the candle is regarded – in our case, with fear. In effect, what we are left with is only the thetic character of the intentional act. So we can see that in a sense, a Humean impression of reflection corresponds to what Husserl would call the thetic character of an act. This teaches us two very interesting things. First, that the Humean term ‘impression’ can describe not only the perception of an object simpliciter, but also the manner in which it is intended. After all, if we reflect on each mental act as Hume seems to, we can presumably describe any and all characterisations of the intentional act in terms of impressions of reflection. If I reflect upon the act of perceiving for instance, there is the impression of perceiving or having perceived. In reflecting upon the act of recalling we find the impression of recalling, in judging the impression of judging, and so on and so forth. This is notable inasmuch as it seems to be clearer evidence of intentionality within Hume’s philosophy than anything we were able to discern from a straightforward analysis of Hume. By comparison with Husserl however, we find this evidence that even if Hume did not have a theory of intentionality per se, he seems at least to have had an instinct that mental acts have a certain character which describes the manner in which one regards an object, and which can be picked out in philosophical reflection, an idea which is fundamentally linked to intentionality. Second, we learn that Hume has on some level, exercised the phenomenological reduction and separated the act of perception from the experience of perception in order to study the nature of our experiences from an empirical perspective. While Hume does make a distinction between vulgar consciousness and the philosophical attitude, he does not go so far as Husserl, who maintains that separating the two is a methodological necessity if we are to make a clean analysis of experience. It is

interesting therefore, to note that Hume seems to have done this of his own accord in distinguishing between impressions of sensation and those of reflection.

It may be objected at this stage that I am stretching the relationship between Hume's impressions and Husserl's conception of noesis a little thin. That while the parallel between the noesis and impressions of sensation is pretty clear, the thetic character of an intentional act is a separate phenomenon. However, this objection misses the relationship between the noesis and thetic character of the act which perceives it. As we have discussed already with regard to the sense-making quality of the noema, the nature of the object itself creates limitations on the ways in which it can be perceived, the determinations in which it can be present in consciousness. An object of a certain colour may be seen by one person to be a brighter shade, or by another as a darker shade, but nobody could interpret it as 'the colour of the smell of bread'. So for instance, if someone indicated an object and asked, "what colour would you say that is?", as I turn my regard towards the object in question, the act of perception thus effected is characterised by the aim of judging what colour it is. The noetic data denoting the object's colour is then picked out among all the other noetic data in fulfilment of the expectation of exactly that data. Thus constituted, the thetic character of the intentional act is inextricably linked to the intentional object constituted as a posited noesis, since an intentional act is *always* comprised of some noetic content interacting with the appropriately characterised intentional regard. Noetic data simply cannot be consciously apprehended without an intentional act of the appropriate character. Put simply, it is difficult to see what you don't know to look for. Since Hume conceives of perception as an almost passively acquisitive act, with empirical data travelling in a strictly world-to-mind direction, he mistakenly characterises the thetic character of the intentional act as an impression which

arises fully formed within vulgar consciousness as a unique, separable perception, when in actual fact it can only be characterised in this way in reflection. However, since both the noesis and the thetic character are part of the process by which the phenomena Hume calls 'impressions' are produced, the parallel between 'impression' and noesis remains strong, regardless of the objectivations Hume has found it necessary to make in order to incorporate the character of intentional acts into his theory.

Now that we have established the place of impressions in relation to Husserl's noesis, we can move on to the relationship between Hume's 'ideas' and the noema. We have already established that the full noema is the meaningful correlate of the intentional object, by which we mean that it is what is really grasped once the posited noesis has been picked out in consciousness in some particular mode of determination, which is to say, in a certain *sense*. In distinguishing between the noesis and noema, we might say that where the noesis is what is experienced, the noema is what is understood. With the benefit of our comparison between impressions and noesis, this understanding should help us line up Hume and Husserl's different approaches to the concept of an idea more easily. However, since in Husserl's theory the relationship between the noesis and noema is somewhat more complicated than the mere 'copying' that Hume suggests, we first have to clarify how Hume's theory can be interpreted in order to accommodate this complexity.

Now, we have already identified that Hume's concept of 'impressions' encompasses everything that is experienced within a single intentional act, but a single impression is by no means sufficient to produce a meaningful idea. A single image, perceived for only a fraction of a second may constitute an impression on its own, and it may well be possible for this

impression to be copied into an idea, but not one that can be interpreted in any meaningful sense. An idea like this, entirely singular and devoid of any possible connection to any other, could not be factored into the stream of consciousness and would therefore have no force with which to act upon the mind. It would be as if it had never been perceived at all. Impressions, by Hume's account, gain vivacity when reinforced by regular experience, and so a whole concatenation of impressions are required in order to produce an idea of any force. The reason I bring this up is that Hume's theory seems to lack any account of how we make sense of new experiences. On the face of it, this is a fairly significant flaw in Hume's theory, and of course, this is related to Hume's difficulty in explaining how 'nature' predisposes us to unite all of our separable impressions into distinct existences in the imagination. Surely, he needs somewhat to explain how we are ultimately capable of interpreting new experiences if we are born with no innate ideas with which to connect them. However, despite the lack of *ultimate* grounding, Hume's theme of *relations* between impressions provides a fairly sound framework for explaining our faculty for cognition, if a certain number of simple ideas can be taken as given. Put simply, we make sense of new ideas by comparing them to old ones. When a new idea bears strong relations to some old ones, we extend our understanding of existing ideas to this new idea. For example, when driving a lorry for the first time, I may observe that the controls of a lorry bear some resemblance to the controls of a car and attempt to interact with the lorry on that basis. This comparison is not perfect, but it *does* provide me with a basis of understanding from which to operate until more experience of the particular skills associated with lorry-driving can be obtained. This further experience will likewise be processed in terms of prior experiences, with each moment of experience informing my understanding of the next, and so on and so forth.

The reason this part of Hume's philosophy is important to our discussion of the noema, is that it corresponds fairly well to the phenomenological notion of eidetic regions, even if it is a little more crude. For both Hume and Husserl, ideas are, in a sense, organised according to their relationships with other ideas, into a structure which is established and refined by repeated experiences. The point on which they differ is merely the manner in which these ideas are arranged. For Husserl, ideas are sorted into regions arranged into a hierarchy of eidetic generality, with more general eidetic regions encompassing several more specific regions. So red, blue, and yellow are all species of colour; colour, brightness and reflectiveness are all species of visual phenomena etc. For Hume, ideas are organised into clusters of related perceptions, such that, for example, in a series of perceptions with nothing in common except that they all contain something white, each individual impression of 'white' is copied into an idea, which is related to every other idea of 'white' by the relation of resemblance between them, until the idea of 'white' can be conceived in general terms without the necessity of referring to any one individual impression or idea of 'white'. This is an aspect of Hume's theory which we will discuss more fully in the next chapter. For now though, it is worth pointing out that, although Hume does not explicitly say so, and I would by no means suggest that this is a part of Humean theory, we could presumably group several similar *general* ideas together in the same manner by which we group individual, specific ideas, such that a series of general ideas with nothing in common except that they all denote, for instance, a *colour* of some sort. In this way, we can see that with very little effort, we can make Hume's theory of ideas harmonise with that of Husserl, arranging Hume's general ideas into a hierarchy which greatly resembles that which Husserl describes, which gives us the basis we need to proceed to a discussion of the noema.

We saw in our investigation of the noema that at least one of the functions of the noema is to provide the structural framework into which novel noetic data can be fit in order to produce the meaningful experiencing of a new perception, and from Husserl's point of view this is achieved by virtue of our immanently given intuition of the eidetic hierarchy. This is how we know that, for instance, colour is a property of substance, and not the other way around. As such, when we encounter a new perception, all questions of this sort, regarding the hierarchical relations between the individual properties exhibited within the perception, are taken for granted. Now, Hume does not have a sophisticated theory of meaning which would enable us to make a close comparison to Husserl, but we have already established that Hume's theory of ideas is at least compatible with Husserl's model of eidetic hierarchies. Given this, we can see how a Humean idea can fulfil the same role as does the noema in Husserl's philosophy. Each general idea acts as a frame of reference for all the many different components of a complex perception such as those which comprise many of our conscious mental states, with every familiar idea being recognised by its resemblance to an existing idea, thus giving stability to the perceptual act in the same way that the noema derives its structure from eidetic intuitions.

If we were left in any doubt as to the relevance of Humean 'ideas' to the noema, all reservations should be easily swept aside as we move on to the next function attributed to the noema by our interpretation. We will recall that aside from providing the structural framework for new ideas, the noema also serves as the intentional object of predicative acts. In predicating, we posit a fully realised noema as being really existent (either provisionally, or with conviction), thus objectivating it into a form which can be seized upon in an intentional act. Thus conceived, the meaning which the noema represents functions as the noetic content

of the predicative act, and is seized upon in a particular mode of determination, which is to say that the intentional act which takes this noema as its object has a particular thetic character. In this way, the noema is iterated upon, and we can form new beliefs about the object from which the original noema was derived. The reason this should excite us is that, taken together with the structural function, this conception of the noema seems to successfully address issues which Hume conceded that he had difficulty approaching.

In the section of the *Treatise* entitled 'Of the nature of the idea or belief', Hume attempts to confront the question of what differentiates an idea which is believed to be true, from one which is believed to be false. He writes:

"Suppose a person present with me, who advances propositions, to which I do not assent ... 'tis evident, that notwithstanding my incredulity, I clearly understand his meaning, and form all the same ideas, which he forms ... I therefore ask, Wherein consists the difference betwixt believing and disbelieving any proposition?" (T 1.3.7.3)

The question here is very simple, if two people share an idea, how is it possible that one of them should believe the idea to be an idea grounded in reality, and another should believe it to be only a fiction? After all, the idea is the same whether or not it is believed, the difference consists only of a difference of force and vivacity, since a more forceful idea is more likely to be believed than a weaker one. Hume writes:

"We may mingle, and unite, and separate, and confound, and vary our ideas in a hundred different ways; but 'till there appears some principle, which fixes one of these

different situations, we have in reality no opinion: And this principle, as it plainly makes no addition to our precedent ideas, can only change the manner of our conceiving them.” (T 1.3.7.4)

This passage seems to conclusively demonstrate that Hume acknowledged a distinction between an idea and the manner in which it is perceived, just as there is a distinction between impressions and the manner in which *they* are perceived. We have already shown that Hume has some way of describing the different manners of perceiving ideas in the form of his impressions of reflection, though he doesn't seem to make this connection himself, but now we learn that Hume himself recognised in his philosophy, a need for this difference in the manner of perceiving in order to make sense of apparent variations between empirically identical ideas. The principle which he claims we require in order to fix a particular meaning to an idea is, we might conclude, the noema, and we can strengthen this interpretation with the following passage from the *Treatise*:

“When we infer the existence of an object from that of others, some object must always be present either to the memory or senses, in order to be the foundation of our reasoning; since the mind cannot run up with its inferences in infinitum”
(T 1.3.7.5)

Or, in other words, to every predicative act, there belongs some (intentional) object upon which depends all reasoning which takes place within and on the basis of the act, and this is true whether we are predicating in the perceptual presence (present to the senses) or the absence (present to the memory) of the object. Now, Hume discusses this problem regarding

the distinction between ideas which are believed and those which are not, which is a distinction which Husserl gives special prominence when he comes to discuss the special modifications the noema undergoes when its particular belief modality is being considered, which is something we will discuss in chapter 8. However, when belief is taken in a narrower sense, as a particular judgement, we can see how this same line of reasoning can be applied just as readily to any other thetic modifications of the intentional act. In perceiving, recalling, judging, loving, fearing etc., the idea of the object in question is always the same, the difference constituted only by the different manner in which it is perceived, and though he may not have had the resources to explain why, Hume definitely recognised this fact, giving us all the evidence we need to equate his concept of an idea to Husserl's noema.

Another reason we might equate the noesis and noema to Hume's impressions and ideas is, as we demonstrated in chapter 1, that for both Hume and Husserl, first person subjectivity constitutes a certain type of a priori understanding by virtue of its immanent givenness within consciousness. Of course, for Husserl this fact depends on the noesis and noema operating together syncretically; the experience of a particular essence depends on the understanding of a corresponding general essence and vice versa, whereas for Hume ideas can theoretically be separated from their corresponding impressions, but this discrepancy can be explained as part of Hume's recurring difficulty in indicating whether a phenomenon he describes occurs in vulgar consciousness or philosophical reflection. While it is possible to exercise reason in order to separate an idea from its impression in philosophical reflection, in vulgar consciousness they always come as a linked pair, at least at the point at which the impression occurs. In fact, separating an idea from its impressions and regarding only the idea is precisely the process that is carried out in the eidetic reduction. In the same way, the noesis and noema

may be separated from one another in phenomenological reflection, though in actional consciousness they are explicitly and permanently correlated. To put it another way, while noesis and noema, or impressions and ideas, may be apprehended individually, the function which they perform within cognition depends on their being linked. From this we can see that the functional relations between noesis and noema closely parallel those between impressions and ideas. Both the noesis and the impressions are described as bearing the immanent sense content obtained by the mental acts which they represent. For both Hume and Husserl, what is obtained by the simple act of perceiving is only *particular*, a particular essence or group of essences for Husserl, or a particular impression for Hume. Now, while the manner in which Hume conceives of an 'idea' is rather vague and poorly grounded, as we will explore in more detail in the next chapter, we can still observe that Humean ideas perform a similar function to the noema by the following argument. For Hume, an idea must exactly resemble the impression from which it is derived. The only respect in which ideas differ from their impressions is by their force and vivacity. Since all the sense content of a perception arises initially within the impression, and all that content vanishes as soon as the impression is interrupted, then the idea represents nothing but the persistent belief that there *was* an impression in the first place or, in other words, the idea represents the objectivation of its own meaning. After all, the sense content of the idea is the same as the content of the impression, so the formation of the idea adds nothing to the perception. What distinguishes an idea from an impression then, if they are otherwise identical, is only the fact that the idea lingers after the impression has gone. Its diminished force and vivacity is not the quality which distinguishes it from an impression, but a consequence of the fact that the impression which formed the evidential basis for the idea is absent (or only intermittently present).

Chapter 7 – Reassessing Hume

In chapter 1, we identified three main principles underpinning all of Hume's work in the *Treatise*. The copy principle established that all ideas are copied from corresponding impressions which resemble them exactly, differing only in respect of their diminished degree of force and vivacity. The separability principle establishes that every perception is a distinct existence, with no necessary connection to any other perception. The principle of association establishes that the purely contingent connections between perceptions exist purely on the basis of the perceived relations between them, predominantly the relations of resemblance, causation, and contiguity. We have also seen how these principles cause problems for Hume. There is a whole host of questions that arise while investigating the science of man that Hume struggles in vain to explain. These problems are most evident when explored concerning the matter of personal identity, and in this discussion Hume observes that since all our perceptions are separable, then there is no basis on which to believe in the existence of a unified mind. In trying to explain this discrepancy by referring to the principle of association, he is unable to account for the mechanism by which the mind is made capable of associating separate perceptions. By following these principles in his characteristically meticulous style, Hume succeeds in elucidating a great many things about human cognition, but ultimately loses himself in a labyrinth due to his inability to renounce either his account of the mind, which holds that there really is no single central ego in which all our perceptions inhere, or his account of perception, which holds that we are able to produce a fictional idea of the mind according to the principle of association. This is an insuperable problem for Hume, since the principle of association which governs the process of forming an idea of the mind depends on the existence of a mind in the first place. This would not be a problem if the mind came into

the world already equipped with enough innate ideas to mediate the incorporation of new perceptions into the mind-bundle, but since Hume does not believe in innate ideas because they would not be empirical ideas copied from impressions, this avenue of thought is not available to him. As such, we are left with only the copy principle with which to explain our idea of the mind, and since we can never have a true impression of the mind, then we should not be able to have an idea of it either, and Hume founders on the reef of his own scepticism.

7.1 – Reassessment of Humean Concept of Ideas

It should be clear by now, that Hume's philosophy has a problem. Namely, whichever way we interpret its principles, we always end up backed into a corner, unable to properly account for any of our supposed knowledge. Furthermore, even if we are happy to indulge this sceptical view and abandon our claim to any rationally justified knowledge, we still fail to justify even the illusion of knowledge, since we are inevitably caught between Hume's two unrenounceable principles and prevented from conceiving of the existence of a mind to preside over the association of our various perceptions. Husserl would not have been surprised by this. We have already discussed Husserl's attitude to the natural sciences in section 1.4.1, and the same problems which affect the natural sciences apply equally to Hume's philosophy, due to Hume's adherence to a strictly empirical theory of knowledge. The confusing, meandering paths of reasoning we have been navigating in Hume's work are, to Husserl, the inevitable product of a strictly empirical theory of knowledge, since each new principle within the theory must be justified by a further empirical observation, the validity of which must itself be justified by certain general empirical principles, and so on and so forth. Husserl writes:

"If...all proof rests on principles governing [empirical] procedure, and if its final justification involves an appeal to such principles, then we should either be involved in a circle or in an infinite regress if the principles of proof themselves require further proof, in a circle if the principles of proof used to justify the principles of proof were the same as the latter, in a regress if both sets of principles were repeatedly different." (LI, pp. 59-60)

This problem is precisely what we see in Hume, and if we are attentive, we can trace its origin back through Hume's reasoning to the very foundations of his theory. We know that Hume ultimately resorted to attributing our faculty of association to the influence of 'nature', and this recourse to naturalism is his half-hearted attempt to escape the circular consequences of an argument based on the principle of association, whereby the mind is necessary to mediate the process by which the idea of itself is established. Tracing the argument back further however, we know that the reason for the introduction of the principle of association in the first place is Hume's need to explain why perceptions *seem* to be necessarily connected in vulgar consciousness when, according to the separability principle, they are always separable, and whatever connections that do exist are only contingent, even though according to the copy principle, it should not be possible for us to have an idea of a connection between two perceptions unless we have had an impression of such a connection. The separability principle itself though, is only the inevitable consequence of the copy principle. If ideas are only copies of impressions then, since impressions can easily be considered independently from each other and are fairly obviously distinct existences due to the ease with which we are able to, for instance, distinguish between different colours, sounds, objects or moments in time, their

corresponding ideas must equally be distinct existences. Thus, we can see that all three of the core principles which we have found in Hume's philosophy proceed from one another. The copy principle is, to Hume's mind, self-evident. As a result, the separability principle must be true. If all perceptions are separable, then the fact that we perceive them as related can only be accounted for by the principle of association. Given that the copy principle is therefore the fundamental premise of Hume's entire empirical philosophy, the separability principle and the principle of association are inevitable, there simply does not seem to be any other way of conceiving of empiricism once the nature of perceptions is outlined in this way. The root cause of Hume's problems then, and indeed all the problems which Husserl attributes to empiricism, is found within the copy principle. Specifically, the problem is how Hume conceives of an 'idea' since impressions are, for both Hume and Husserl, given within consciousness as apodictic evidence due to their immanent self-givenness, whereas the corresponding ideas, for Husserl, gain new significations in their intentional constitution within a mental act.

The problem, at its core, is that a purely empirical theory of knowledge entails a purely empirical theory of cognition, a theory which takes empirical psychology to be the be-all and end-all of metaphysical reasoning. A view like this however, rests upon a series of assumptions concerning supposedly apodictic certainties and other ideal objects without empirically observable correlates in the real world. I have already touched on the problems involved in the naturalisation of logic, the assertion that logic is merely an articulation of the process of valid thought, and I shall choose not to repeat myself here, but Husserl does express some significant concerns over an area of empirical philosophy which is indicative of this very problem, which gives us an opportunity here to understand how Husserl approached Hume's interpretation of the same issue.

The area in question is the empirical theory concerning abstract ideas. We discussed Hume's version of this theory a little earlier when discussing abstraction as evidence of the function of causal derivation, and it seemed to be a very compelling theory in that regard. As we shall see, Hume's theory varies somewhat from some of the better-known versions espoused by philosophers contemporary with him, and in fact while Hume's theory bears some resemblance to it, he rejects many of the particulars. In general however, the empirical theory of abstraction holds thus; that all abstract ideas are in fact particular ideas which represent other particular ideas in some respect. This is naturally achieved by virtue of the association of many different perceptions, by comparing lots of different objects and picking out characteristics common to each of them or, alternatively, by stripping away characteristics that differ between objects, leaving only a simple idea, with its meaning self-evidently attached by virtue of all other possible meanings having already been stripped away. For example, to gain an idea of the colour white, abstracted from any particular objects, I can compare a number of different objects, such as snow, milk, and chalk, and between these different complex ideas, I can clearly pick out that there is one property common to all of them, which is the colour white. Abstract ideas conceived in this way can then be used in later cognitions as a sort of link, facilitating the association of two new perceptions by their common relation to the same abstract idea. As one might imagine however, the empirical argument presented here only succeeds as long as every abstract idea can be derived from an empirical perception, and this is by no means the case. As Husserl points out when discussing the version of this theory presented by John Locke, there is a fundamental difference between an individual presentation of an object possessing a certain quality, and the abstract concept representing the general form of that quality. For example, if we try and think of the abstract idea of a triangle by referring only to particular triangles, we run into

difficulties. The abstract triangle, after all, is not any one particular triangle, so it cannot be an equilateral triangle, nor can it be an isosceles triangle, or a scalene triangle. Its sides have no particular length, and its angles bear no particular proportion to each other. In fact, the abstract concept of a triangle has no *particular* qualities whatsoever, so in order to think of the generalised form of the triangle, we must think of a triangle which has none of the properties of a triangle in any particular determination, and therefore bears no specific resemblance to any particular triangle we have ever seen. This being the case, we are left to wonder how exactly abstraction is supposed to work if, by abstracting certain concepts, they lose their resemblance and hence applicability to the objects in which these concepts are supposed to inhere? If one is limited to thinking of abstract ideas only according to empirical standards by appealing to the idea of derivation from experience, one will encounter this problem in every instance, required to think of the abstract object as an object resembling those particular objects which it is supposed to represent, but nevertheless resembling those objects in no particular, rendering the abstract object unthinkable. If abstractions of perception do not and cannot resemble in any particular the impressions from which they are supposedly derived, they cannot be said to meaningfully represent any particular perception. The difficulty here, according to Husserl, is that Locke (and by extension, all empiricists) maintain a dichotomy between mental existence and so-called 'real' existence. He writes:

"[Locke] forgets that mental existence is also real existence, and that, when being-presented is opposed to being-real one does not and ought not to point to the opposition between the mental and the extra-mental, but to the opposition between what is presented, in the sense of being merely meant, and what is true, in the sense of corresponding to such a meaning" (LI, p. 255)

What this means is that the abstract triangle is not a mental object like an idea, which one can seize upon and consider as independent from the impression from which it is derived. Rather, it is a *meaning* (or ‘Sinn’), which denotes the conditions a particular object must meet in order to be judged to be a triangle. To think of an abstract object in the way described by Locke is simply impossible, since it must by necessity lack any resemblance to the objects from which it is supposed to derive, which by empirical reasoning, should be impossible. For Husserl, it is simply an *a priori* truth that the universal is inseparable from the particular, since the universal form of a given quality is “*rooted in the essence of the Genus as such*” (LI, p. 255), meaning that the abstract triangle, for instance, is the intuitive, genetic description of any triangle, encompassing every species of triangle and/or every particular triangle as eidetically subordinate objects. Likewise, any other abstract concept is similarly genetic, describing whatever Sinn is common to every object within that eidetic genus.

Hume’s theory, however, differs from that espoused by Locke in the respect that Hume acknowledged the absurdity of an abstract idea that cannot be thought of (T 1.1.7.2), and attempted to circumnavigate the issue in what we should recognise by now as a classically Humean style. An abstract idea, says Hume, is simply a particular idea “*annex’d to a certain term*” which bears certain relations to a large number of other particular ideas (T 1.1.7.1). In which case, according to Hume, I might gain the idea of ‘white’ for instance, from only a small number of impressions, and subsequently learn a name for this impression, the linguistic term ‘white’, which is the term to which the idea of whiteness is then ‘annexed’. This enables me to describe new objects possessing that same quality in an apparently abstract sense, by using the term ‘white’ as a linguistic intermediary to describe the particular resemblance between each object. So, for example, I do not need to say “the colour of milk closely resembles the

colour of salt” which manages both to be fastidiously precise in expressing only what I am empirically warranted to express, *and* to leave open the possibility of conveying that milk and salt are *different* (if similar) colours, which is exactly the opposite of what I wish to convey. Instead, I can simply say, “milk and salt are both white”, and thereby delineate more clearly the sense of the resemblance between them, describing not only that there is a resemblance between them, but also what the precise resemblance is. In thinking of white then, I do not need to be able to conceive of an abstract form of white, dissimilar from any one particular white whilst nevertheless resembling all of them. In thinking of white, I am really just calling to mind the idea of the colour of milk, which I know from experience is almost exactly the same as the colour of salt, and of snow, and sugar, and however many other things. In effect, when I think of the colour white, I am really only thinking of ‘the colour which is shared by salt, milk, snow, etc’. In this way, the general idea is expressed in a neatly empirical form, in terms of the resemblances between every object which represents a given idea, and to that general idea is given a nominalisation which will serve to describe each particular instance of that idea, or ideas sufficiently similar to it.

The clear advantage which Hume’s nominalist version of the theory of abstraction has over Locke’s, is that it does not require that empirical perceptions be converted into formless, abstract things at all in the process of generalisation. An ‘abstract idea’ such as it is in Hume’s theory, is really just an idea which is present in multiple different perceptions, and is called to mind in express terms of those natural, empirical perceptions. Thus, Hume evades the absurdity of Locke’s position, but is Hume’s solution sufficient to escape Husserl’s critique? We might, in fact, be tempted to hold out hope that it is, since Hume’s description of the relationship between particular ideas and the terms that unite them has some formal

similarities with Husserl's account of eidetic hierarchies, with higher level general descriptions standing in a single common relationship with each more particular concept beneath it. Alas, Husserl himself was not convinced. As much as Husserl recognises the moves that Hume makes towards a properly eidetic description of ideas (LI, p. 292), he nevertheless maintains that Hume has made key errors in his application of this principle. He writes:

"Whenever things are 'alike', an identity in the strict and true sense is also present. We cannot predicate exact likeness of two things, without stating the respect in which they are alike. Each exact likeness relates to a Species, under which the objects compared are subsumed. Similarity is similarity of a certain kind and this kind cannot be once again reduced to similarity without an infinite regress." (LI, p. 242)

The exact problem here, as far as Husserl is concerned, is that Hume's 'general terms', unlike Husserl's own 'eidetic genera', the structure of which is a matter of eidetic essentiality, are merely derived from individual particular ideas, which cannot possibly be indicative of any sense beyond the sense which they possess in and of themselves. Since, as Husserl tells us, we cannot predicate the likeness of two objects without stating the respect in which they are alike, Hume is hence unable to predicate the likeness of any two objects without reference to a third similar object, and the likeness between this third object and the first two must be predicated according to their resemblance to a fourth similar object, and so-on and so-forth, *ad infinitum*. To give a clear example, let us consider how we might make the judgement that milk and snow are the same colour, according to Hume's system. Naturally we cannot simply say that 'they look the same' because that is, empirically speaking, the same as saying that 'they are alike in the respect that they share a likeness', and hence a trivial and circular

argument. Instead we might say, ‘they are both the same colour as sugar’, and this would indeed be a non-trivial way of describing the likeness between milk and snow, but now we must justify the judgements that milk shares a likeness with sugar, and that sugar shares a likeness with snow, or else the use of sugar as a common reference to describe the likeness between milk and snow falls under suspicion. As such, we must introduce a fourth object which bears the same likeness to all three of our objects, and then justify our judgement of *that* likeness, and so-on. So, we can see that Hume’s account of abstraction falls prey to exactly the same sort of problems which are endemic to all purely empirical philosophy, either he becomes trapped in a circular argument, or falls into an infinite regress.

7.2 – Husserl’s Objections to Empirical ‘Ideas’

The reason for the confusion regarding the nature of abstract ideas is that the empiricists’ concept of an *idea* in general is incredibly unclear. In fact, Husserl identifies six problems with the concept of an idea within what he calls the ‘English theory of knowledge’ (LI, p. 251), which he seems to take to be best exemplified by Locke, but which also includes Hume. First, the empirical version of ideas refers to absolutely any object of interior perception whatsoever, regardless of its origin. As such, under this rubric, no actual act of perception is necessary in order for us to have ideas, they can sometimes simply emerge, as is the case with the ideas corresponding to the passions, or with general ideas corresponding to a set of particular ideas associated with them. Second, the term idea can also refer more narrowly to only a singular presentation of an idea, as opposed to abstract, general ideas. Singular presentations of this kind are, to Husserl, intentional experiences, whereas eidetic intuition, the phenomenological equivalent of abstract ideas describes a set of purely intuitive, pre-

cognitive understandings. From these first two criticisms alone then, we can see that the empiricists fail to make a distinction between intentional and non-intentional ideas, since the concept of an idea encompasses both intentional, perceptual ideas (like the idea I have of the books which I can see on my shelf), and non-intentional, non-perceptual ideas (like the idea I have that books belong on shelves). Third, Husserl claims that Locke confuses the act (or act-phenomenon) of presentation with the object which is being presented. The effect of this confusion is to reduce the existence of each object to only the sum of its perceived attributes, and make any mind-independent existence it might have indistinguishable from the mind-dependent subjective presentation that is given within the act of perception. If we are to maintain that objects can have any mind-independent existence, this conflation of the subjective and the objective cannot be allowed. Fourth, and along much the same lines as the third criticism, Husserl tells us that Locke regularly conflates the sensation associated with a perception, with the properties belonging to the object of that same perception, meaning that there is no difference between an object *being* red, for instance, and merely *seeming* red. Ultimately, this suggests that the only reason why an object could *seem* to be red is because it *is* red, a view which blithely ignores all questions of perceptual error, or any variation in the subjective presentation of an object to the mind. This is another instance then, where the distinction between the objective and the subjective fails to be drawn. Fifth, the empirical notion of a 'general idea' conflates 'properties as specific attributes', meaning those properties which pertain to a *particular* object in and of itself, with 'properties as objective aspects', meaning those properties which constitute essential species within their own eidetic genera – this criticism runs in the same vein as the earlier criticism of empirical notions of abstraction. Sixth and finally, Husserl tells us that Locke “*fails to distinguish between an idea in the sense of an intuitive presentation (a phenomenon, a floating image), and an idea in the*

sense of a significant reference" (LI, p. 252). What this means is that Locke acknowledges no distinction between an idea which is the product of perceptions, and one which is intuitively given, taken for granted, despite the fact that such ideas behave manifestly differently.

We can see in these criticisms a single common thread which characterises much of the conflict between dogmatic empiricism and phenomenology. For empiricists, an idea is a simple thing, a straightforward copy of an empirical impression, and nothing else. For phenomenologists, an idea can exist in any one of a number of different forms, which empirical reasoning cannot make out because of its insistence on conceiving of ideas as always being traceable to empirical phenomena. Thought of in this way, we could never account for any of the different modes in which the idea can be presented, namely the intuitive, the noetic, and the noematic modes. The role of these different modes should be made clearer as we progress, but broadly speaking, intuitive ideas are those which are presented as *given*, they are those ideas which form the background to cognition; noetic ideas are those which have circumscribed the observable properties of the object of perception and present them to us *as* a single contiguous object of perception as opposed to a mere assemblage of parts; noematic ideas are those which have been seized upon in a particularthetic mode of determination, and given some significance, a noematic *Sinn*. Translated into Humean terminology, we might equate intuitive ideas to those ideas which are part of the mind-bundle already, those which have been incorporated by previous acts of perception into the body of perceptions which comprise the mind. Noetic ideas can be equated to Humean impressions as they exist prior to being copied into ideas, and noematic ideas can be equated to ideas proper, with all of the relevant associations factored into the understanding, as it exists in conscious apprehension rather than as a naturalised part of the mind-bundle. It likely

won't have escaped notice that I have equated Humean impressions to a Husserlian form of idea, but this is illustrative of the single most important difference between Hume and Husserl – the introduction of intensionality to the perceptual act.

7.3 - Intensionality

Intensionality (not to be confused with intentionality) is, in this context, contrasted with extensionality. The extensionality of a perceptual act describes the extent to which the content of a perception is determined by objective properties belonging to the object of perception, those properties which are native to the external world. By contrast, intensionality describes the extent to which the content of a perception inheres in its subjective, interior presentation within the mind. By making this contrast, we are thus able to distinguish between objects or classes of objects with functionally similar extensional properties, but intensionally different meanings. For example, 'things that float on water' are extensionally identical to 'things less dense than water', in the sense that all things which are less dense than water will float on it, they share the extensional property of 'buoyancy'. However, the mere observation that an object floats on water is not identical to the observation that an object is less dense than water. It is perfectly possible to observe that an object is less dense than water without ever putting it into water in the first place, so the intensional *meaning* differs between the two ideas. Put simply, buoyancy means something different to density, and an understanding of the one cannot be intuited by observation of the other. As we have seen, many empiricists view perception as a purely extensional process, a view which we see reflected in the *Treatise* fairly consistently, and although the existence of intensional meanings can be explained by empiricists as the observation of certain relations

between ideas (for instance, it is observed that all objects less dense than water also happen to be buoyant in it), we have already seen that a purely extrinsic, extensional model of perception cannot account for the intentionality necessary to escape the self-defeating consequences of dogmatic empiricism. For Husserl, a purely extensional model of perception results in an ultimately sceptical attitude towards all possible content of perceptual phenomena. This being the case, a truly non-sceptical account must include an account of the intensional quality of perception.

Before we proceed, it will probably be a good idea to discuss the bearing that intensionality has on intentionality since the concepts are related but distinctly different, but in order to do this, we will first need to clarify the position of intentionality in our discussion. Intentionality insofar as we have already covered in this chapter, is generally taken to concern the ‘aboutness’ of a mental act, the quality of the act which describes precisely which object it concerns, but this account of intentionality is too restrained. In discussions of intentionality within Humean scholarship, we have seen that intentionality is typically thought of in terms of representation, but neither a strictly extrinsic model of representation, nor a partially intrinsic account supplies us with an adequate understanding of intentionality which coheres seamlessly with Hume’s theory as a whole. Husserl, for his part, takes intentionality to be the very crux of the issue, and he certainly didn’t believe that Hume made any truly concerted effort to describe anything like intentionality in the *Treatise*. He writes:

“Had [Hume’s] sensualism not blinded him to the whole sphere of intentionality, of ‘consciousness-of’, had he grasped it in an investigation of essence, he would not have

become the great sceptic, but instead the founder of a truly 'positive' theory of reason." (PRS, p. 113)

I cannot stress enough how important this passage is for us in understanding Husserl's attitude to Hume. Here, Husserl identifies for us the two details, the lack of which he conceives as having limited Hume from attaining a proper, phenomenological philosophy, namely his lack of understanding of intentionality, and his failure to investigate objects as 'essences', rather than sensualistic 'ideas'. We have already established that the empirical concept of 'ideas' is too vague, and we will see the consequences of this vagary as we proceed, but we have not yet conclusively demonstrated that Hume actually *lacked* an understanding of intentionality, only that if he *did* have one, it didn't help him much. In what respect then, are we to understand this supposed deficiency of Hume's theory?

If we insist on interpreting intentionality in the manner most common to modern authors, as the matter of what mental acts are 'about', then plainly Hume *does* have shades of intentionality in his theory, particularly in those passages pertaining to the passions which are, according to Hume, always *about* something or other. This is too significant a detail for Husserl to have overlooked, and yet he still firmly believes that Hume lacks any kind of understanding of intentionality. The matter will be made clearer for us however, if we recall that Husserl's understanding of intentionality was informed by his reading of Brentano's work on the subject, and is therefore characterised in terms of the concept of 'intentional inexistence'. On this basis, intentionality describes the idea that every mental phenomenon "*contain[s] an object intentionally within [itself]*" (PES, p. 68). This notion was rather oblique when we first encountered it, but having since encountered the concept of the noema, we

can understand much better what it means. The object 'within' the intentional act is, strictly speaking, the full noema which, we will remember, is the meaningful correlate of the sensuously grasped noesis or, if you prefer, it is the fully developed *idea* of an object once meaning has been projected onto its sensuous presentation. The fullest understanding of any given object is dependent on the synthesis of the extensional properties of the object as represented by the noesis, and the intensional, noematic meaning projected onto it, and the difference between these two sets of properties can be easily understood. Solidity, for instance, is an extensional property, since it is defined in objective terms. An object is solid if it is impermeable to other objects. However, if we compare *solidity* to a property like *hardness*, we can see that hardness has a degree of subjectivity to it which solidity does not possess. For example, while pumice might be judged to be very hard when compared to sponge, it might equally be judged to be very soft when compared to diamond. In either case, all three objects are solid, because solidity is an extensional property and not subject to interpretation, but the hardness attributed to them depends on intensional significations borne of an intuitive grasp of the different factors relevant to each act of judgement. As such, we understand that while the actual *rigidity* (which is the actual extensional counterpart to hardness) of pumice remains the same, the hardness which we attribute to it at any one time will depend on what it is compared to, or the circumstances under which said attribution is made. With all this in mind, we can see that intentionality for Husserl, far from being a matter of merely determining what a mental act is 'about' (since mental acts can be about things which don't exist), it is the matter of determining the manner in which intensional *meanings* are conferred upon the intentional object of a particular intentional act. Intentionality, therefore, is to be understood as depending on the intensionality of each mental act.

The need for an intensional account of perception can be further demonstrated if we return to the concept of objectless presentations which we discussed earlier. Obviously, we can form an idea of an object by purely empirical means when it is manifestly present to us, but we must remember that there are all sorts of ideas which lack any specific worldly referent. The traditional Humean approach to this problem has been to refer to the capacity of the imagination to link together simple ideas in order to form more complex ones and thereby construct these objectless, fictional, or otherwise non-veridical ideas from parts of referentially grounded ideas. While this account is perfectly adequate for accommodating fantasies, like the idea of Pegasi (horse plus eagle wings) or of giants (man plus very big), once we turn our attention to more abstract ideas, we once more run into difficulties. Frege writes:

“It may perhaps be granted that every grammatically well-formed expression representing a proper name always has a sense. But this is not to say that to the sense there also corresponds a reference. The words ‘the celestial body most distant from the Earth’ have a sense, but it is very doubtful if they also have a reference. The expression ‘the least rapidly convergent series’ has a sense but demonstrably has no reference... In grasping a sense, one is not certainly assured of a reference.” (Frege, 1892)

Frege here provides us with two examples of ideas which we are perfectly capable of grasping, but totally incapable of assigning a reference, and neither of which we can claim to comprehend by association with other, empirically derived ideas. The idea of the ‘most distant celestial body to Earth’ has no theoretical limit to its distance, and since every other relation of distance we have encountered by sensuous means has had quantifiable limits, no

real association can be made between the two. Likewise, the 'least rapidly convergent series' cannot be found, as there is always a less rapidly convergent series, descending infinitely in smaller and smaller increments, but every convergence ever encountered by the senses has a definite and finite rate of convergence. One could ask of course, if it is possible for an idea to have a sense which cannot be conceived of in terms of veridical experience, but it is easily retorted that if these ideas did not have a sense, then it would not be possible to seize upon said senses in order to assess them for their possibility; in other words, if these ideas had no sense, it would not be possible to wonder whether or not their apparent sense was meaningful. Assuredly, the ideas communicated by these words *do* have a sense, but the sense is abstract and therefore is grasped abstractly. As such, the senses of each of these ideas do not describe easily comprehensible mental objects. Instead, they circumscribe possible eidetic regions, and the mental act which brings the idea into conscious apprehension posits the possibility of an object occupying that region. The extensional part of the perception (the existence or non-existence of such an object) merely determines the truth-value of the idea, while the intensional sense (Sinn) is what delineates its meaning and/or significance.

Returning to the matter of the deficiency of empirical 'ideas', we can see with the benefit of our understanding of intensionality what it is that the empirical, extrinsically derived idea is lacking. Namely, it lacks any facility to confer meaning *onto* perceptual objects since, from an empirical perspective, all meaning pertaining to perceptual objects is derived from the objects themselves. When restricting ourselves to only very simple acts of perception, such as the static perception of a single object without any other context, we can see why this mistake might be made, since ideas *of* objects do tend to have fairly clear correlates in their respective

impressions. Ideas *about* objects, or *concerning* objects however, have a good deal more meaning than the impressions to which they refer would imply, as we can see if we take a more complex scenario as our example. For instance, imagine that I am playing hide-and-seek in an environment where I have never played hide-and-seek before, like someone else's house. In searching for a hiding place, I enter a room I had been in earlier in the day, and I see a table covered by a large cloth, which drapes onto the floor. Immediately, I take the table to be an excellent hiding place, and dive underneath it, obscuring myself with the cloth. Now, I had been in this room earlier, and seen the table already, so I already had an idea of the table, and all its formal properties were well known to me. I had an idea of how large it was, how high off the ground it stood, and I knew that the cloth covering it draped onto the floor. However, once I was engaged in the task of finding a place to hide, these properties gained new meanings which the table did not have in and of itself. If it had, I would have taken note of them on the occasion of my initial impression of it. Now the table is not only four feet square in area and three feet off the ground, it is also 'big enough to crawl under comfortably', and the cloth is no longer merely a tablecloth, it is also, for me at least and in this instance, a veil. It is important to stress that my initial impression of the table and the latter impression are extensionally identical. No new information has been added to the presentation of the table to indicate its aptitude for facilitating covert behaviour. The only difference is the context in which the object has become present to the mind, and hence the thetic character of the perceptual act. Where in the first instance the perceptual act was characterised merely by simple 'observing', in the latter case the act is characterised by 'searching for a hiding place', which is in fact a complex thetic construction which entails the search for an object which satisfies criteria of 'suitability for hiding', which will be ascertained by a secondary mental act characterised by the thetic quality of 'judging'. All of this additional meaning is

intensional, conferred on the table by virtue of an existing intuitive understanding of the concepts of 'hiding' and 'seeking' and the conditions under which a hiding place may be judged to be good, all of which would be irrelevant to the table were it not for the precise circumstance (the game) which has made it relevant.

Hopefully, we have now grasped the range of issues pertaining to the empirical model of ideas well enough that we can draw out of Husserl's more explicit review of Humean 'nominalism' some choice inferences which demonstrate the innovations on Hume that phenomenology represents. It is clear from the *Logical Investigations*, that Husserl has a great deal of respect for Hume; he clearly recognises the insight that Hume had in avoiding the pitfalls of Locke's naïve empiricism. However, in the very first instance, Husserl identifies one problem which Hume shares with Berkeley and, by extension, Locke. Hume takes 'general' (abstract) ideas to consist purely in representations, and therefore falls into the very trap he was trying to avoid in rejecting the notion of purely abstract ideas in the first place, namely the notion that general ideas are in any sense equivalent to particular ideas. Where Locke's absurdity lay in the assumption that an abstract idea could resemble a particular instance of the same idea while at the same time possessing no particular quality in common with it, Hume's mistake lies in his assertion that a particular idea can in a sense, 'do duty' as a representation of any idea which it closely resembles. Husserl explains the problem thus:

"In this phenomenological analysis, [Locke et al.] stick almost exclusively to the intuitive individual, to the palpable side, as it were, of our thought-experiences, to name and illustrative intuitions, while they are quite unable to do anything with 'act-characters', since these are not at all 'palpable'. They therefore go on in quest of

further sensuous details, and of sensuously presentable manipulations of such details, so as to give us the sort of reality that they favour, and that flatly refuses to show itself in the actual phenomenon” (LI, p. 287)

What this reveals to us is, at first glance, much as we have established already, that Husserl took individual ideas to be incapable of representing more than their own representational content without some intensional framework, some existing, intuitive grasp of the possible relations between the ideas in order to ground a comparison between them. As such, while Hume was correct to point out that an idea cannot strictly *be* abstract and general, but only represents the meaning-fulfilment of a particular name attached to it, he fails to recognise that the element necessary to ground the sense of such a meaning-fulfilment cannot be another individual idea or set of ideas. Husserl explains:

“generality of meaning – whether this be generality of meaning-intention or generality of meaning-fulfilment – is something felt as immanent in each individual case where a general name is understood, and is applied to intuition in accordance with its sense, and [that] is something which, in immediately evident fashion, distinguishes such a case from an individual intuition” (LI, p. 290)

What we see here is that Husserl has in fact divided the perceptual act into two parts, the meaning-intention and the meaning-fulfilment. In Fregean terms, we would say that the meaning-intention relates to the *sense* of the perceptual act, inasmuch as the mind adopts a certain sense-gathering disposition towards the object of its perception, and the meaning-fulfilment relates to the *reference* – if any – of such an act. Accordingly, a *general* idea can

also be grasped either in meaning-intention, in the sense that the mind adopts a disposition towards the idea which circumscribes the possibility of an idea which encompasses an entire ideal species of meaning, or in meaning-fulfilment, in the sense of a corresponding reference which exhibits such and such an idea. In this way, the general idea of 'white' could consist either in the meaning-intention of the concept of 'whiteness', unaffiliated from any particular white 'thing', or in the meaning-fulfilment of an object exhibiting the property of 'being white'. In *either* case, Husserl stresses, the sense of the idea in generality is not 'derived' *per se*, from experience, as though the understanding that multiple things can be white were being grasped anew in each new experience of a white thing. Meanings grasped by us in generality do not 'stand for' each other as imperfect analogues of one another's representative content. Provided we have a corresponding particular idea to begin with, general ideas are simply *felt*, grasped intuitively the instant we encounter them. Were it the case that, as Hume supposes, our general ideas are only understood by analogical relations between similar, but ultimately different experiences, it seems to me that we would be at least somewhat conscious of the imperfections in such analogies every time they were employed, and yet if someone put in front of me both a strawberry and a tomato, and asked if they were the same colour or not I would, barring any personal tendency towards philosophical pedantry, happily concede that they were. Since the matter at issue is the *colour* of the fruits, and not the *shade*, which belongs to a different eidetic sphere and hence has a different *sense*, the mind in the natural attitude is happy to remove from consideration all factors which are not relevant to the judgement concerning *colour*. Were I to be asked if a strawberry and a tomato are the same *shade*, the answer would clearly be no, and in no sense can these two different beliefs, that the strawberry is the same colour as the tomato, and that

the strawberry is a different shade to the tomato, be held to be contradictory, in my own mind or in anybody else's.

In appealing to this distinction between intuitive sense and representative sense, Husserl draws our attention to the distinction he draws between a general idea and what he has called an 'individual intuition'. The term 'individual intuition' here refers to the presentation of a single ideal unity of meaning-intention and meaning-fulfilment, although it is important to remember that Hume's 'ideas' as purely extrinsic representations of objects lack the intuitive aspect which is key to Husserl's terminology. In using this term, equating it to Hume's ideas, Husserl gives us a fuller idea of what intuition means for him; he is telling us that an 'individual intuition' performs at least some of the same functions in phenomenology as Humean 'ideas' perform in Humean theory, namely, these terms denote the purely mental content which corresponds to a particular mental act. However, since Humean ideas lack intensional meaning, they can correspond only to a meaning-fulfilment; they require a reference in order to have any meaning at all. Husserl's intuitions on the other hand, as fully realised unities of meaning-intention *and* meaning-fulfilment, are differentiated from Humean ideas by the fact that they contain intensional meanings joined to whatever extensional (or apparently extensional) reference is obtained by the mental act. Important to note here is how Husserl's 'individual intuitions' are distinguished from what Hume calls 'impressions' in a much fuller sense than the simple 'difference in force and vivacity' that Hume describes. Rather than being merely a faint copy of an impression and hence entirely dependent on the impression from which it is derived, an intuition is an immanent understanding of a concept's essence. As such, an 'individual idea', once grasped in essential purity, is no longer dependent on the mental acts which revealed it to us in the first place and we are able to avoid Hume's

dependence on more and more sensuous experiences to justify the sense of the first one. A general idea then, refers not to any one experience or set of experiences, but to “*the quality or form exemplified in [the thing-idea]*” (LI, p. 290). What this means is that the actual reference for each general idea is not, for instance, any particular white object or shade of white which we have observed, nor is it the term ‘white’ itself, to which we annex however many individual presentations of whiteness. Rather, the reference for the idea is quality of whiteness itself, which exists objectively in and of itself, but which is immanently grasped within the mind as an essential quality. It may be objected that this is a somewhat vague description, that the gap between what really exists in objectivity and how any one person would perceive it leaves us with some doubt as to whether the reference for the idea of white would be white itself, or a false impression of white. To this it is easily retorted that intuition *is* vague. Ask a hundred people where the line is between yellow and green, and you will be hard-pressed to establish any clear consensus. Naturally, the ideas which we are able to form are limited both by our own limited faculties, and the vagaries of reality. As such, where there are no clear distinctions between ideas the mind clearly cannot form an idea of such a distinction, unless it is an arbitrary distinction. Likewise, my idea of whiteness might not be an idea of perfect white if I am not able to perceive such a thing, but the quality of whiteness is not the same as the physical phenomenon of pure whiteness. What is grasped in intuition is the *quality* of an idea, the ‘-ness’ that characterises its being, its whiteness, quickness, hardness, shortness etc., each understood as actually *being* the immanent epistemic characteristic of every experience in which its presence is felt.

7.4 – Theory of Meaning

In Husserl's view, Hume's model of abstraction, where 'individual intuitions' are treated 'as if [they] were general' leaves him in a very peculiar position. Namely, Husserl thinks that Hume seems to concede to Locke that *if* abstract ideas were possible, then Locke's theory would be perfectly adequate, and while Hume acknowledges that abstract ideas really *aren't* possible, his representationalist account fails to address the real problem in Locke's theory because, again, Hume fails to treat experience as a body of essential *meanings*, instead treating it as a concatenation of ideas which lack the essential grounding necessary to give experience its reliable sense (LI, p. 291). If we are to properly understand why this distinction is important, we shall need to explore more closely Husserl's analysis of meaning, and the acts which confer meaning.

To begin with, it will be useful to clarify some terms which Husserl uses frequently in his discussion of meaning. First, we should understand the term 'expression', which Husserl uses to refer to an act or sign which conveys meaning. This is important because 'signs' are often spoken of as though they are intrinsically meaningful, but not all signs necessarily express anything (LI, p. 183). A road sign, for instance, which bears the text 'Portsmouth, 50 miles' is a sign in the indicative sense, since it indicates the apparent existence of this 'Portsmouth', but since there is no information on the sign to denote what precisely a 'Portsmouth' is, it fails to express anything meaningful. By contrast, an expression can convey meaning even if it does not indicate anything at all. For example, the expression 'the energy of a particle is equal to its mass multiplied by the square of the speed of light' has a definite meaning, but what is indicated by it? One could respond that what is indicated is the relationship between the energy and mass of any given particle, but to say this would be saying no more than that

the expression indicates itself. In fact, this expression cannot indicate anything, because it does not describe a particular phenomenon, but a general one. In indication, a sign directs one towards a possible object of thought where meaning *may* be discovered, though it does not itself necessarily convey any of that meaning. An expression, however, directs one towards meaning itself, bypassing particular representations of meaning entirely in order to appeal directly to the understanding (LI, p. 191). As such, we can draw a distinction between a merely indicative sign, as in 'New York, 20 miles', a sign which both indicates an object and expresses meaning, as in 'Welcome to the City of New York', or a non-indicative expression of pure meaning, as in 'the Concrete Jungle'. In the first example here, New York is merely indicated as being 'something', in the second it is both indicated *and* defined as a 'city', and in the last example it is not indicated at all, since the expression 'the Concrete Jungle' could refer to any number of things. That it happens to refer to New York is not expressed, and the expression is therefore non-indicative. It is expressive however, because it provokes the mind into calling into consciousness the qualities of concrete and of jungles, and associates these concepts by presenting them more or less simultaneously, thereby conveying its new meaning.

Next, we should clarify a notable ambiguity, that between an expression, and the meaning thus expressed. An expression will usually consist of some act; a speech act, a gesture, a signal of some kind, or even a purely mental act such as an act of the imagination. This last category however is unique, in that the expression is purely intra-mental, and as such is a special case which will be discussed in section 7.6. The former three however, as acts contributing to practical communication are both indicative and expressive, and as such there is a need to separate the meaningful expression from the indication of its object. Husserl argues that an

act of this kind can be broken down into parts, namely the physical phenomenon involved with the act, such as the sound of spoken words, the shape of written words etc., and the intentional part of the act which attaches meaning to the physical expression. In fact, for analytical purposes, Husserl construes these different parts as different acts in and of themselves, such that in each single expression, there is both a physical act, and an intentional act being performed (LI pp191-2). This means that, to give an example, the act by which I intend for the word 'dog' to denote a domesticated species of canine, is distinct from the act whereby I articulate the sound [dɒg]¹⁵. In this way, we conceive by what really amounts to a single act, that I simultaneously perform an act of physical articulation *and* an act of meaning-intention in order to attach meaning to the articulation, which is otherwise just the act of making a noise. If, perchance, the reason I am saying 'dog' is because I can see a dog in front of me and wish to point it out to others, then we can add a third act-component to our expressive act, that by which I recognise the sense of the appearance of a dog in front of me. This latter type of act is hence constituted as an act of meaning-fulfilment, since in performing this act alongside my acts of articulation and meaning-intention, I thereby assert that there is, in the body of the creature in front of me, a reference for the meaning which I have attached to my vocal articulation. In the single act of saying 'dog' then, in response to seeing a dog in front of me, I convey that "the sound [dɒg] denotes for me a domesticated species of canine, and here I see one such example of that creature".

¹⁵ International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) transcription.

7.5 – Meaning-Intention and Meaning-Fulfilment

Naturally, the means by which I myself am able to identify that a creature I have never seen before is a dog is my intuitive understanding of what a dog is. As such, what is conveyed in the meaning-fulfilment of the expression is the intuitive fullness of my own understanding (LI, p. 192). Of course, it need not be the case that the expression has a fulfilled meaning. In expressing something I may easily be speculating, lying, making assumptions, hypothesising, or otherwise engaging with a variety of fantasies or other objectless presentations. In such cases the expression functions as a sign of sorts, indicating that meaning was *intended*, but remains as yet unfulfilled. The distinction between these different parts of an expression is summarised by Husserl like this:

“We shall, on the one hand, have acts essential to the expression if it is to be an expression at all, i.e. a verbal sound infused with sense. These acts we shall call the meaning-conferring acts or the meaning-intentions. But we shall, on the other hand, have acts, not essential to the expression as such, which stand to it in the logically basic relation of fulfilling (confirming, illustrating) it more or less adequately, and so actualizing its relation to object” (LI, p. 192).

The act of meaning-fulfilment then, only applies in circumstances where the expression has a clear objective correlate, or else the expression fails to refer and has only propositional sense rather than what we might choose to call ‘actual’ sense. This difference might become clear if we recall Sokolowski’s discussion of predication. At that time, we saw how predication may be employed to make propositions concerning an object which may be obscured or even absent. In such cases, propositions are likely to lack any very definite relation to the truth, but

contain meaningful expression regardless. Let us re-use an example from that discussion. The sequence of expression; “It’s a bird”, “It’s a plane”, and “It’s Superman” are all both indicative and expressive, like all practical communications. They are indicative because they all indicate a particular object which their expression concerns, and they are meaningful because they all attempt to convey information concerning the nature of the indicated object, which is Superman. In all three cases, the expression possesses the essential components of an expression in Husserl’s view. A ‘verbal sound imbued with a sense’ is present in each of these expressions, and they can therefore be said to possess some meaning-intention alongside the physical articulation of sound involved. For the former two expressions however, Superman is too distant for them to be able to clearly identify him. Therefore, rather than articulating a meaningfully fulfilled expression, the speakers instead *predicate* an assumption concerning the nature of the distant figure on the basis of their intuitive grasp of the category ‘things that fly’. The final speaker, who waits until Superman has arrived to make their remark, is able to express themselves without predication, exclaiming “It’s Superman!” while in the unobscured presence of Superman. As such, their expression is meaningfully fulfilled by virtue of their intuitive grasp of who Superman is.

Of course, meaning-intention and meaning-fulfilment, being separable from one another and from the physical act by which meaning-intention is articulated, can take place independently of any actual expression in the sense of communication. These parts are, in the strictest sense, the base components of cognition, and take place just as surely in purely mental acts as they do in practical communication, simply without any need of a physical articulation of the expression’s sense. It may be useful to think of meaning-intention and meaning-fulfilment as having the same kind of relationship as do ‘hypothesis’ and ‘investigation’. In hypothesising,

one postulates a given circumstance as really existing, and in investigation, one searches for evidence to validate the hypothesis, all of which can take place whether or not you write it down. Likewise, it is not necessary to articulate an expression in order for it to have meaning and be understood. As such, Husserl cautions us, it is perhaps better not to think of an act of expression as 'expressing its meaning', because this implies that the meaning belongs to the expression, when in fact it belongs only to itself. Rather, we should say that a statement 'gives expression to' an act of perceiving or imagining (LI, p. 192). An expression is after all, only an articulation (physical or mental) of *sense*, and sense can only be grasped in private intuition. In expressing something then, I give articulation to a circumstance which I understand to be the case, either to communicate this understanding to somebody else, or to recall its sense in my own mind. We should by now be beginning to gain a clearer understanding of what is meant when we talk about intensional meaning, and how it is conferred onto the object of an intentional act, but before we can apply this understanding to Hume there are still a few more concepts we need to clarify.

7.6 – Phenomenological Unity of Expressions

An important detail to stress is that although we have described expressive acts as though they are comprised of several acts, in reality these separate acts are only separate inasmuch as they perform separate functions within the single expression. The reason we describe them as separate acts is so that we can see more clearly how each part is separable from the others, to clarify that there is a difference between the meaning of an expression, and the means of articulating that meaning, and that there is a further distinction between meaning and any particular reference for, or presentation of that meaning. This distinction is very Humean in

character, and if we followed the Humean line of reasoning to its conclusion on this matter we may end up having to conclude that we really have no means of attaching meaning to words at all since each real object has only a contingent relation to its meaning, and the meaning only a contingent relation to its own articulation, leading to the conclusion that there is no rational basis for attaching any particular bundle of meanings to any particular object. However, Husserl rescues us from this eventuality, by telling us that the separate parts of an expressive act are in fact bound together in a *phenomenological unity*. What this means is that all the different functions of an expressive act (intention, articulation, reference) are performed more or less simultaneously, and while they may be separable in philosophical reflection, in the natural stream of consciousness these parts are experienced as a single act-phenomenon.

To give an example, a child being taught the names of animals is shown a picture of each animal, and then taught its name. In teaching the child these names, the parent employs a series of signs in order to give articulation to the meaning they wish to convey. They point to the picture, they say the animal's name, perhaps they describe what sound the animal makes. The reference for each of these expressions is obviously the picture of the animal, and the meaning which the parent wishes to convey is the identity of each animal. The very purpose of these expressions is to connect the intended meaning to a name, and to indicate a reference which exemplifies it. In doing so, the parent equates the animals in and of themselves to the meaning which encompasses their identity, and attaches a name to this unity of sense and reference. As such, an expression such as "this is a horse" in fact communicates the meaning "this [horse] is a horse and it is called a '[hɔ:s]'." Not only does this further illustrate the separability of meanings from their names and/or references, it also

demonstrates how all of these separate facets of experience come to be bound together in a phenomenological unity. Put simply, the mind receives all of these facets of the expression at the same time, and since it is necessary for an expression to include some articulation the mind naturally associates the meaning with the means by which it was articulated. However, once the meaning has been fully grasped and internalised, once it has become a piece of intuitive understanding, the means of articulation is irrelevant. If, for instance, I suddenly forgot all the words I know for 'horse', I would not cease to understand what a horse is. I would only have lost my means of forming meaningful expressions concerning horses. As such, we can see that meaning has an existence of its own, independent from its reference, or even its expression.

This conclusion helps to give credit to our earlier assertion that general ideas refer to their own essential qualities rather than to any individual presentation or set of presentations of them. However, this time we can see how the same principle applies to more or less all ideas when they are articulated as expressions. This should be readily apparent if we consider properly what is meant by the expression of a particular idea. For example, if I were to make the assertion P, "the square of the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the remaining sides", it can seem as though I am asserting that P. However, we know from Hume that even analytical statements like this which are supposed to be perfectly rational are subject to some degree of doubt when uttered by a flawed individual like ourselves. As such, the most I can be said to be asserting is that *I myself* judge that P. Is this what I *mean* to express though? Plainly not, and clearly nobody would take me to be expressing only my own judgement. Husserl writes:

“It would hardly occur to anyone, if asked as to the sense of my assertion, to revert to my judgement as an inner experience. Everyone would rather reply by saying: what this assertion asserts is the same whoever may assert it, and what it asserts is precisely [that P]” (LI, p. 195).

What we can see from this example is two things. First, how significantly the meaning of an expression is affected by the way in which it is intended, and second, that the meaning of an assertion can be intended as though it is independent of the articulated assertion, even though the articulation is necessary in order to give expression to the intended meaning. In asserting that P, I genuinely *believe* that P, and so I assert it not as my own judgement, but as an objective fact. If I were to assert only ‘I believe that P’, the meaning of the assertion would be entirely different. In the former case my assertion concerns a law of mathematics, in the latter it concerns my own judgements concerning mathematics. The difference is that in the former case what I intend is supposed to be objective and is therefore asserted as being objective because insofar as I can tell, it *is* objective. It makes no difference whether I am correct in my assertion or not, the assertion is made in the same fashion regardless. As Husserl explains:

“my act of judging is a transient experience: it arises and passes away. But what my assertion asserts... neither arises nor passes away. It is an identity in the strict sense...”
(LI, p. 195)

We see therefore, that there is a distinction between the ideal content of an expression and the transient act of either affirming or denying it and, consequently, we see that each

expressive act refers primarily to its own ideal meaning which has an identity 'in the strict sense' all of its own, independently of any singular presentations of it.

We have established in numerous different ways by now, that meaning is essentially separate from its means of expression, but we should nevertheless go further, and explain fully how meaning actually *is* connected to its reference when an expression is made to facilitate such a connection. We have already seen how an expression 'gives expression to' some meaning or other, and in this way the meaning is expressed by means of a name with respect to an object, thus defining it. Thus, Husserl tells us, we can say that an expression 'signifies or names its object *through* its meaning' (LI, p. 198). What this tells us initially is that meaning is *conferred* on an object rather than derived or determined, but more than this, it allows us to conceive of many different modifications of meaning according to our different circumstances by means of which we are able to interpret the same ideas in many different ways. Up until now, we have often spoken of intuitions as though they represent the full body of our own knowledge, and although we have also discussed how the different thetic characters of mental acts can affect the meaning which is produced by them, we have not yet addressed how this is able to take place. After all, an intuition is a singular thing, an understanding of a thing's essence, its essential nature in eidetic purity. By its very nature, a phenomenologically pure intuition has no context attached to it, but our real-world experiences are packed with extra details which change the context in which the intuition is presented. As such, an expression pertaining to a world-involved intuition is affected by our passive understanding of the context in which the expression is made. Take the hide-and-seek example from earlier. Say, for the sake of argument, that the initial perception of the table is the phenomenologically pure intuition, apprehended exclusively in terms of its 'table-ness' so to

speak. The later perception, during the game of hide-and-seek, we have already established is contextualised by the game and thus different properties of the table are brought out of the intuition. Suppose I were to say to another player, “under that table is a good place to hide”. In this expression my meaning-intention is very clearly characterised by the desire to communicate that the table has qualities which make it suitable for hiding beneath. In other contexts I might say “that table would make a good barricade”, “that table is too far away”, or “that table looks nice”, and although in each case the reference is the same, and so is the pure intuition – I always know what a table *is*, a different meaning is expressed in every one of these expressions. Husserl writes:

“expressions, even when they function outside of knowledge, must, as symbolic intentions, point to categorially formed unities. Different meanings may therefore pertain to the same intuitions regarded in differing categorial fashions, and may therefore also pertain to the same object.” (LI, p. 199)

So, with regards to our table, when I am playing hide-and-seek I confer meaning on it appropriate to the category of hiding places, in decorating a house I confer meaning on it appropriate to the category of decorative items and so on and so forth. Husserl’s use of the term ‘categorially formed unity’ can hence be understood as denoting the synthesis of intensional and extensional meanings formed within a certain context which provides the categorial basis for the mental act which confers meaning on its object.

Taking this concept and remembering that an expression is, insofar as it is expressed, a phenomenological unity of an articulation of meaning and the intended meaning itself, we

can describe how the meaning contained within a mental act is expressed in a more naturalistic sense. After all, in order for meaning to be expressed somebody first has to have an intuition of it, and almost always in the form of a categorially formed unity such as Husserl describes. In recommending a hiding place to somebody during a game of hide-and-seek for instance, I first make the judgement concerning the table for myself, and *then* I recommend it to the other player. In effect here, what I am expressing is the content of my own perception, in the mode of presentation appropriate to the context behind the perception. Not only this, but I am also expressing *that* I have had this perception at all. I am thus expressing both my perception *and* the content of that perception. Naturally, both of these things are distinct from the object of the perception which is, as has been repeatedly demonstrated, not actually necessary to any expression. However, since in this case, there *is* such a fulfilling object to serve as the reference for the perception, it will be prudent to reiterate that there remains a distinction between the object itself and the full, synthetically formed, categorial unity which is contained in the *meaning* of the expression. The only difference between this case and one where no reference is present is that in this case the presence of the objects confers a 'fulfilling sense' onto the expression in addition to the intended sense it has. In addition to this, one more final distinction can be made between the intended and fulfilling senses already mentioned, and the supposed 'objective sense'. Earlier we discussed the expression of Pythagoras' theorem and demonstrated how the meaning contained within that expression is taken to be objective. It is in this way that we are able to describe such ideas as objective and thereby posit the existence of objective facts. However, this principle can be applied equally to any expression whatsoever, provided the expression is sincere and without qualification, because in ordinary consciousness we presume our perceptions to correspond perfectly to the real, objective world. In making the judgement,

“that table would make a good hiding place”, I am expressing not only that I see a table and judge it to have certain qualities that make it an appropriate hiding place, but also that I do not expect these facts about the table to be unique to my perception of it, but to be cast iron facts of its existence. As such, my expression not only communicates a particular intended meaning which finds fulfilment in the body of the real table itself, but finds this fulfilment *in the manner in which it was intended*. This is the table’s objective sense.

7.7 – Clarifications

We have enough information now to make a very significant deduction, but before we do that, I think it will be prudent to cover the clarifications which Husserl makes concerning the nature of expressions with regards to the distinction between meaningful and meaningless expressions, as it has been a nuanced and difficult discussion so far. There are four clarifications in the *Logical Investigations*, and we will go through them in order. First, Husserl reminds us that an expression is by its nature meaningful, so an expression which has no meaning is not an expression, even if it seems to have the form of an expression. ‘Expressions’ such as these are therefore ‘expression-like’ or ‘expression-seeming’ at best (LI, p. 201). For example, the nonsense expression “tremble is taffeta marine” has the grammatical form of an expression, but lacks any actual sense. Second, we are told that ‘In meaning (and hence in an expression), a relation to an object is constituted’ (LI, p. 201). As such, every expression can be taken as indicating an object in communicating some meaning concerning that object. Importantly, it does not matter whether this object constitutes an objective reference because, as we have seen, the object of every expression is ultimately its own meaning intended in its objective sense. It is in this way that we can understand the meaning of

expressions concerning fictions, hallucinations, abstract concepts, or those predicated upon unproven hypotheses. In each expression, the intended sense is given within the intentional act as objective, and thereby constitutes the object of the expression (LI, pp. 201-2). Third, Husserl distinguishes between the classical examples of 'meaningless' expressions and the type of utterances described as meaningless in the first of these clarifications. Expressions like 'a round square' or 'a golden mountain' have often been taken to express nothing at all, but this is not the case. This is obvious in the case of the golden mountain, since 'gold' has a sense and 'mountain' has a sense, and the two senses are arranged within the expression in a way which makes intuitive the supposed relationship between the two (a mountain made of gold), so the lack of objective *reference* does not prevent the expression from having an objective *sense*. It is less clear why a 'round square' should not be taken to be a meaningless expression however, because the sense of 'round' is mutually exclusive with the sense of 'square'. However, as we saw earlier, the expression must have a sense in order for us even to be able to question whether or not it has a sense. In this case, the senses of 'round' and 'square' are both understood, and understood as being mutually exclusive, thereby revealing the sense of a contradiction. As such, the sense of 'round square' is the sense that belongs to an oxymoron or, more generally, any impossible thing. One could imagine a scenario where the expression 'round square' might be used interchangeably with 'flying pigs' as a byword for impossibility. By comparison, in the expression "tremble is taffeta marine", while all the words individually have meaning of their own, they are assembled in such a way as to give no suggestion of any, even equivocal meaning. The most we could do to ascribe meaning to it would be to speculate blindly that it might be a code of some sort, but this would be only a speculation that it had meaning at all, not what that meaning might actually be, and even so there would be no real basis for making such an arbitrary speculation in the first place. In such an expression, there

is no basis even for asking whether or not the expression is meaningful. So we can see, expressions like 'round square' or 'golden mountain' are not actually meaningless per se. They simply contain within their sense, in Husserl's words, the "a priori impossibility of a fulfilling sense" (LI, p. 203), which is in no wise necessary for meaning. Finally, Husserl makes another attempt to demonstrate exactly why fulfilling intuitions are not necessary to meaning. He acknowledges that there is a tendency for us, when giving examples of expressions, to produce expressions which contribute knowledge about some object or other ("the table is small, "the pig is pink" etc.), and therefore we might confuse fulfilling intuitions with meanings. However, he draws our attention to the fact that the fulfilment of expressions is often only partial or imperfect, if it exists at all, and yet such expressions nevertheless succeed in communicating meaning. For instance, the expression "laughter is the best medicine" is, I would wager, almost certainly never accompanied by a fulfilling sense, but nevertheless it communicates its meaning perfectly adequately (LI, pp. 202-3).

Having made these clarifications, it should hopefully be very clear that an expression can have an objective sense and therefore be fully meaningful even in cases where there is no objective reference. It is this fact which is central to the very significant deduction mentioned earlier, which is that *every intentional mental act constitutes an expression in itself*. Since no objective reference is necessary to an expression, it follows that the means of articulation involved in an expression, the 'sign' as it were, need not be an exclusively physical phenomenon (and so not a sign at all), especially since what is indicated in an expression is *meaning* and not any *object*. An expression can then, be articulated in thought; in comprehension, rather than in words or images, and "indicates" its meaning not by any sign, but immanently, by means of intuition. Herein lies the real significance of the distinction between signs and expressions,

since an expression that takes place entirely within the mind has no sign as such, because all of the necessary meanings are equally immanent within intuition. Rather, in expressing a meaning internally, the intended meaning is called to the mind as the object of the intentional act, the 'thing being thought about right now', and has its meaning brought to the forefront of consciousness where it can be modified by whatever other circumstances happen to pertain there and then, and worked into whatever categorically formed unities it needs to be, before being returned to passive intuition. Returning one last time to the game of hide-and-seek, in seeing the table during the game, its meaning is brought to the forefront of one's mind. Then, by virtue of the new set of circumstances within which that meaning is brought to the mind, the meaning-intention is modified. In thinking of the table in this new context, I intend to assess it for its suitability as a hiding place, and therefore emphasise those of its qualities which make it so suitable within my own expressed apprehension of it. In this way, I have expressed these qualities in thought to myself, and learned something new about the table. At root, this process is *learning*, it is the acquisition of new understanding on the basis of existing knowledge/intuition in order to create a whole chain of evident cognitions which forms the basis of our own understanding of the world, just as we saw from Husserl's most basic philosophical principles.

Chapter 8 – Solving Hume’s Labyrinth

We have now seen how the empirical, purely extensional model of ideas falls short of explaining the wide variety of meanings that exist as possible objects of intentional thought, and hopefully we can understand how Husserl’s addition of intensional meaning helps to broaden the scope of empirical analysis to the entire field of possible mental objects. By incorporating his account of eidetic intuition as the basis of intensional meanings, Husserl is able to explicate more clearly the nature of intentional constitution. Once we know that the subjective consciousness possesses an intuitive understanding of the essences presented by the noesis *and* the essences inherent to the thetic characters of different mental acts, we can see that much of the meaning pertaining to the object of a particular mental state originates from inside the mind. As such, we can see in much greater clarity how intentional mental states are, at their core, *positional* states, positing a meaning in anticipation of the fulfilment of their intentional sense. It is worth observing too, that this description is not too far from Humean philosophy. Given their mutual belief in the apodictic nature of first-person perceptual experience, we can observe close parallels between Hume and Husserl in respect of ‘relations’ and ‘intuition’. After all, since Humean relations can be observed between different impressions without the need for an understanding of their corresponding ideas due to the separability principle, the relations themselves must be intuitive faculties. Husserl’s concept of intuition is therefore not a deviation from Humean theory, but merely an elaboration on the means by which the intuition functions. To observe a *resemblance* is simply to observe that two impressions share a common essence, and to observe contiguity is to apprehend a unity of essence as opposed to a plurality of essences. Causation is unique among Hume’s three species of relation since, while the intuition of causation in and of itself

merely consists of the intuition of a particular essence (the essence of *potency* or causal power), the intuition of individual causal relationships in fact depends on predicative intuitions. We have already discussed predication insofar as it is a kind of mental act which necessitates the noema as the correlative intuitive faculty to the experiential noesis, but now that we know that what was missing from Hume's theory of ideas was an intentional theory of meaning grounded in intuition, it will be necessary for us to explore the precise implementation of Husserl's theory of meaning within a broader theory of cognition in order to see how Husserl's model of intentionality succeeds in evading the sceptical consequences of Hume's empiricism. Since predication and positional consciousness are such significant elements of ordinary cognition, this final chapter will give significant focus to these elements of Husserl's theory.

8.1 – Noetic-Noematic Structures of Positional Consciousness

Now that we have a new understanding of 'ideas', their meanings, and how these meanings are formed, it is an ideal time for us to return to the subject of the noesis and noema. With the benefit of our new understanding, we should hopefully be able to incorporate into our account of intentional consciousness, a description of the various 'belief characteristics' of our posited noeses, a concept Husserl describes in the *Ideas*. We have already discussed the issue of belief a little, during our discussion of 'objective sense' with regard to how the objective sense is constituted by the fulfilling sense of a dogmatically posited noesis, and our discussion here should help to elucidate that concept even more. However, before we get to that, it will first be a good idea to articulate more clearly the relationship between the noesis and noema in light of the insights gained since we introduced the concepts in chapter 6, in

order to better frame this new discussion in the context of our broader topic concerning how Husserl's phenomenology proceeds from Hume's earlier philosophy.

So far in our discussions of noesis and noema, we have isolated the noesis and noema in order to discuss them individually, and described in a limited sense how the two are united in consciousness, but we are yet to give a truly detailed account of the significance of this union in the context of a continuous stream of consciousness. Of course, we *have* already discussed the notion of predication, and explained how the noema can be iterated, but it still remains to properly unfold the matter of 'iterated' noema, and properly explore the place of Hume in this discussion. Before we get to that though, let us first recap what we know already of the noesis and the noema.

The noesis, we have seen, is the name given to the intensive *form*¹⁶, either individually or in general, corresponding to whatever sensuous object is the intentional object of an intentional act. Of noesis Husserl writes:

"These noeses make up what is specific to nous in the broadest sense of the word; it refers us back, according to all its actional life-forms, to cogitationes and then to any intensive mental process whatever, and as a result comprises everything (and essentially only that) which is the eidetic presupposition of the idea of the norm."

(Ideas I, p. 205)

¹⁶ Husserl uses the Greek word *morphi* (form), in contradistinction with *hyle* (substance).

Characteristically dense as this passage might be, it tells us more or less everything we need to know about the noesis as far as Husserl understands it. It tells us that noesis is conceived as being the defining characteristic of ‘nous’, a term classically understood to mean something like ‘intellect’. Given that we also know that Husserl subscribed to a broadly Brentanian model of intentionality whereby “intentionality is the mark of the mental”, we can conclude that noesis is in fact the essence of intentionality, a conclusion borne out by this later passage from the *Ideas* where Husserl remarks:

“One feels oneself forced to speak again even of a ‘noematic intentionality’ as a ‘parallel’ of the noetic <intentionality>, which is <intentionality> properly so called.”

(*Ideas I*, p. 251)

This is pretty clear evidence that for Husserl, intentionality is fundamentally noetic in character. Next, from our earlier passage, we can infer that noesis is inherent to all of our conscious mental states. When Husserl says “[noesis] refers us back... to cogitationes and then to any intensitive mental process whatever”, he tells us that in picking out the noesis, the observable ‘form’ of an intentional object, we are directed to the associated *thought*¹⁷ and thereby to whatever the original mental process happened to be. By this remark, Husserl means to demonstrate both that the noesis is the central intentional aspect of consciousness, as we have already shown, but also the empirical significance of noesis within his

¹⁷ Note: The Latin term ‘cogitationes’ which Husserl uses literally translates to ‘thoughts’, and while I have chosen to use the English translation, it should be noted that Husserl uses the Latin in order to distinguish a casual use of the word ‘thought’ from his meaning of a thought correlated to a particular noesis.

phenomenological methodology. The final phrase, that noesis is “everything... which is the eidetic presupposition of the idea of the norm”, while obtuse in its language, tells us something very important. Up to this point, Husserl has distinguished between substance and form, and we have been told that noesis concerns only the form. However, the substance itself is fundamentally perceptually inaccessible, so in ascribing to an object a certain determinable form, we must first make the supposition that there *is* some determinable form belonging to that object in the first place. Since an intentional act is required in order to fix upon a given object in intentional consciousness, and intentionality is essentially noetic, we can conclude that noesis, in its general sense, describes the presupposition of the norm by which substance is ascribed with form. This can of course only *be* a norm, and not a law, because no real evidence can ever be obtained to confirm it. This presupposition is, in a very Humean way, only a convention, derived from long-standing and seemingly reliable observations that objects’ forms *seem* to conform to and/or be determined by their substance. Naturally, for Husserl, this convention is construed as *eidetic intuition*, hence the term ‘eidetic presupposition’.

So, in practice, when seizing upon an object as the object of an intentional act, the object is presupposed to have a certain form corresponding to its particular substance, and as such, the object’s content is given to consciousness as, and hence presumed to be, the objective content of a really existing object. It is not, we should stress, taken to be *representative* of the object, because that would imply a consciousness of the distinction between content and object, and no such awareness exists within the natural attitude. Rather, the noesis is *presentative*, it is how the object is raised to consciousness in the first instant, and it is supposed to do so in an objective sense. Now, our habit has been to speak of intentional acts

as if they correspond wholly to a single noesis each, but in practice an intensive mental process can continue for some time, possibly seconds, possibly minutes, so we should not view the process of establishing a noesis as a means of obtaining static noeses. A full mental process is comprised of a series of intensive *moments*, to each of which corresponds a noetic moment, and all of these noetic moments are adumbrated together around an essential core, to which each noetic moment is supposed to belong. The result of which, is that the noesis corresponding to a particular object has a certain flexibility, always capable of being further developed by further, sustained regard by the intentional consciousness, as more of the object is taken in and more about the object is discovered. We should note here, that this noetic 'core' is only necessary to the perception of physical things. Fantasies, and perceptions of abstract concepts naturally lack any physical presentation, and are generally experienced in reflection, as immanently given phenomena. Nevertheless, we have now outlined the role of noesis in intentional consciousness, namely that of providing the basis for every intentional mental state by individuating each intentional object as an object with a determinable form, and therefore as capable of being 'intended towards' in the first place. However, we must still remind ourselves of how sense is made of this noetic presentation of form, and so we must now return to and develop our account of the noema.

The noema, we have said, is the meaningful correlate of the intentional object, and this description has been perfectly adequate so far, but we have as yet overlooked the fact that noesis too has something we call meaning, or sense, a sense which we have characterised as that information which is retrieved from the intentional object. This interpretation is not inaccurate, and is certainly borne out by our most recent clarifications since it follows from the presupposition that an object's form corresponds to its substance, that there *is* some form

to perceive, and what this form amounts to could justifiably be called its sense. We should nevertheless clarify the distinction between noetic sense and noematic sense. The concept of noetic sense should be clear to us by now. It is, after all, nothing more than the objective sense pertaining to an intentional object, as it is perceived in subjectivity. It is, since intentionality is noetic, the *intended sense*. This is not to suggest that the objective sense is equivalent to the meaning-intention of a given intentional act since, as we know, the meaning-fulfilment is just as essential to the objective sense, but if this is so, then where do we find room for a noematic sense? To answer this we must reflect on the fact that in the stream of consciousness that characterises the natural attitude, an intensive mental process is not experienced in terms of the process itself, but in terms of its object. In regarding my computer screen, I do not see a perception of a screen, I see only a screen. In remembering what I had for dinner last night, I am not thinking of a memory of pizza, I am remembering a pizza. Despite the fact that in the natural attitude I have no conscious experience of these different kinds of mental process, nevertheless I understand the differences between them and never confuse them. This is the noematic sense, the sense of the intensive mental process 'as such'. The perceived as perceived, the remembered as remembered, the judged as judged, and so on and so forth.

Noematic sense is not limited however, to an awareness of what type of mental process is being carried out, because that would mean that the noema of every mental process of the same type would be the same; every perception would have the noema 'the perceived as perceived', every remembering the noema 'the remembered as remembered' etc., and this is certainly not how we understand the noema. After all, if we recall the first of Føllesdal's theses, a thesis which we accept, that "to one and the same Noema corresponds only one

object”, we must realise that in order for any talk of a correspondence between object and noema, the noema must be, at least in part, determined by factors pertaining to the object itself. In short, it has to interact with the particular noesis pertaining to the object.

The manner in which it does this is the key to how the noema can subsequently be iterated, so I shall try to explain. Let us take as an example the mental process ‘liking’. In liking an object, a vase, say, the corresponding noema is that of ‘the liked as liked’, by means of which I am aware that ‘liking’ the vase is what I am doing, rather than perceiving, valuing, judging, etc. If I like this vase, then presumably there is a reason, or set of reasons why, contributing to the single intensive mental process (Erlebnis) of ‘liking’. So, as I cast my eye over this vase, I am engaged in a process by which I accumulate a series of noetic moments. At one moment I take note of the vase’s shape, at another moment I note its colour, at another moment, its craftsmanship. For the sake of argument, I note all of these things approvingly. To each of these noetic moments corresponds a noematic moment by which I understand not just that the shape, colour, and craftsmanship are good, which is their objective (noetic) sense, but *that I like them*. That *I* think they are good. As such, corresponding to every noesis is a noema comprised of a series of noematic moments accumulated around the noematic core which is the intentional object itself, taken as a unity of all of its individual properties and parts. So, the noema is not merely the ‘liked as liked’, it is ‘the liked [object] as liked’ or more specifically in this case, it is ‘the vase as liked’, inextricably linked to the intentional object by virtue of the individual noematic moments ‘the shape as liked’, ‘the colour as liked’, ‘the craftsmanship as liked’ and so on. This is a view we can see expressed by Husserl in the following passage from the *Ideas*:

“Corresponding in every case to the multiplicity of Data pertaining to the really inherent noetic content, there is a multiplicity of Data, demonstrable in actual pure intuition, in a correlative ‘noematic content’ or, in short, in the ‘noema’.” (Ideas I, p. 214)

The noema then, boils down to an understanding of the mental process itself, an understanding of ‘what we are doing’ *as* we are doing it, and intuitively grasped in reflection. In short, an understanding of each mental process as it pertains to its object, in all its particularities. Perhaps a clearer example can be found in the experience of watching a film. The process of watching a film is generally construed as a single mental process, so naturally the entire process consists of an enormous number of individual intensive *moments*, but the action in a film typically progresses so quickly that we do not have time to reflect on each noematic moment *in* the moment at which it occurs. All we can do is simply *experience* it. In doing so, we are wholly immersed in the noesis, conscious only of the action on the screen, and as each scene progresses, we either enjoy it, or we do not, but only rarely do we withdraw from our attention to take note of which it is. Once the film is over, perhaps the friend with whom we were watching might ask “what did you think of it?”, and if so, we are almost always ready with an answer despite having not thought about it while watching the film, and having had only seconds to reflect on it in the time between the end of the film and the question being asked. This intuitive sense of how our experiences relate to our consciousness is the noema and, as a side note, this example also happens to demonstrate how the noema is *always* present within intentional consciousness, and does not merely appear upon reflection.

8.2 – Belief-Characteristics and Positional Acts

Our understanding of the noesis and noema is now almost complete, for the sake of our purposes at least, but there is one final aspect of our intentional mental states that we need to incorporate if we are going to have a full, Husserlian account of cognition with which to compare Hume's account. Specifically, we are yet to adequately explain the different ways in which one can express *belief* in a given idea. It should be fairly apparent that to each idea fixed upon in an intentional act, there corresponds an associated attitude of belief which is related to it, but not a part of it. Hume expresses this notion thus:

"The idea of an object is an essential part of the belief of it, but not the whole. We conceive many things, which we do not believe." (T 1.3.7.1)

This neatly encapsulates the need for an account of belief as independent from the mere perception of a phenomenon. When an idea is present to the mind, we can never be entirely Pyrrhonic in our regard towards it, there must always be some quality of belief, we must believe in the idea, or disbelieve it, or deem it possible, or probable, or questionable, or doubtful, etc. Husserl writes:

"As noetic characteristics related to correlative modes of being – 'doxic' or 'belief characteristics' – we find perceptual belief and, sometimes, to be sure, perceptual certainty, really inherently included in intuitive objectivations, e.g., in those of normal perceptions as 'attentive perceptions;' corresponding to <perceptual certainty> as its noematic correlate belonging to the appearing object is the being-characteristic: 'actual.'" (Ideas I, p. 250)

From this we can see that belief characteristics are considered by Husserl to be noetic characteristics, a part of the really inherent objectivation of an intentional object, which is to say that our attitude of belief, our 'doxic' attitude forms part of the objective sense of the intentional object insofar as it is intended by the noesis. What this means is that, for Husserl, when we look at, for example, a physical object in the world, alongside the idea which we form of the object itself on the basis of our empirical perceptions, there goes an attitude of certainty whereby the object is characterised as 'really being there' and, correlatively, a noematic sense of this object's actuality, whereby we are made aware of this fact, thus the intentional object is apprehended as 'the actual as actual'. As such, we can construe belief characteristics not as a part of the subject-object relation constituted in the intensive mental process as such, but as an integral part of the intentional mental state itself which pertains to it. The belief in an object naturally cannot be derived from the object itself. The very fact that we are subject to perceptual errors, and in fact that we are capable of having ideas of things which we have never seen, demonstrates how the truth-value (or 'actuality' if you prefer) of an idea is not contained within the idea itself, so belief must come from another source, which is the mind. This is perfectly in accordance with the account of belief found in the *Treatise*; Hume writes:

"... an opinion or belief is nothing but an idea, that is different from a fiction, not in the nature, or the order of its parts, but in the manner of its being conceiv'd." (T 1.3.7.7)

However, he gives no further explanation as to precisely what it is that causes this difference in the manner of an idea's conceptions. In fact, it is a question which he considers altogether too difficult to explain. He says:

"This operation of the mind, which forms the belief of any matter of fact, seems hitherto to have been one of the greatest mysteries of philosophy; tho' no one has so much as suspected, that there was any difficulty in explaining it. For my part I must own, that I find a considerable difficulty in the case; and that even when I think I understand the subject perfectly, I am at a loss for terms to express my meaning." (T 1.3.7.7)

For Husserl however, the different manners in which an idea may be conceived vary according to the different noematic being-characteristics that might pertain to the idea, or the object from which it is derived, and since being-characteristics are correlated to intentional, noetic belief-characteristics, we should be able to describe the intuitive process by which different being-characteristics are associated with each idea.

First however, we should explain in more detail the nature of these being-characteristics and belief-characteristics. In the first instance, Husserl tells us, all ideas are seized upon with the belief-characteristic of *certainty*. This should be evident if we explain it in terms of simple logic. Put plainly, in order to make any pronouncement concerning a proposition P, it is first necessary to understand what it would mean for P to be true. As such, the sense of any proposition P is intuitively given as dogmatically certain. If it were not, expressions such as 'not P', 'probably P', 'possibly P' etc. would lack any grounding sense. It is for this reason that Husserl introduces the term 'protodoxa' to describe the belief-characteristic of certainty, in order to highlight its essentiality to all subsequently adopted modes of belief (Ideas I, p. 252).

Once an idea is understood in the mode of certainty (or ‘naïve supposition’) it can then be fixed upon in an intensive mental process and, if necessary, it may undergo modifications of its being-modalities according to the changes to the belief-characteristic inherent in the act. For example, suppose I am walking outside late at night, and in the distance I see a movement. I look towards its source and see what I take to be the silhouette of a man, just barely visible against the darkness. In that first instant, I am certain that what I see is a man, but as I scrutinise the shape (making it the object of an intensive mental process), I begin to pick out details (construed ‘as such’ within individual intensive moments) which contradict my initial assessment. As I continue to look, my attitude towards the idea that the shadow is a man is thus modified. At first I was *certain* that it was a man, but now I think it is only *possibly* a man. I look for longer and now I find it *doubtful* that it is a man and, finally, I am certain that it is *not* a man. It is only a tree, moving in the wind, and I decide that I must have just been a little jumpy. Over the course of a whole mental process then, as the identity of the shadow is continually questioned, and brought into greater clarity, the belief-characteristics intended by the noesis undergo modification, from protodoxic certainty, I move to deeming *possible*, to deeming *doubtful*, to conclusively deeming *not*. Correlatively, the noema pertaining to the shadow changed too, from *actually* being a man, to *possibly* being a man, to *doubtfully* being a man, to *not* being a man. This then, is the relationship between belief-characteristics and being-characteristics. Corresponding to the expression “I believe that shape is a man”, expressed in this instance as an intentional mental state characterised as the experience of seeing a man, goes the noematic determination “that shape is a man”. The former, the noetic, intentional expression thus characterises the experience, whereas the latter, the noematic correlate, characterises the understanding, the *sense* associated with that experience.

Now, we have occasionally in the thesis so far, referred to the positional quality of intentional mental states. We saw, drawing from our discussion of Sokolowski's interpretation of the noema, how an intentional act doesn't merely have to fix upon an object which is physically present to us in the world, but that it can also fix upon an object which is only hypothetical. In the strictest sense of course, following the powerful scepticism we inherit from Hume, *all* mental states pertaining to the external world do in fact refer only to hypothetical objects, since all experience of external objects is mediated by our innately fallible senses, rendering perfect knowledge of the external world perceptually inaccessible. We have also seen roughly how this 'positing' occurs in our analysis of Husserl's theory of ideas, most notably pertaining to 'expressions'. A particular meaning is intended by the subjective consciousness *as though it has a fulfilling sense*, whether or not that is actually the case. Of course, there is more to it than that, and now we have the beginnings of an understanding of doxic modifications to our intentional mental states, we can now factor that into our account of positional consciousness to bring both topics into sharper focus. In positing a particular idea, we have seen, we are positing it with a particular belief-modality, as certain, possible, probable etc. In the first instance we posit it as being certain, in the protodoxic 'unmodalized' form of believing. However, once we have carried out an intensive mental process with that idea, object, or state of affairs as intentional object, we are in a position to effect a modification of this belief-characteristic according to the new sense we derive from our new intensive moments, a process which occurs entirely unconsciously.

Aside from the modifications already mentioned, those which occur as the result of an intensive mental process shedding new light on the object of intentional consciousness, we must also explore the modifications pertaining to 'affirmation' and 'denial'. In affirming or

denying a position, what is affirmed or denied is not merely the objective sense of the intentional object, but what Husserl calls the 'whole positum', the objective sense *with* some belief-characteristic already inherent in the mental state (Ideas I, p. 254). Husserl explains:

"Noetically... negation is the 'modification' of some 'position' or other; that does not signify an affirmation but instead a 'positing' in the extended sense of some belief-modality or other." (Ideas I, pp. 253-4)

And likewise:

"Just as negation, metaphorically speaking, strikes out, so affirmation 'underscores,' it 'confirms' a position by 'assenting' instead of 'annulling' it as negation." (Ideas I, p. 254)

As such we should acknowledge that the doxic modifications pertaining to affirmation and denial have this special function of pronouncing judgement, as it were, on the status of the intended object within the parameters of the belief-modality with which it was posited, so we can assent to the 'being' possible of P, or the 'being probable', or else refute these and thus effect the positing of the 'being impossible' or 'being improbable' of P.

Alongside the modifications of affirmation and denial, Husserl gives us one last type of modification, this time of a totally unique nature. This modification is what he calls the 'neutrality modification'. Possibly the most succinct way to describe this modification is as the

process by which conscious posita become intuitively given. In 'neutralising' a positum, Husserl says:

"The posited characteristic has become powerless. Believing is now no longer serious believing, deeming likely is no longer serious deeming likely, negating is no longer serious negating etc. It is a 'neutralized' believing, deeming likely, negating or the like, the correlates of which repeat those of the unmodified mental processes but in a radically modified way: the being simpliciter, the being possible, the being probable, likewise the non-being and each of the other negata and affirmata – all that is consciously there although not in the manner of something 'actually' thought of but instead as something 'merely thought of,' as 'mere thought.'" (Ideas I, p. 258)

In effect then, the neutrality modification comprises the 'acceptance' of an idea that must occur in order for the mind to bring an end to a mental process and take as given the sense arrived upon in that mental process. Every notion which forms part of the intuitively given background of all our experiences is, in effect, a positum which is neutralised within consciousness, its belief-characteristics and correlative being-characteristics exempt from scrutiny until such a time as their object is brought back into the focus of intentional consciousness. It is by virtue of these neutralised posita, the being-characteristics of which have already been posited and subsequently neutralised that I know, for example, that the ground is solid beneath my feet, that there is milk in the fridge, the difference between left and right, the location of the keys on my keyboard, etc., etc. All of these examples are ideas which can only be formed with the benefit of some empirical experience, but are now taken

for granted, and are only consciously posited when some new idea or experience arises to bring them into doubt.

Much of this discussion has taken place with regards to Husserl alone, as though he were originating an entirely new style of philosophy which solves many of Hume's shortcomings, and while this may be the general thrust of our discussion, we should be careful not to overstate the case. It has never been our aim to demonstrate that Husserl's philosophy is intrinsically *superior* to Hume's although Husserl certainly benefits from the advantage of almost two-hundred years of progress in the study of philosophy. If we look carefully at the *Treatise* however, we can find evidence that many of the insights introduced by Husserl were at least beginning to form in Hume's mind, if only in a larval state. For example, we have identified that one of the more significant details in Husserl's account of doxic modalities is the separation of belief-characteristics from the ideal content of a particular noesis, something which is only possible if we allow for mental acts to be characterised by intentionality, something which Hume, who lacks an understanding of intentionality, cannot do. However, Hume writes:

"'Tis certain, that the belief super-adds nothing to the idea, but only changes our manner of conceiving it, and renders it more strong and lively." (T 1.3.8.7)

Here, Hume demonstrates that he knows full well that belief-characteristics (the 'manner of conception') are entirely separate from ideas, and that they have no influence on the content of the ideas, merely modifying the manner in which we engage believably *with* those ideas. This is quite possibly the clearest evidence of intentionalist thinking that we have yet found

in Hume. Further than this, Hume also gives us clues that he believes, just as Husserl describes, that 'belief' is a component of a perceptual act by which an idea is apprehended. He tells us:

"...the belief which attends the present impression, and is produced by a number of past impressions and conjunctions; ... this belief, I say, arises immediately, without any new operation of the reason or imagination." (T 1.3.8.10)

The key phrase here is 'without any new operation of the reason', which is to say, the belief is formed *within* the same mental process as that by which the idea is fixed upon, and therefore as a component of the mental act. This is a somewhat unusual line for Hume to take, it does not seem to cohere very neatly with his central, empirical line of reasoning. Typically, we understand Hume as requiring that every idea be exactly identical to the impression from which it has been copied, and that ideas vary from their corresponding impressions only in respect of their 'force and vivacity'; an idea is, by nature, a less vivid copy of its impression. However, Hume now tells us that an idea can be made more vivid by our belief in it – "the belief... renders [the idea] more strong and lively", he tells us, but where does the belief come from? Hume of course explains that the belief is derived from custom and habit (T 1.3.8.11), from regular observation of reliable, repeatable phenomena, but he also notes something very interesting:

"...we here find, that the understanding or imagination can draw inferences from past experience, without reflecting on it; much more without forming any principle concerning it, or reasoning upon that principle." (T1.3.8.13)

Putting aside our already-noted issue that Hume's 'custom and habit' only constitutes a basis for belief by virtue of 'nature', in this remark Hume observes that our experiences constitute a body of knowledge which is drawn upon wholly unconsciously, without the need to reflect upon it and, crucially, that we are able to draw *inferences* from this body of knowledge, entirely non-reflectively, in the vulgar consciousness. This seems to suggest that Hume conceives of such knowledge as immanently *given*, and begins to hint at an account of intuition, which can be further corroborated by the following:

"...tho' we are here supposed to have had only one experiment of a particular effect, yet we have had many millions to convince us of this principle; that like objects plac'd in like circumstances, will always produce like effects; and as this principle has established itself by a sufficient custom, it bestows an evidence and firmness on any opinion, to which it can be apply'd ... In all cases we transfer our experience to instances, of which we have no experience, either expressly or tacitly, either directly or indirectly." (T1.3.8.14)

This is eidetic intuition, spelled out as clearly as we could ever hope for in Humean language. The principle 'that like objects placed in like circumstances always produce like effects' is, if generalised to the entire field of possible meanings and relations between meanings, the ultimate defining principle of the eidetic hierarchy. All species of a particular genus are defined by their like circumstance with respect to that shared genus. Every shade of red is experienced in a like circumstance, as a more specific determination of colour within the originary presentation of red. Equally, every colour shares the like circumstance of being presented in the more specific determination of 'a visual phenomenon' within the

presentation of some 'visible thing', and so on and so forth. Hume's principle here, by which he explains how we form beliefs concerning 'rare and unusual' objects, about which we have not had time to develop customs and habits, in fact very neatly describes the foundation of Husserl's eidetic science. He tells us that whenever we receive a somewhat novel impression, about which we can have formed no previous ideas, we rely on this essential principle, and make the assumption 'expressly or tacitly, directly or indirectly' that if the idea of this impression resembles in some respect the idea of a prior impression, then those details which resemble one another in each idea are likely to produce similar effects within, or bear similar relations to, the whole of their respective ideas.

8.3 – 'Founded' or 'Predicated' Positional Acts

Now then, returning for the time being to a Husserlian style of thought, we have a broad sketch of the process by which cognition takes place, as expressed within a single mental act. Within that intensive mental process, we fix upon an intentional object, develop an understanding of it, and acquire a certain attitude of belief pertaining to that understanding. Then, we either affirm or deny that attitude (designating its sense either 'affirmata' or 'negata'), and that pronouncement is ultimately neutralised within consciousness, resulting in the appropriately modified objective sense pertaining to this intensive mental process being taken for granted as intuitively given knowledge. Now however, since cognition is not limited to individual mental processes and takes place continuously, allowing us to develop our ideas, form new opinions, gain new knowledge etc., we must explain how these doxic modifications fit into the topic of predication.

So far, all that we have said about predication is that it is, at least as Sokolowski describes it, a presentational form which allows the identification of individual objects or parts of objects to occur, allowing us to understand them both individually, and in context. So for instance, the perception of a bicycle tyre, understood *as* a bicycle tyre with all the associated *relata* (ideas related to the function of a bicycle tyre and, by extension, of bicycles in general), is predicated upon the presentation of a whole bicycle, or at least an understanding of what bicycle is. Without this, the perception is not of a *bicycle* tyre, but merely a tyre, and any possibility of adopting an intentional mental state characterised by concern for bicycle-related matters is precluded, meaning that we can have no thoughts about, for instance, the tyre's suitability for different types of cycling, whether or not it is in an acceptable state of repair, or what type of bicycle it might best fit. This entire line of questioning is predicated upon an understanding of what bicycles are, and serve as a very clear example of the kind of predicative presentations that can occur within intentional consciousness.

However, there are many more ways in which predication can take place including, conspicuously, the much more ordinary sense of predication, which is to say the sense of 'predicate reasoning' or, in other words, statements of the form 'If P then Q'. Since such reasonings obviously take place within mental processes, we naturally need to account for them within the system we have elaborated thus far. For Husserl, this subject is annexed to the matter of doxic modifications by means of a sort of reflective turn by which, whilst 'inhabiting' our modified consciousness, we turn our regard towards the noetic part of the idea. Husserl writes:

“On the one hand, we can e.g., while living in probability-consciousness (in the deeming likely) look at what is probable; on the other hand, we can, however, <look at> the probable itself as probable, that is, at the noematic Object as having the characteristic allotted to it by the deeming-likely noesis. The ‘Object’ however ... is given as existing in the second focusing of regard...” (Ideas I, p. 253)

From this we can see how, by effecting this ‘second focusing of regard,’ we remain fixed upon only whatever X is deemed-likely, and refrain, as yet, from affirming or denying any being-characteristic corresponding to it. In objectivating this possible X, we are therefore able to freely predicate upon it without having to be at all times intimately conscious of the quality of ‘mere possibility’ pertaining to the entire chain of predications.

Alternatively, we can instead fix upon the noematic part of the idea, the ‘probable X as probable’ etc., and then, by extension, bracket away the ‘X’ altogether and focus on the ‘being probably’, ‘being doubtful’ etc., in and of itself. In so doing, the identity of the X is rendered unimportant, all that matters for us to be able to fix upon the being-characteristic of a given sense-object is that there *be* some sense-object in the first place. Thus, when fixed upon this being-characteristic, the object itself, the ‘determinable X’ as Husserl later calls it, is given purely as ‘*being*’. The effect of this insight, Husserl tells us, is that:

“...we can observe the highly remarkable eidetic peculiarity that in relation to all the noetic moments the ‘intentional object’ as ‘Object’ is constituted as having by means of its noeses, every mental process functions as belief-consciousness in the sense of protodoxa; or, as we can also say:

It is not the case that only new noematic characteristics are constituted by the new supervening noetic characteristics or by modifications of old ones: instead, new Objects posited as existent are therewith eo ipso constituted for consciousness; to the noematic characteristics correspond predicable characteristics in the sense-Object as actual and not merely noematically modified predicables.” (Ideas I, p. 253)

This is a difficult passage, but its meaning is very important. It tells us that in predicating upon any sense-object, any and all noematic modifications to the object are suspended, and the object is taken as purely *given*, in whatever determination has been noetically posited in the original act. When Husserl tells us that “*every mental process functions as belief-consciousness in the sense of protodoxa*”, he means to say that just as protodoxic certainty is the default mode of belief in all original presentations, so too in predication is the sense-object, here presented within the predicative act in the form of a posited noesis rather than the sensuous ‘appearing’ that constitutes the presentation of an external object in an originary act of perception, acknowledged protodoxically as ‘being certain’ in the posited determination, for the sake of being at all predicable in the first place.

To give an example, suppose I have in front of me a clear, glass bottle. In perceiving this bottle, I believe that it is really present in front of me and so, corresponding to this belief-characteristic is the noematic being-characteristic ‘being certain’, or ‘certainly existing’ if you prefer. Suppose I now choose to imagine what this bottle would look like if it were green. Now, the existence of the bottle is not the issue, since it is no longer the object of my active mental process. Instead, the *colour* of the bottle is what matters, and the existence of the bottle, up until now apprehended as the object of a noematically modified mental state as

‘certainly existing’ is now given as ‘merely existing’, its existence taken entirely for granted, in protodoxic certainty, in order that I may speculate on the possibility of its being green. This speculation, of course, carries with it its own modifications, in this case the noetic belief in the possibility of the bottle being green, and the corresponding noematic being-characteristic, the ‘being-possible’ of the bottle being green. Suppose now, that I take this idea of a green bottle and imagine it in some other location, on a beach for instance. Now the object of my mental process is the bottle’s location and once more, the noematic modifications pertaining to the previous mental state are suspended, the bottle is now ‘merely green’, but affected by a belief in the possibility that this bottle could be on a beach, and so by the noematic modification, the ‘being-possible’ of being on a beach. From these examples we should be able to see first, how the noematic modifications must be neutralised into mere givenness in order for predications to take place at all and second, that once this principle is established, infinitely many predications may take place in sequence, since each new mental process has its object posited in the mode of protodoxic certainty, taken entirely as given, ready to be modified anew in the new intentional act.

What we have here, is an account of cognition that adequately describes the continuity of thought. To each noesis and to each noema there correspond certain doxic modalities which characterise the doxic *status* of these ideas within our mind, which is to say, the nature and extent of our belief in them. However, since every *affirmatum* and every *negatum* are themselves objects, capable of being objectivated and apprehended in reflection as sense-objects in their own right, we need not consider these ideas to be ‘decided’. At any time they can undergo objectivation and be fixed upon, either in reflective consciousness, or having been revived by some new sensuous experience, and become re-posited in order to form the

basis of a predicative mental process. This new act, this predication, naturally has its own noesis and noema, and therefore its own set of doxic modalities corresponding to them. This new act thus produces its own effects, a change of opinion, a confirmation of an existing opinion, the apprehension of a new property pertaining to the posited noesis, or whatever else might be the product of a thought. This conclusion, once arrived upon, may then be affirmed or denied, and then neutralised within consciousness until it is once more objectivated, and re-positing, ready to be the object of a new mental act. In this way, we can run along an endless chain of predications, and at any time the doxic modalities pertaining to the object in question may change to reflect our apprehension of new evidence. Husserl writes:

"In consequence of the constitution of something as existent effected anew at every step, an ideally infinite chain of reiterated modifications therefore results. Thus at the first level, 'not non-existent,' 'not impossibly existent,' 'not unquestionably existent,' and so forth." (Ideas I, p. 255)

With this continuity of thought well established, the last part of Husserl's account of predication which we need to discuss concerns what he calls 'founded noeses', those species of thought which are founded on objectivations and *"in their structure, show obvious differences in level-by-level founding"* (Ideas I, p. 276-7). These are noeses such as 'feeling', 'desiring', 'willing' etc. Giving examples of noeses such as these Husserl writes:

"...an aesthetic liking may be founded on a neutrality consciousness with a perceptual or reproductive content; a gladness or sorrow on a (non-neutralized) belief or belief"

modality; a striving for or against on the same, but related to something valued as agreeable, or beautiful, etc. (Ideas I, p. 277)

What Husserl describes here are the positional forms of some of the more complex mechanisms behind intentional consciousness, those which are required in order for us to have more complex attitudes to objects within our apprehension. To explore these mechanisms, let us find examples of each of the kinds of mental processes Husserl has described. For instance, where Husserl uses the mental state characterised by ‘aesthetic liking’ as an example of the type of noesis which can be founded on neutrality consciousness, we could just as easily use that of ‘desire’. Specifically, let us suppose that I am thirsty, and therefore desire water.

In desiring water to quench a thirst, one is not generally fixated upon the *reason why* water is suitable for doing so, nor even on the fact that it is; the object of the mental state is the water itself. The knowledge that water has the capacity to quench my thirst is immanently given and therefore we can say, since this knowledge was at one time *learned*, that it has become neutralised within consciousness. Since, in order to desire water for its thirst-quenching properties, we *must* first understand that water has these properties, so we can see that this ‘desiring’ noesis is *founded* upon the neutralised consciousness of the fact that water is hydrating. Likewise, in Husserl’s example of ‘an aesthetic liking’, the object of the mental act is the liked-object, and the reasons *why* it is liked, having presumably been elaborated in an earlier mental state, are neutralised within consciousness and are hence providing the foundation for the current, liking-noesis. Not all founded noeses are founded on neutrality consciousness however. As Husserl says, “*a gladness or a sorrow [may be*

founded] on a (non-neutralized) belief or belief-modality," which we can demonstrate with the aid of the following example.

Suppose I have placed a bet on a horse race, and the horse I chose to bet on wins the race, earning me a substantial amount of money as a result. This is certainly something I can be glad about, so we can say that the mental act characterising my apprehension of the horse's victory is itself characterised as 'perceiving gladsomely'. Of course, this example is a little complex since, nested within the perception of the horse's victory, is the neutralised understanding of the potential earnings in that eventuality, but this constitutes only the basis of my desire for the horse to win, and since in this example that desire has already been fulfilled, we can focus on the *gladness*. Now, in this example the object of my mental state is the horse's *victory*, an outcome made desirable by the money I stand to earn from it, but on what is the gladness founded? It cannot be the mere idea of *that* horse winning *that* race (and hence earning me lots of money), or I would be glad about it whether or not it actually occurred, the idea alone would be sufficient. Neither can it be the actual perception of the horse's victory itself, since the perception may occur within any one of the many possible belief-modalities, and it would seem strange to suggest that I might have been glad about the horse's 'questionably' winning, or indeed about the horse's 'not' winning, which was always a possibility. No, I am only glad if the horse actually *does* win, so the 'perceiving gladsomely' noesis must be predicated upon the specific belief modality, the 'being certain' of the horse's victory. This account is even more compelling if we remember that the entire act of watching the race constitutes only a single intensive mental process, throughout which the object, given that I am anticipating the discovery of whether or not *my* horse has won, is always the horse's victory. Until the horse actually proves to have won however, the belief-characteristic

corresponding to the act which has the horse's victory as its object is in fact the mode of 'being possible' or perhaps 'being probably', if I were feeling confident. Since I only become glad once the horse has actually won, and the only thing that changes at that time is the belief-modality pertaining to the mental process, then it is safe to conclude that the gladness is founded upon precisely that particular modality, and no other aspect of the intentional act.

Lastly, Husserl lists 'striving for or against' and tells us that these mental acts are also founded on beliefs or belief-modalities, but with the added caveat that they must be related to "*something valued as agreeable, or beautiful etc.*" To illustrate mental acts of this type, let us use the example of 'striving to win an award'. As with the horse race, this example also contains some neutralised understanding of the connotations connected with winning the award, but what we are interested in is the thing which forms the basis for our actual state of 'striving for'. The object of this mental state is of course the award, but what does this actually mean? Presumably it does not refer to any physical object intended to *represent* an award; one can buy trophies anywhere, so we must be striving for the conferral of some prestige or renown upon our person which is, for our purposes here at least, what an award actually *is*. Given this, we must actually believe that the award *is* prestigious since, while we are aware that awards in general are supposed to confer prestige, an award for being 'the most average employee' or suchlike has no actual prestige itself. Therefore, in this case too, the very possibility of *striving* for this award must be predicated upon our *belief* that the award is prestigious or, in more conventionally Husserlian terms; that an intensive mental process may be characterised by striving for some award is predicated upon the "being-certain' of the award's being prestigious' being given within the 'striving' noesis.

These are only a few examples of the kinds of predications which are possible, and which Husserl's model is able to explain. In combination with our earlier discoveries concerning how individual belief and/or being characteristics can be re-positied and reinterpreted according to new modifications, we should have a very full understanding of cognition according to Husserl's philosophy. As such, all that remains for this section is to explore how this philosophy constitutes a possible solution to Hume's labyrinth.

What is presented to us in Husserl's system is a means of exploring the structure of cognition within an intentionalist model of consciousness, and therein lies the advantage of this system over that proposed by Hume. For Hume, ideas are connected only by the relations that exist between them, of resemblance, causation, and contiguity, and we discussed earlier how this model enables Hume to explain how the mind is able to run freely between these otherwise distinct ideas and hence account for the ease of our cognition. However, what we lacked in that account was a means of expressing the proper *agency* of thought inherent to truly intentional consciousness, something we find ourselves able to explain once we introduce the concept of the eidetic hierarchy to our discussion. It is possible that I have not yet adequately stressed the significance of the eidetic hierarchy, and while I think I have made it clear that, as the basis of our intuition of the immanently given it is the foundation of all intentional mental states, I should spell out very clearly how this constitutes such a remarkable innovation upon Hume. What we find in eidetic intuition, is a system of necessary connections between ideas, which is revealed to the individual as the result of regular, empirical observation of the world around them, according to the principle we discussed earlier, that 'like objects placed in like circumstances produce like results'. Put simply, by observing the world around us in the manner described by Hume in the *Treatise*, we develop an intuitive

grasp of the hierarchical relationships between different *eidos* (meanings). That this structure is obtained by empirical means is evident, since in order to understand the relationship between colours and sounds, for instance, it is necessary to understand what both of those things are, which we can only achieve by having experience of them. However, the precise order of this hierarchy, collecting particular species of phenomena within their common descriptive genera, follows a necessary structure. Even though each of us has experienced the world through only our own subjective perspective, we *all* understand these eidetic relations in the same way, the hierarchy is the same for all of us. The overall effect of this on Hume's theory is to provide a system of necessary connections between perceptions that are perceptible by, if not integral to, the human mind, thereby providing us with a route out of the labyrinth, by satisfying the requirement that "*the mind perceive some real connexion among [the perceptions]*" (T App. 21).

This is a very significant point, and it is important we do not gloss over it. Hume's contention that "*the mind never perceives any real connexion among distinct existences*" (T App. 21) was an irrefutable consequence of the copy principle; if all of our ideas are nothing but copies of impressions, then naturally all of our perceptions, ideas and impressions both, are always separable from one another, because they can always be apprehended individually. However, if an idea is something more than a mere copy of an impression, if it is a living, evolving thing constituted in positional consciousness as a predicative belief, then we have a means of avoiding the troubles Hume encounters regarding the separability principle. The mere fact that an idea (or *positum*) is separable within the mind from all other ideas, in no way detracts from the fact that it depends for its meaning on predicative formations of the sort described above, nor the fact that our comprehension of that meaning depends on our immanent

intuition of the eidetic relationships associated with the various meanings contained within the posited idea. In other words, the possibility of separating an idea from those other perceptions which are related to it does not entail that those relations were not necessary. Once an idea has been separated and is apprehended in reflective consciousness, its meaning is transformed, its predicative significations severed from it, and it is constituted anew as a mere object of thought, rather than as a thought itself. As such, we might say, while the separability principle is true, and all perceptions are separable from one another, nevertheless they cannot be separated without loss. In the natural attitude however, we are intuitively aware of the eidetic relationships and predicative significations which define our thoughts and feelings, and the necessity of them for our cognition. By these necessary relations therefore, we can explain what Hume could not. The reason we persist in believing in the continued identity of external bodies is that we understand that the identity of any idea in particular depends on the maximally general essence 'any object of consciousness whatever'. In other words, for us to have an idea of any object's identity, it is necessary for us to believe that there is something which has an identity in the first place. Therefore, when the impression of that object passes out of consciousness and all we are left with is an idea, the existence of the idea refers us by eidetic necessity to the idea of an existent thing. Put plainly, if that thing did not exist in some form, we could not have an idea of it, and while we know, on reflection, that the precise nature of that object might have changed, we are unlikely to amend our understanding of it without actual evidence to that effect. Given this principle, it is a small step to suppose that all of our general and predicative positings are grounded by this same eidetic necessity. In positing the general existence of something, the sense of the expression is guaranteed by the eidetic necessity of an intended sense, insofar as every intentional mental state must have an intentional object of some kind or another, be

it a real external body, a fantasy, a hallucination or whatever else; in order to posit the existence of a thing, that thing must exist in some form, even if that form is only ephemeral and imaginary. In positing anything about the *nature* of some object or circumstance, our mental states are formed predicatively from general positings, and the sense available to these predications is limited by the sense of the general positing. As such, the sense of any predication must proceed from the intuition of essences presented in some earlier mental state, and according to the limitations inherent in the eidetic hierarchy. Therefore, all of our perceptions are linked as a matter of necessity by the eidetic relations between the sense contained within them.

It may be argued at this stage that I am making too great a leap by inserting the concept of eidetic intuition into Hume's philosophy and expecting it to solve these long-standing problem's in Hume's work, but I believe I can refute such an argument if I once again highlight how much Hume's thought resembles Husserl's. Most recently of course, I explained how Hume's general 'principle of like circumstances' circumscribes the principle of eidetic hierarchy, but also, we should remind ourselves, much of Hume's understanding of the nature of perception aligns with Husserl. Certainly, on numerous occasions we have seen how Hume seems to approach a problem from an intentionalist point of view, only to fail when proceeding would demand that he leave behind his strict empiricism and commit fully to intentionality. For what it is worth, there is some evidence that after publishing the *Treatise*, Hume started to perceive some of the drawbacks in his account of belief. Moyal (2011) has identified a distinct difference between what he calls Hume's 'early' and 'mature' doctrines concerning belief, drawn from a comparison of Hume's writing in the original text, and the passages he later inserted into it via the Appendix. Briefly, the difference between the two

lies in the fact that the early Hume characterises belief as consisting entirely of degrees of force and vivacity, with a more ardent belief being more vivid than a doubtful one. The later Hume however, conceives of force and vivacity as being only two particular ways of describing the manner of conception annexed to the act of perceiving. In this thesis so far, we have made no distinction between the original text and the later additions, but it may be interesting to identify which parts of the text Hume deemed to be ‘corrections’, particularly since, as we will see, these corrections do seem to bring Hume more into line with Husserl.

The first occasion where such an alteration is made to Hume’s doctrine of belief comes in the form of a seemingly minor correction. In the section ‘Of the nature of the idea or belief’, Hume has this to say concerning the nature of belief:

“All the perceptions of the mind are of two kinds, viz. impressions and ideas, which differ from each other only in their different degrees of force and vivacity... when you wou’d any way vary the idea of a particular object, you can only encrease or diminish its force and vivacity.” (T 1.3.7.5)

However, in the Appendix Hume makes the following remarks concerning the above passage:

“I believe there are other differences among ideas, which cannot properly be comprehended under these terms. Had I said, that two ideas of the same object can only be different by their different feeling, I shou’d have been nearer the truth.” (T App.22)

It is a small distinction, but a significant one, because it indicates a departure from the strict letter of the philosophy laid out in the *Treatise*, as represented by the replacement of the strictly empirical themes of ‘force and vivacity’ to the more nebulous and altogether vague concept of ‘feeling’. This is yet another occasion where Hume seems to resort to vagaries in response to his inability to give a phenomenon its proper intentionalist treatment, just as he did with his appeal to ‘nature’ in order to avoid having to explain the precise mechanism of the indiscernible ‘I-principles’. It is interesting therefore, that this particular resort to vagaries comes significantly *after* the original publication; that Hume replaces his specific, grounded argument with a more general and unsupported account, considering after mature reflection, that the latter description is nearer the truth. At any rate, it seems that Hume recognised the inadequacy of this appeal to nature, as later on in the same section he inserts a paragraph which elaborates upon it. He writes:

“...this different feeling I endeavour to explain by calling it a superior force, or vivacity, or solidity, or firmness, or steadiness. This variety of terms, which may seem so unphilosophical, is intended only to express that act of the mind which renders realities more present to us than fictions, causes them to weigh more in the thought and gives them a superior influence on the passions and imagination.” (T 1.3.7.7)

Hume seems to realise that this does not actually make his argument any clearer, merely reiterating what he expects everyone to already understand and agree upon, that belief inheres in some feeling inherent within the mental act. For us however, this is further evidence that Hume’s turn away from the restrictive terms of his early view is a considered move which Hume believes rescues him from some inadequacy of his earlier beliefs. Having

learned what we have about belief from Husserl, it should be fairly clear to us that what Hume describes as a ‘feeling’ can more adequately be described as a ‘belief-characteristic’ given that such characteristics are inherent to the mental act, as Hume requires, and that they describe both the nature and extent of one’s belief concerning the object posited by the act. It cannot be overstated how essential to the whole system is the positional quality of mental acts; it is the lack of exactly this detail, the intentional expression of a *particular* object as a positum, that stalls Hume in his tracks, and renders him incapable of accounting for the different modes of presentation within which an idea may be expressed. Nevertheless, though he cannot account for it, Hume does seem to understand that there *are* such different modes of presentation, as we see from the following:

“There is no passion of the human mind but what may arise from poetry; tho’ at the same time the feelings of the passions are very different when exacted by poetical fictions, from what they are when they arise from belief and reality. A passion, which is disagreeable in real life, may afford the highest entertainment in a tragedy, or epic poem.” (T 1.3.10.10)

This passage, also added to the text via the Appendix, comes at the end of a discussion of the relationship between belief and the passions, wherein he describes how *“wherever we can make an idea approach the impression in force and vivacity, it will likewise imitate them in its influence on the mind”* (T 1.3.10.3), meaning that an idea which is attended by some passion is made more vivid, and so more believable as a result. The above passage however, goes beyond the original purpose of the section in distinguishing between passions elicited by poetry, and those same passions elicited by real-world experience. The reason for this

addition is unclear, however, Moural (2011) suggests that one of Hume's influences in developing his mature doctrine was Henry Home (also referred to as Lord Kames), who did make a pointed criticism of Hume's assertion that history makes a more lively impression than poetry:

"Every man must judge for himself: I cannot admit this to be my case. History, no doubt, takes faster hold of the mind, than any fiction in the plain historical state. But can any man doubt who has taste, that poetry makes a stronger impression than history?" (Kames, 1751, p. 145)

With this in mind, it is possible that we might view Hume's appended remarks about poetry as an attempt to reconcile Kames' beliefs with his own. He readily admits the influence that poetry has on the mind, but rather than capitulate to the idea that the influence of poetry is *greater* than that of history, he merely allows that the passions excited by poetry are of a different kind. He writes:

"...how great soever the pitch may be, to which this vivacity rise, 'tis evident that in poetry it never has the same feeling with that which arises in the mind, when we reason, tho' even upon the lowest species of probability." (T 1.3.10.10)

Indeed, by the time of writing the Appendix, Hume seems dead set on establishing the notion that *feeling* is the key identifying characteristic which distinguishes the different modes of belief, and while this description is painfully vague, if we continue reading the appended section, we start to see evidence that even if Hume didn't necessarily have the means of

articulating the precise nature of this feeling, he nevertheless had some idea of how our beliefs are articulated in different acts. He writes:

“A poetical description may have a more sensible effect on the fancy, than an historical narration. It may collect more of those circumstances, that form a compleat image or picture. It may seem to set the object before us in more lively colours. But still the ideas it presents are different to the feeling from those, which arise from the memory and the judgement. There is something weak and imperfect amidst all that seeming vehemence of thought and sentiment, which attends the fictions of poetry.” (T 1.3.10.10)

Most important in this section is the very last sentence; in identifying that even amongst the vivid ideas evoked by good poetry, there remains something ‘weak and imperfect’, Hume has struck upon something of the noematic quality of mental acts. Regardless of the skill with which a poet manipulated language to shape the ideas present to the mind, we are nonetheless aware that it is only poetry, and therefore the being-characteristic corresponding to the act by which the objects depicted by the poem are fixed upon is never going to be one of ‘certainty’, except protodoxically within a further, predicative act. In identifying this difference between poetry, which is generally fiction, and history, which is received as fact, Hume has found not only a provisional account of doxic modalities, but he also demonstrates an understanding of how eidetic reasoning forms the basis for cognition in general, as a ‘system of evident cognition’, with lived experience forming the evidentiary basis for belief not merely in the passive sense which he strictly intended, but also in the active, intentional sense advanced by Husserl.

It should be clear by now that Hume, at least by the time he wrote the Appendix, was aware of many of the shortcomings we have described in this thesis, and with the benefit of some reflection, was beginning to grasp some of the more nuanced facets of cognition. It is also apparent, that although Hume had started to understand these problems, he had not recognised that his dogmatic adherence to traditional empiricism had rendered them unsolvable, and so he merely made efforts to clarify his descriptions of mental processes, all of which demonstrate remarkable perspicacity within the limitations of his system. That so much of Hume's philosophy can be aligned with, and expanded upon within, Husserl's philosophy demonstrates, I think, that the two philosophers belonged to essentially the same school of thought, and I believe that this justifies the application of the devices of Husserlian phenomenology to Hume's philosophy as a means of understanding and resolving its various limitations.

Conclusion

All that remains to us now is to assemble everything we have learnt about the relationship between the philosophies of Hume and Husserl in order to see how the latter may be seen as a development upon the former, sharing many of the same basic concepts, but refined by the implementation of a nuanced account of intentionality. We have seen how these two schools of thought depend upon a shared belief in the apodictic self-givenness of subjective experience, and that as a result, our perceptions may be used to form the basis of an a priori stratum of experiential evidence upon which rests the entirety of our cognition. For Hume, this stratum of evidence consists of a bundle of individual perceptions with no necessary relation to each other, which he knows because when he singles them out in his mind for analysis, he is able to separate them from the rest of the perceptions which are otherwise connected to them, and view them on their own. As such, he surmises, the connections between our perceptions must be merely contingent, associated by some principle of the mind. Furthermore, he informs us, the manner in which two perceptions are linked must be one of only a limited number of different types of relations. There are only three ways in which ideas can be associated in the mind, either by some resemblance, by their contiguity in place or time, or by the causal relationships between them. This system furnished Hume with some significant early successes when using it to examine the way in which we form beliefs concerning the external world. Hume observes that our attitude towards the existence of external objects demonstrates some curious inconsistencies and fallacies which are easily identified when exercising reason, but nevertheless continue to influence our thought even once we have made ourselves aware of them, and which we cannot persuade ourselves ever to abandon. Most notably, Hume observes that we have a tendency to attribute a single,

continuous identity to objects within our perception, even though the impressions by which these objects are presented to us may be interrupted or inconsistent, and such variation between these impressions should be enough to annihilate the idea of identity between them; since variation is diametrically opposed to identity, they are mutually exclusive concepts. By applying the principle of association however, Hume is able to demonstrate how the strong resemblance between two impressions of the same apparent object are sufficient to lead us to believe, however erroneously, that the object presented within each impression is the self-same thing. Likewise, the principle of association is able to account for almost all of the habitual fallacies to which we fall prey. Any idea we have which is not simply copied from an impression is derived from the association of several perceptions according to their resemblance, contiguity with one another, or causal relationships.

For Husserl however, the apodictic self-givenness of perceptions is more nuanced than Hume's copy principle allows. For him, what Hume calls an impression is really only a noetic moment, within which is presented not any object in and of itself, but the various essences pertaining to it constituted as an *eidos*. It is therefore not the object of perception which is apodictically given, but the essential *meanings* presented to the mind in the perception. As such, by accumulating experiences and having their essences presented to us in this way, we develop a schema of essences. This schema, we come to understand, is hierarchical, due to the capacity of essences to be more or less general, meaning that some essences are in fact only more particular expressions of other, more general essences. In fact, tracing our way up the hierarchy of essences we find that all essences are just particularisations of the maximally general essence 'any object of consciousness whatever' which, from the perspective of the subjective consciousness may easily be construed as the essence of 'existence'. Simply by

accumulating experience then, we develop an intuition of the relation between the essences contained within individual noetic presentations. This is, more or less, a Husserlian account of the 'indiscernible I-principles' which we discussed in chapter 2, which govern the principle of association. It has always been clear that Hume's principle of association is governed by an intuitive faculty, since it is only in vulgar consciousness that our perceptions are supposed to be united. It is in philosophical reflection that we discover that these connections are merely contingent, and where Hume has no explanation but a vain appeal to nature, Husserl's theory of eidetic intuition allows us to account for this discrepancy. Further, we can see how Hume's philosophical reflection really amounts to an eidetic reduction. Since Hume conceived of all perceptions as being distinct existences, this implies that there is a separation between an idea and the very impression from which it is copied. Separating an idea from its correlative impression in this way, as well as separating it from any other ideas to which it might be habitually connected in the mind is precisely the purpose of the eidetic reduction as Husserl describes it. By reflecting upon an idea (eidos) in this way, it is thereby considered in its essential purity and can hence have its nature properly examined without being influenced by the complex of circumstances with which it might be involved in the ordinary stream of consciousness. We might therefore be able to say that all three of Hume's core principles have found their parallels in Husserl's theory. The copy principle can be equated to the principle of inward evidence, in the sense that every *eidos* is contained within the noesis of a mental act, which we have shown corresponds quite closely to Humean impressions, and it is this immanent intuition of the essence presented within the *eidos* which constitutes the basis for inward evidence. The separability principle is accommodated in Husserl's theory by the phenomenological/eidetic reduction. In asserting the importance for a phenomenological philosophy of bracketing away everything but the essence of the object of investigation,

Husserl implicitly acknowledges that all essences are separable from one another in precisely the manner described by Hume. Finally, the principle of association is accounted for, and even improved upon, by building upon the theory of eidetic intuition and positing that not only does experience give us the ability to intuit the meaning of essences presented to us within individual perceptual acts, but that this intuitive faculty also mediates our understanding of the relation between essences by revealing to us the structure of the eidetic hierarchy.

Without a full understanding of the mechanisms behind intuitive thought, Hume encounters numerous sceptical difficulties in his thought due to his lack of an account of how distinct ideas can be united. These problems are exemplified in his discussion of personal identity. While the principles of Hume's philosophy should apply equally to the question of how to establish an idea of personal identity as it does to the question of forming ideas of external objects, Hume finds considerable difficulty in doing so. Where the apparent identity of external bodies could be accounted for by deferring to the action of the mind in associating distinct ideas according to their relations, this option is not available to Hume in order to produce the idea of a mind. The mind is, according to Hume, nothing but a bundle of perceptions, but a bundle of perceptions on their own could not possibly give rise to consciousness unless they were in some way connected, but according to the principle of association, these connections are produced by the mind itself, which is clearly a circular argument. Without the ability to refer to the mind as the unifying entity, a whole range of problems emerge which threaten much of what we conceive as being our identity. For instance, supposing that there is a common identity between myself aged ten, and myself aged twenty-five would seem absurd. There is not one single cell in my body which is the same as it was when I was ten years old, and the bundle of perceptions which I call my mind

is equally transformed. I know far more than I did then, my memories are very different, my attitudes towards those memories we *do* share have changed, and so on and so forth. Without recourse to the continuity of mind to bind these changing states together by common reference to it, I am forced to depend on unsupported suppositions. For example, I may be tempted to believe that my identity must be preserved across all that time by the causal links between each successive state. Nevertheless, without the mind to unite these successive states according to the principle of association, I have no reason to suppose that they are really connected in this way, nor even any means to observe that there *is* such a thing as causation in the first place. No matter how one approaches the matter, the mind is necessary for the formation of beliefs concerning the identity of anything more complex than simple, unmediated perceptions. Supposedly, Hume's conclusion is that the matter of identity, when reduced in this way to a matter of relations, is really a grammatical issue, since there is no 'just standard' according to which we may judge if a particular relation confers identity or not, due to the infinitely many degrees of force and vivacity a relation may have, as well as the difficulty in ascribing an identity to two separate perceptions without the action of the imagination. Nevertheless, Hume was not satisfied with this conclusion and, as we have seen, acknowledged in the Appendix of the *Treatise* that there must have been something wrong with his theory of personal identity, because of a conflict between his two 'unrenounceable principles': that the mind inheres in nothing simple and individual, and that the mind never perceives any real connection amongst distinct existences.

Of course, as we have pointed out, these two principles do not seem to be remotely inconsistent with one another when laid out in this way, and it has been a persistent mystery in Hume studies what Hume thought the problem actually was. The account that we have

observed in this thesis is that which proposes that Hume was troubled by the fact that these two principles combined preclude not only the possibility of knowledge concerning the identity, but also the *fiction* of identity, since even the fiction depends on there being a mind to produce it, and Hume's principles annihilate the possibility of even that. It is not the case of course, that Hume was merely disappointed that the consequences of his philosophy were more solipsistic than he might have preferred. Rather, that these two principles seem to produce an untenable conclusion reveals a severe breakdown in Hume's whole system. That the mind inheres in nothing simple and individual is supposed to be self-evident, since when he enters 'most intimately into himself', all that Hume discovers is a bundle of individual perceptions, and this is all that is ever discoverable, as far as Hume can discern. None of these perceptions individually have the capacity to produce consciousness, and if this is the case it should surely be impossible for any number of these perceptions together to produce consciousness either. Further, that the mind never perceives any connections between distinct existences is supposed to be similarly self-evident. According to the separability principle, all our perceptions are distinct existences and whatever connections we do observe between them are only contingent. What's more, since observing any relations between two differing perceptions requires an act of the mind in order to make a comparison, every such relation must be, in a sense, fictional. Such relations are native to the mind, not the perceptions themselves, and since no impression of such a connection is possible, no idea of such a connection can be copied from it, so the only connections between perceptions which we *can* perceive are the fictional ones which arise in our minds by some action of the imagination. Given the apparently self-evident truth of these two principles, it should be impossible for us even to suppose the existence of the mind, or indeed anything at all, were it not for the fact that the imagination mediates between our perceptions and produces these

fictional ideas, which is why it is so very unfortunate for Hume that the fact that the mind inheres in nothing simple and individual prevents us from acknowledging the influence of the imagination, due to the circularity of an argument which rests on the assumption that it is an action of the mind which produces the mind. It is this apparent contradiction that clues us in to the fact that there is something fundamentally wrong with Hume's theory, as a theory that sets out to explain the how we think and concludes that, contrary to all the evidence of our own existence, thought itself is an illusion, must be seriously flawed. As we saw, Husserl's solution was to introduce a more nuanced account of the intuitive faculty which Hume unknowingly introduced with his conception of the imagination. Of course, this introduction of eidetic intuition as a concept represented far more than a simple refinement of essentially Humean concepts. It represented the introduction of intentionality to an otherwise purely empirical science of man.

Despite the fact that the modern discussion of intentionality was originated by Brentano in the later nineteenth century, and the medieval discussion of intentionality had died out long before Hume's time, there has still been some thought given by modern Hume commentators to whether or not Hume's theory contains any details which account for the phenomenon of intentionality in thought. As we saw, there are two possible lines of argument to the effect that it does; the 'causal role' theory derived primarily from the copy principle and the principle of association, along with the ensuing discussions in book 1 of the *Treatise*, or the 'intrinsic' model, which draws on Hume's arguments concerning the passions in book 2. Within the context of Hume scholarship the discussion of intentionality centres around the manner in which the mind takes a particular entity as its object or, in other words, how we know what our perceptions are about. The explanation offered by the causal role theory refers to the

supposed causal relationships between objects, impressions, and ideas. According to this theory, the nature of our ideas is determined by the nature of their objects because in ordinary consciousness the object is, in effect, the cause of an impression which is, in turn, the cause of a corresponding idea. This theory works by appealing not only to the Humean concept of causation, but also to resemblance. In short, since impressions can be associated in terms of their causal relation or resemblance, and ideas always resemble their impressions, then an impression of one thing can provoke the apprehension of another thing which resembles it and/or is causally related. In fact, it is interesting to note that according to causal role theory, resemblance alone is not sufficient to account for the representation of objects to the mind, since an idea can represent an object without resembling it, and can represent more than one thing at a time, or even a thing which is much more complex than the original idea. The thing which drives representation must therefore be causation. It is in respect of its *causal role* that an object can be represented to the mind by an impression which does not resemble it, so the impression of a matchstick can produce the idea of a flame because the idea of a flame is linked to the idea of a matchstick by its causal relationship. If we experience enough instances of a match producing a flame it will eventually be possible to arrive at the idea of the flame from an impression of only the match because both the idea of the flame and the impression of the match are causally related to the same object; the match itself.

The intrinsic model of Humean intentionality, however, struggles to accept all of the causal role theory's conclusions, due to apparent contradictions which emerge when we consider the passions. In book 2 of the *Treatise*, Hume expressly denies that passions have any representational quality, and since the causal role theory takes 'representation' to be the crux of intentionality, this would imply that only some of our perceptions are intentional mental

states, and *none* of the passions are. While some modern writers, like John Searle, have suggested that not all our mental states are intentional, nobody would suggest that *none* of our emotional states are intentional. Nevertheless, if we take representation to be the standard of which mental states are intentional, then Hume's claim that passions contain no representational content would seem to suggest just that. However, if one takes the view proposed within the intrinsic model, it is possible to bypass this difficulty by interpreting Hume as maintaining a distinction between 'representation' and 'directedness'. If we do that, then we can use directedness rather than representation as the standard of Humean intentionality, and therefore account for the intentional qualities of the passions by claiming that passions are *about* those objects to which they are *directed*. Considering the possibility of Humean intentionality in this way seems to be a fairly conclusive rebuttal of the causal theory for three main reasons. First, the causal role theory fails to address the essential directedness of passions like pride and humility. If such passions are considered to be nothing but the causal products of certain perceptions, then Hume's assertion that passions of this kind reveal to us the idea of self via a double relation to both self and object presents a difficulty. According to Hume, the passion refers to both the self and the object, but this is a subversion of the direction of causation which is necessary to the causal role theory. The causal role theory requires that the self be the causal product of the passion, and the passion be the causal product of the object. If this is true though, then the passions are clearly produced *prior* to the idea of self, in which case no self exists for them to refer to, which contradicts Hume. Second, the causal role theory fails to accommodate Hume's belief in the originality of passions. If passions were causal products, then not only their occurrence, but also their *nature* would be causal products, but since passions are original existences which do not acquire their qualities from anything else, this cannot have been what Hume believed.

Third, Hume suggests that the directedness of the passions is a quality intrinsic to them, which precludes any interpretation suggesting that this quality could have itself been in some way determined by causal relationships. The intrinsic model would therefore seem like the conclusive answer to the question of Humean intentionality, were it not for two things. First, the obvious fact that Hume never made any mention of intentionality in his work, so any resemblance to our present-day conceptions of intentionality is purely coincidental, and second, neither the intrinsic, or the extrinsic models of intentionality help to evade the sceptical consequences of Hume's theory. If we interpret intentionality as a matter of representation, mediated by the causal relationships between objects and perceptions we fail to account for the idea of self, due to the difficulties involved in identifying the original cause of that idea. Equally, if we interpret intentionality as a matter of directedness, then passions like pride and humility, which supposedly *produce* the idea of self, are characterised by their directedness *towards* the self. This presents a problem, since it is impossible for the passions to be directed towards an object of which we have no idea, and the idea of self does not arise at least until the same moment when the passion occurs, leading us to question how the passion arose in the first place if we had no idea of any self in whom to feel proud.

Neither of these models however, is the model of intentionality favoured by Husserl, and so they do not help us to make sense of Husserl's assertion that if Hume had understood intentionality "*he would not have become the great sceptic, but instead the founder of a truly 'positive' theory of reason*" (PRS, p. 113). To understand that, we have to understand the model of intentionality proposed by Husserl's mentor, Brentano. The Brentanian model, which revived the discussion of intentionality for modern philosophy, was characterised by the obscure concept of intentional in-existence. As we saw in chapter 4, this term has a history

of being misinterpreted, but all it amounts to, is the idea that every mental state has an object, and that this object once perceived, is merely *given* in consciousness as really existing. Intentional in-existence then, is merely another way of expressing the apodictic self-givenness belonging to all first-person perceptual experience. The principal concern with this model of intentionality is therefore the matter of understanding the relationship between the object of a perception, and its content. After all, this model seems strongly to resemble the representationalist account favoured by the Humean causal role theorists, but Brentano explicitly denies that the 'immanent object', the thing which lives within the mental state, is specifically different from the really existing object. We have already accepted that this is the case, and that the immanent object merely constitutes the givenness of that object in consciousness, but this does not help us establish much about the content/object distinction. The alternative to the representationalist account that was adopted by Brentano and his students was an account which proposed that rather than being *represented* to consciousness, objects are simply 'presented', in which case the issue is not one of how objects are 'copied' into the mind, since a) the content of perceptions is both immediate and self-evident and b) there is no way of knowing if external bodies are ever perceptually accessible in the first place, but one of how *sense* is attributed to sensuous presentations. The only serious impediment to this model of intentionality then, is how to account for the sense of those ideas with no apparent object to give a reference to their sense, because it is unclear in these circumstances exactly what is being presented. Such ideas fall into three basic categories: those for which a reference is impossible (a round square, a golden mountain etc.), those with imaginary referents (a unicorn, a flying pig etc.), and those which constitute what Hume might call 'original' qualities, such as pains ('original impressions' (T 1.1.2.1)) and passions ('original existences' (T 2.3.3.5)) which are sensations without any representational

quality, and are presented to consciousness immediately in reaction to some stimulus. These types of experience present a challenge for Brentanian intentionality, and particularly its claim that *all* mental states are intentional, by demonstrating that while we might make a distinction between an object and its sensuous presentation, there are still some mental states for which this is not the case. The cases of impossible and imaginary things are covered by Husserl's theory of meaning, which we will recap shortly, but the more general Brentanian model is still able to accommodate the 'original' sensations, by re-examining the nature of sensation in general, and arguing that even when an experience as such an original quality that arises immediately in consciousness, nevertheless we can distinguish between the *cause* of a sensation, and its experiential content. So, while the sensation of pain might arise immediately, the cause of the pain could occur independently of the experience of pain. For instance, a cut to my hand would be accompanied by the sensation of pain, but a cut to the hand of a corpse would not. Equally, when we attend to the question of the passions, we can circumnavigate the issue by highlighting that even when a passion does not *seem* to be directed at anything, the object of that passion is oneself, or one's own life circumstance. As such, we can conclude that these sensations, while not objects of mental states in and of themselves, nevertheless characterise the *manner* in which the mind intends its object.

In chapter 6, we saw how Husserl takes this model of intentionality and put it to use in explaining some of the finer points of human cognition. The basic structural elements Husserl's theory are the noesis and the noema, two interrelated components of every intentional mental state. It is important to remember that these two components cannot truly be separated from one another; every noesis entails a noema, and vice versa, so while we have often discussed them as though they were separate and distinct from one another, this

is only ever the case in our philosophical reflection, and does not reflect their real nature within actional consciousness. The relationship of the noesis to the noema, if our discussions have not yet made that clear, is analogous to the relationship between the specific and the general. The noesis individually is best conceived as *being* the intentional element of consciousness, in the sense that it constitutes the presentation of an object in the mode of determination particular to it. In the simple case of the perception of external bodies, this intentionality is predominantly articulated as a factor of one's physical perspective, and hence any one particular perception is distinguished from anybody else's, or one's own at a different time, by one's unique disposition to the object at the time the perception occurred. As we saw in chapter 8 however, the content of the noesis can be a great deal more complex when it is predicated upon earlier cognitions, and the sense in which we understand one's own subjective 'perspective' is significantly expanded to accommodate the body of attitudes, presuppositions, and circumstantial mental states which alter the manner in which the object is apprehended in consciousness. In this way we can see how intentionality can be said to determine *all* mental states, since the noesis, which defines the intentional *sense* of the mental state, is formed not merely from the sense data, the *hyle* of an object, but also from the whole system of understanding which comprises inward evidence. Every basic intuition of essence, every eidetic relation between essences, and every predicative cognition founded on them contributes to the noetic intentional *form* of the presented object. The noema, therefore, has a somewhat obscure nature. Since the noesis seems to cover quite adequately everything that is really required of a Brentanian-style model of intentionality, the role of the noema has been unclear. We saw in chapter 6 the two predominant interpretations of the noema, however, since both Føllesdal and Sokolowski failed to respect Husserl's agnosticism concerning the existence of the external world, their descriptions of the noema, both of which

contain valuable insights, fail to address the core issue, and therefore pose themselves as opposites when in fact they can easily be synthesised into a more holistic picture of the noema. Føllesdal's interpretation characterised the noema as *"an intensional entity, a generalization of the notion of meaning"* (Føllesdal, 1969), and this is essentially true. Husserl characterised the noema as a *"multiplicity of Data demonstrable in actual pure intuition"* (Ideas I, p. 214), correlated to the noesis or, in other words, the noema is the intuition of two kinds of essence: the general essences corresponding to the particular presentation of those essences within the noesis, and the essence of givenness. To put it yet another way, where the noesis gives us the sense of an object in particular, the noema contains the sense of both *that* it is, and *what* it is in general. Thus, when an object is apprehended in consciousness, it is by virtue of the noema that we understand what we are looking at, and that we assume that everybody else's perception of it resembles our own. We say therefore, that the noema is the 'objectivation' of the intended sense of a mental state. Sokolowski on the other hand, expresses the view that the noema is in fact *"the objective correlate of an intentional act or state"* (Sokolowski, 1984). This too is true, in a manner of speaking, though it is by no means clear that Sokolowski is using the word 'objective' correctly in this assertion. In the sense that noematic sense is the objective sense which corresponds to the noetic intentional sense, we could describe the noema as the objective correlate of an intentional act, but this would seem to contrast the 'objective' noema with the 'subjective' noesis when in fact, both are indispensable elements of subjective consciousness. The source of this confusion is really the mistaken concern for the internalist-externalist debate, when Husserl flatly ignored questions of that kind. Without that confounding detail, Føllesdal and Sokolowski are really in perfect agreement. Our understanding of the noesis and the noema then, is this: the noesis consists of the original presentation of some intentional object, its form determined by the subjective

consciousness' unique disposition to it, and comprised of essences particular to that presentation. The corresponding noema represents the objectivation of these essences to the widest sphere of intentionality, by which the object is taken as *given* in its particular mode of determination.

Now, it is certain that Hume has no notion of the noesis and the noema as Husserl understood them, but the structural elements of Hume's philosophy are sufficiently similar that we can draw certain parallels. Given that both philosophies rely on the apodictic self-givenness of the content of our perception, Hume's account of perception can be distinguished from other so-called representationalist accounts by his sceptical indifference to the existence of external bodies. As such Hume, like Husserl, picks up the argument at the point at which the perception is *presented* within consciousness. Hume has, in effect, performed a version of Husserl's reductions, and directs his focus not to the external bodies themselves (and hence questions of how they are *represented* to the mind), but to what he deems essential to the perception of these objects, namely the impressions and ideas. It should be clear therefore, that the similarities between Hume's impressions and ideas, and Husserl's noesis and noema, are not merely coincidental, but proceed from shared methodological principles. It is no accident then, that the self-given content of impressions is reflected in the noesis, since both concepts represent the immanent presentation of sense data to consciousness, within the confines of a single perceptual act. The correlative concepts in each case too, the ideas and the noema respectively, occupy similar roles. If ideas resemble their corresponding impressions in all respects except their force and vivacity, then they too must be straightforwardly given within consciousness, and this fact accounts for the intuition of givenness which forms part of the noema. While it is more difficult to find a parallel between

the Humean ideas and the noematic intuition of general essences, nevertheless we do have some strong reasons to suspect that there is a connection. First of all, it is clear that Husserl's 'general essences' relate to Hume's theory of abstraction and his 'general terms', in the sense that both of these concepts attempt to explain the understanding of an idea which is independent from any particular presentation of it. By Hume's account, such ideas arise as a result of the ideas corresponding to several resembling impressions being annexed to a certain term, which is used to denote the quality by which these ideas resemble one another. Husserl, by comparison, judges that over time, through repeated experience, we acquire the intuition for the necessary eidetic relations between essential qualities. In either case, the understanding of these 'general' ideas is related to acts of perception. Second, Humean relations correspond reasonably well with the phenomenological *eidetic* relations. The principal difference is that where Hume contends that the regular experience of a certain relation in several particulars produces a custom of believing in a necessary connection between separable perceptions. Husserl elaborated that this custom is not a fiction, but instead derives from the necessary relations which different essences must bear to each other. The practical difference between these two models is only really articulated in the difference between ideas and noemata, since noemata depend on the intuition which Husserl conceives as being essential to intentional thought, but the cognitive function of 'ideas' to 'noemata' varies little. Both Hume and Husserl hold that it is the ideal *relations*, of some type or another, which govern the association of ideas and facilitate complex, predicative cognitions. Lastly, since Hume acknowledges a distinction between an idea and the manner in which it is perceived, we can infer a certain awareness of the intentional nature of ideas. Since the mere act of sensuous perception could not copy the peculiar quality which *characterises* the perception of an idea, the only possible source for such a quality is the

unique disposition which intentional consciousness bears to its object. As such, Hume seems to have included provision for his ideas to serve the same function as the noema, in terms of generalising not merely the object of perception, but the object of perception *in the manner in which it is perceived*, with all its intentional modifications accounted for.

We seem at this stage, to have an answer to the question of whether Hume exhibits some tendency towards a phenomenological style of thought. His methodological scepticism which suspends all judgement concerning the existence of external bodies leads to a science of man bearing a striking resemblance to Husserl's phenomenology in terms of its structure and purpose, and even when Hume's theory encounters limitations, he expresses some awareness of the need for a solution that goes beyond his strictly empirical principles. To see exactly how phenomenology may be employed to solve Hume's problems, we need to recap the limitations of Hume's theory and the solutions offered to us by Husserl. In chapter 7 we focused on Hume's conception of ideas and how they relate together. We saw how Hume deviated from the approach taken by earlier empiricists in asserting that there is no such thing as an abstract idea, thus evading some of the absurdities that arise as a result of that conception. We know that Husserl had a degree of admiration for Hume's clarity of thought in this respect, but nevertheless we saw how Hume's theory struggles due to its overreliance on the copy principle to explain the formation of ideas. We saw how, in Hume's view, all ideas are mere copies of impressions, and this does not come close to accommodating all the different kinds of thoughts and ideas it is possible to have. Hume for his part knows that his theory is limited in this way, as we noted earlier regarding his acknowledgement that there must be some principle which shapes the manner in which ideas are conceived (T 1.3.7.4), but he offers no real suggestion as to what this principle might be.

As we have already pointed out, Hume's biggest problems, those which trap him in his labyrinth, are the inevitable consequences of his three core principles, all of which depend ultimately on the copy principle, and from our discussion of the theory of ideas in chapter 7, we should be able to see why. By closing themselves off to the idea of intuition in all its forms, the English empiricists adopted a disposition regarding perception which characterised experience as a purely passive, acquisitive phenomenon. Under this rubric, the *sense* of a perception is exclusively *derived* from objects in the world, and this view has significant difficulty in accounting for any kind of perception which concerns something other than external bodies. Hume recognises that the usual recourse to abstract ideas was not tenable within an empirical system, and Husserl showed that Hume's replacement theory failed to do the job either. Thus, we have seen that it is by virtue of reducing ideas to mere copies of impressions, that Hume walks himself into his labyrinth, closing himself off from the possibility of acknowledging any predicate knowledge which is not founded on an idea which has been explicitly copied from an impression including, for instance, the idea of self. To account for ideas of this kind then, requires a whole new theory of meaning, one which was willing to accommodate the possibility that meaning could be intentional, in the sense that existing mental states could contribute to the proactive conferral of meaning onto acquired sense data; in effect, that perceptions could be interpreted. Husserl's theory of meaning satisfies this requirement. The core problem with the empirical account, was that for it, meaning was a purely *extensional* affair, but as we saw in section 7.3, there is a difference between the extensional and intensional significations of the same properties. So, for example, while the category of 'things that float on water' is identical to the category of 'things which are less dense than water' in terms of their extensional significations, the

observation that something floats on water is intensionally distinct from the observation that it is less dense than water, and one cannot infer the one from the other from observation alone. For example, metal is not less dense than water, and yet metal ships may be observed to float, so while it is true that metal in and of itself does not float on water, it may not be intuitive that this is the case, since metal can be *observed* to float on water under certain circumstances. By respecting the sense of intensional meanings, Husserl is thereby enabled to account for expressions which lack a reference, and which cannot be comprehended by association with other, purely extensional expressions such as those Frege provided for us in 'On Sense and Reference': "*the celestial body most distant from the earth*" and "*the least rapidly convergent series*". The benefit of introducing intensional meaning to our account of cognition is seen most clearly when we move away from discussing ideas *of* objects and turn our attention to ideas *about* objects; those ideas which describe our opinions about objects or otherwise predicate on the presumed existence of that object. These examples reveal the necessity of accommodating intensional meaning because the purely extensional meanings attached to the presentation of an object never vary according to circumstance. An object's tangible, measurable qualities don't change simply because the perceiver adopts a different perspective. However, an object can nevertheless acquire a myriad of different significations in the mind of a perceiver, depending on the context under which it is viewed. A table may therefore be viewed as a platform from which to eat at one time, and an object to hide beneath at another, or a gift for a friend, a convenient seat, a sturdy barricade and so on and so forth. Once more it is important to note that the difference in these significations is purely intensional, and the variation in intensional meanings is only made possible by our intuition of the essences co-presented with those belonging to the table in each presentation. In other words, this is only possible within *intentional* consciousness. The reason Hume's conception

of ideas fails, despite his awareness of the usual pitfalls of empirical philosophy, *and* his tentative acknowledgment of intensional meanings as those which shape the manner in which an idea is conceived, is that Hume temporarily abandons his sceptical indifference to questions concerning the existence of external bodies, and characterises ideas as *representational*, rather than merely *presentative* or, as we came to see Husserl describe them, *positional*. As a result, Hume continues to view ideas as mere copies of impressions, rather than as a body of essential meanings. This then, provides most of the basis for an answer to the second of our purposes in this thesis. The extent to which intentionality constitutes an innovation on Humean philosophy can be expressed thus: First, it expands the understanding of meaning to include intensional significations without sacrificing the empirical means of access to extensional significations. As a result, we are able to maintain a broadly empirical perspective with respect to the acquisition of impressions, and a shared belief in the immanent self-givenness of the content of perceptions. Second, having accepted the necessity of incorporating intensional meanings into our theory of ideas, we can acknowledge the existence of eidetic intuition in more than a theoretical sense, since the only possible way we can account for the variation in intensional meanings between two perceptions of the same object is by reference to some body of knowledge that exists prior to the relevant acts of perception which shape the way in which each act characterises the object in question. Since empiricists in general (and Hume specifically) reject the notion of innate knowledge, this body of knowledge must be built up from lived experience, and since the separability principle precludes the possibility of any necessary connection between empirical ideas, we must maintain a sceptical attitude to the idea that these ideas are united by the principle of association in anything more than a fictional sense. As such, our only recourse is to eidetic intuition. As such, we are able to account for intensional meanings

without abandoning entirely all the principles of Humean empiricism. Finally, the introduction of eidetic intuition as a source of intuitive knowledge which is compatible with empirical thought enables us to properly account for the actional nature of consciousness, and conceive of cognition as a productive faculty, whereby new meanings are discovered and/or generated according to both reason and evidence, rather than evidence alone, a view which leads inevitably to scepticism concerning the sense of all our cognitions. The phenomenological conception of intentionality then, seems to be perfectly compatible with empiricism, while elaborating upon its findings in such a way as to address its sceptical limitations and advance, as Husserl puts it, *"a truly positive theory of reason."* (PRS, p. 113)

All that remains now is to address the last of our key areas of concern, the extent to which Husserl's phenomenology actually *solves* the problems in Hume's theory. We have already seen how intentionality facilitates this solution, but in chapter 8, we saw some of the ways in which this innovation is expressed within Husserl's theory. The reason for Hume's confusion, and his inability to reconcile the lack of real connections between distinct existences with the propensity of the mind to create the fiction of such connections is his dependence on only the extensional parts of perception. Consequently, he lacks an understanding of eidetic intuition, and has no means of recognising the possibility that the connection between perceptions inheres in the intensional meanings derived from the intuitive faculty. In providing this facility therefore, Husserl explains how we come to intuit the relations that exist between essences, by the regular experience of objects and the supposedly objective relations between their separate qualities. These relations are only 'supposedly' objective since, as we know, essences are only presented to consciousness, they are not representations of objects, so the objectivity of these meanings is derived from the

apodicticity of their sense-content. Therefore, instead of Hume's model whereby ideas, being only copies of impressions, are associated according to the action of some indiscernible mediating principles, Husserl proposes that mental acts are *positional* states, centred around noetic-noematic structures of consciousness. These noetic-noematic structures comprise a synthetic unity of noetic, intentional sense, and the noematic, objective sense, the effect of which is that every mental act constitutes a kind of 'theory' concerning its object, it is a mental expression of posited meaning. Conceiving of mental acts in this way helps us to avoid the sceptical problems encountered by Hume because, rather than worrying about the rational basis for believing in the veracity of our perceptions, we instead work exclusively from what is intuitively given, either in the apodictic content of sensuous presentations, or in inward evidence. Further, Husserl's theory affords us a more reliable means of explaining belief, by expressing beliefs in terms of noetic-noematic structures. While for Hume, the concept of belief is an obscure and difficult concept to explain (T 1.3.7.7), nonetheless he recognised two important facts: that differing degrees of belief do not constitute a difference in the content of a perception, and that a belief merely constitutes a different manner of conception of an idea. Of course we know that what this means is that belief (or belief-characteristics as Husserl calls them) are intensional facets of a mental act, and while the extensional part of the act is always the same, belief forms a noetic-noematic synthesis of its own (or rather, belief-characteristics and being-characteristics are given within the single noetic-noematic synthesis which belongs to its particular mental act). The ultimate advantage of this theory of cognition is that it allows us to explain more or less any type of thought of which we can conceive. Since every mental act is intentional, and every intentional act has an object, *and* every intentional object has a noesis and a noema, then we can see how every mental act produces a positum which can itself become the object of a future mental act. In this way,

ideas can be posited, re-posited, judged, re-assessed, accepted, rejected and every variation or permutation one can think of, with every new cognition predicated on an old one, or part of an old one, and always with eidetic intuition to ground the sense of every new mental state. Our final conclusion then is this: David Hume was a phenomenologist to the extent that he maintained a sceptical indifference to the existence of external bodies, he believed in the self-given nature of perceptual data (both of which are hallmarks of Husserlian phenomenology), and as a result he maintained an attitude towards the 'science of man' which Husserl saw as essential to the science of phenomenology, which led to certain formal similarities between their thought, particularly concerning the 'structure' of a perceptual act, and the associationist nature of their respective theories of ideas. Intentionality constitutes an innovation on Humean philosophy in the sense that it resolves many of the sceptical problems of empiricism which pervade Hume's work, without seriously compromising his core empirical principles, by introducing the notion of intensional meaning mediated by eidetic intuition. And finally, Husserl's phenomenology resolved Hume's deeply sceptical views by allowing us to conceive of a means by which the mind *does* in fact perceive necessary connections between ideas, with the faculty of eidetic intuition, thus founding a positive theory of reason which is grounded at every level by apodictic evidence in the form of inward evidence, and self-given sensuous presentations.

Bibliography:

Ainslie, D. 2001. "Hume's Reflection on the Identity and Simplicity of Mind". *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*. Vol 62, no. 3, pp 557 – 578

Allison, H. 2008. *Custom and Reason in Hume: A Kantian Reading of the First Book of the Treatise*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bettcher, T.M. 2008. *Berkeley: A Guide for the Perplexed*. London: Continuum

Brentano, F. 1874. *Psychology From an Empirical Standpoint*. London: Routledge (1995)

Brentano, F. 'On the So-Called "Immanent or Intentional Object" (Letter to Anton Marty, 17 March 1905)' in *The True and the Evident*, ed. Oskar Kraus (London: Routledge, 1966), pp 52 – 53

Butts, R. 1959. "Husserl's Critique of Hume's Notion of Distinctions of Reason." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*. Vol 20, no. 2, pp 213 – 221

Chazan, 1992. "Pride, Virtue, and Self-Hood: A Reconstruction of Hume." *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*. Vol 22, no. 1, pp 45 – 64

Cottrell, J. 2015. "Minds, Composition, and Hume's Scepticism in the Appendix."

Philosophical Review. Vol 124, no. 4, pp 533 – 569

Cottrell, J. 2018. "Hume on Mental Representation and Intentionality." *Philosophy Compass*,

vol 13, no. 7, e12505

Crane, T. 1998. 'Intentionality as the mark of the mental'. In: *Contemporary Issues in the*

Philosophy of Mind, ed. A, O'Hear, pp 229–251. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Davidson, 1976. "Hume's Cognitive Theory of Pride." *Journal of Philosophy*. Vol 73, no. 19,

pp 744 – 757

Descartes, R. 1641. *Meditations on First Philosophy with Selections from the Objections and*

Replies. Translated by Michael Moriarty. Oxford: Oxford University Press (2008)

Dreyfus, H. 1991. *Being-In-The-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time,*

Division 1. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press

Dummett, M. 1988. *Ursprünge der analytischen Philosophie*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp

Ellis, J. 2006. "The Contents of Hume's Appendix and the Source of his Despair." *Hume*

Studies. Vol 24, no. 2, pp 195 – 232

Fieser, J. 2005. ed. *Early Responses to Hume's Moral, Literary and Political Writings*. 2 Vols.

Fogelin, R. 1992. *Philosophical Interpretations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fogelin, R. 2009. *Hume's Skeptical Crisis: A Textual Study*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Fogelin, R. 2017. *Hume's Presence in the Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. New York: OUP USA

Frege, G. 1892. "On Sense and Reference." *The Philosophical Review*, vol 57 no. 3 (1948), pp 209 – 230

Føllesdal, D. 1969. "Husserl's Notion of Noema." *Journal of Philosophy*, vol 66, no. 20, pp 680 – 687

Garrett, D. 1997. *Cognition and Commitment in Hume's Philosophy*. Oxford. Oxford University Press.

Garrett, D. 2006. "Hume's Naturalistic Theory of Representation." *Synthese*, vol 152, no. 3, pp 301 – 319

Garrett, D. 2011. "Rethinking Hume's Second Thoughts About Personal Identity". In *The Possibility of Philosophical Understanding: Reflections on the Thought of Barry Stroud*, edited by Jason Bridges, Niko Kolodny, and Wai-Hung Wong. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Giorgi, 1994. "A Phenomenological Perspective on Certain Qualitative Research Methods."

Journal of Phenomenological Psychology, Vol 25, no. 2, pp 190 – 220

Hume, D. 1740. *A Treatise of Human Nature*. Edited by Ernest Mossner. London: Routledge (1985)

Hume, D. 1779. *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. Edited by Dorothy Coleman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (2007)

Husserl, E. 1901. *Logical Investigations: Vol 1*. Translated by J.N. Findlay. New York: Routledge (2001)

Husserl, E. 1911. "Philosophy as a Rigorous Science." In *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, Translated by Q. Lauer. New York: Harper Torchbooks (1965)

Husserl, E. 1913. *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy: First Book, General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology.*, in: Edmund Husserl Collected Works, Vol II. Translated by F. Kersten. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers (1982)

Husserl, E. 1923/4. *Erste Philosophie*. Vol I in *Husserliana VII*, edited by Rudolf Boehm, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff (1959). Vol II in *Husserliana VIII*, edited by Rudolf Boehm, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff (1959).

Husserl, E. 1929. *Formal and Transcendental Logic*. Translated by Dorion Cairns. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff (1969)

Husserl, E. 1936. *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. Translated by David Carr. Evanston: Northwest University Press

Janoušek, H. & Zahavi, D. 2019. "Husserl on Hume." *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*. Vol 28, pp 615 – 635

Kant, I. 1781. *Critique of Pure Reason*. Translated by Marcus Weigelt. London: Penguin Classics (2007)

Kidd, C. 2021. "The Skeptical Origins of Husserl's Transcendental Phenomenology." *Husserl Studies*. Vol 37, pp 169 – 191

Lecaldano, E. 2002. "The Passions, Character, and the Self in Hume." *Hume Studies*, Vol 28, no. 2 pp 175 – 194

Lipps, T. 1893. *Grundzüge Der Logik*. Charlestone, South Carolina: Bibliobazaar (2009)

Malherbe, M. 'Hume on Belief in the External World.' In *A Companion to Hume*, edited by Elizabeth Radcliffe, pp 126 – 139. Oxford: Blackwell, 2011.

McAlister, L. 1970. "Franz Brentano and Intentional Inexistence." *Journal of the History of Philosophy*. Vol 8, no. 4, pp 423 – 430

McGinn, C. 1982. *The Character of Mind*. Oxford: Oxford university Press

McIntyre, J. L. 1989. "Personal Identity and the Passions." *Journal of the History of Philosophy*. Vol 27, no. 4, 545 – 557

Mill, J. S. 1865. *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*. Boston. William V. Spencer

Moran, D. 2000. *Introduction to Phenomenology*. Abingdon: Routledge

Mossner, E. C. 1950. "Philosophy and Biography: The Case of David Hume." *The Philosophical Review*. Vol 59, no. 2, pp 184 – 201

Moural, J. 2011. 'Is Henry Home the author of David Hume's mature theory of belief?' ms.

Norton, D. 1982. *David Hume: Common sense moralist,, sceptical metaphysician*. Princteon, N.J: Princeton University Press

Owen, D. & Cohon, R. 1997. "Representation, Reason and Motivation." *Manuscrito*, vol 20, pp 47 – 76

Popkin, R. 1951. "David Hume: His pyrrhonism and his critique of pyrrhonism." *Philosophical Quarterly*, vol 1, no. 5, pp 385 – 407

Purviance, S. M. 1997. "The Moral Self and the Indirect Passions." *Hume Studies*. Vol 23, no. 2, pp 195 – 212

Qu, H. 2012. "The Simple Duality: Humean Passions." *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, vol 42, no. S1, pp 98 – 116

Rocknak, S. 'Hume and the External World.' In *The Humean Mind*, edited by Alex Sager and Angela Coventry, pp 124 – 136. New York: Routledge, 2019.

Rorty, A. 1990. "'Pride Produces the Idea of Self' Hume on Moral Agency." *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*. Vol 68, no. 3, pp 255 – 269

Roth, A. 2000. "What was Hume's Problem with Personal Identity." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Review*, Vol 61, no. 1, pp 91 – 114

Russell, B. 1946. *History of Western Philosophy*. Great Britain: Unwin University Books (1967)

Russell, P. 2008. *The Riddle of Hume's Treatise*. New York: Oxford University Press

Sartre, J. 1940. *The Imaginary: A Phenomenological Psychology of the Imagination*.

Translated by Jonathan Webber, London and New York: Routledge (2004)

Searle, J. 1983. *Intentionality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Smith, N. K. 1941. *The Philosophy of David Hume*. London: Macmillan and Company Ltd.

Smith, B. 1989. "On the Origins of Analytic Philosophy." Review of Ursprünge der analytischen Philosophie, by Michael Dummett. *Grazer Philosophische Studien*. Vol 35, no. 1, pp 153 – 173

Sokolowski, R. 1984. "Intentional Analysis and the Noema." *Dialectica*, vol 38, no. 2, 3., pp113 – 129

Strawson, G. 2012. "All My Hopes Vanish': Hume on the Mind'. *The Continuum Companion to Hume*. ed. A. Bailey & D. O'Brien. pp 181 – 198. New York: Continuum International Pub.

Strawson, G. 2022. 'What I call Myself', in *Hume on the Self and Personal Identity*, edited by Dan O'Brien, pp 47 – 83. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Stroud, B. 1977. *Hume*. London: Routledge.

Tienson. J. 2013. "Kasimir Twardowski on the Content of Presentations", *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*. Vol 12, no. 3, pp 485 – 499

Twardowski, K. (1894/1977). On the content and object of presentations, Martinus Nijhoff, 1977. Trans. by Reinhardt Grossmann, of *Zu Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen*, Vienna, 1894. Facsimile edition with introduction by Rudolf Haller, Philosophia Verlag. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982.

Van Manen, M. 2017. "Phenomenology in Its Original Sense." *Qualitative Health Research*. Vol 27, no. 6, pp 810 – 825

Winkler, K. P. 1989. *Berkeley: An Interpretation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press

Zahavi, 2004. "Husserl's Noema and the Internalism-Externalism Debate." *Inquiry*, vol 47, no. 1, pp 42 – 66

Zahavi, D. 2019. "Applied Phenomenology: Why it is Safe to Ignore the Epoché." *Continental Philosophy Review*. Vol 2, pp 1 – 15