

57. The Question of the Suspension of the Pure Ego

Difficulties arise just at one limiting point. Man as a natural being and as a person linked with others in a personal bond, the uniting bond of "society," is suspended, so too whatever possesses an animal nature. But how fares it then with the *pure Ego*? Is even the phenomenological Ego which finds things presented to it brought through the phenomenological reduction to transcendental nothingness? Let us reduce till we reach the stream of pure consciousness. In reflexion every *cogitatio* on being carried out takes the explicit form *cogito*. Does it lose this form when we make use of a transcendental reduction?

So much is clear from the outset, that after carrying this reduction through, we shall never stumble across the pure Ego as an experience among others within the flux of manifold experiences which survives as transcendental residuum; nor shall we meet it as a constitutive bit of experience appearing with the experience of which it is an integral part and again disappearing. The Ego appears to be permanently, even necessarily, there, and this permanence is obviously not that of a stolid unshifting experience, of a "fixed idea." On the contrary, it belongs to every experience that comes and streams past, its "glance" goes "through" every actual *cogito*, and towards the object. This visual ray changes with every *cogito*, shooting forth afresh with each new one as it comes, and disappearing with it. But the Ego remains self-identical. In principle, at any rate, every *cogitatio* can change, can come and go, even though it may be open to doubt whether each is necessarily perishable, and not merely, as we find it, perishable *in point of fact*. But in contrast the pure Ego appears to be necessary in principle, and as that which remains absolutely self-identical in all real and possible changes of experience, it can *in no sense* be reckoned as a real part or phase of the experiences themselves.

In every actual *cogito* it lives out its life in a special sense, but all experiences also within the mental background belong to it and it to them, and all of them, as belonging to one single stream of experience, that, namely, which is mine, must permit of being transformed into actual *cogitationes* or of being inwardly absorbed into such; in the words of Kant, "The 'I think' must be able to accompany all my presentations."

If as residuum of the phenomenological suspension of the world and the empirical subjectivity that belongs to it there remains a pure Ego (a fundamentally different one, then, for each separate stream of experiences), a *quite peculiar* transcendence simultaneously presents itself—a non-constituted transcendence—a transcendence in immanence. Given the immediately essential part which this transcendence plays in every *cogito*, we should not be free to suspend it, although for many inquiries the problem of the pure Ego can remain *in suspenso*. But we will count the pure Ego as a phenomenological datum only so far as the immediate and clearly ascertainable peculiarity of its essential nature reaches, and it is given together with pure consciousness, whereas all theories concerning it which reach out beyond these limits should be disconnected. We shall find occasion, moreover, to devote a special chapter in the Second Book of this whole work to the difficult questions raised by the pure Ego and also by the need to render secure the provisional position which we have here adopted.¹

58. The Transcendence of God Suspended

After abandoning the natural world, we strike in our course another transcendence, which is not given like the pure Ego immediately united to consciousness in its reduced state, but comes to knowledge in a highly mediated form, standing over against the transcendence of the world as if it were its polar opposite. We refer to the transcendence of God. The reduction of the natural world to consciousness in its absoluteness gives *factual* (*faktische*) systems of conscious experiences of certain kinds splendidly ordered and regulated, within which, as intentional correlate, there is constituted, in the sphere of empirical intuition, a *morphologically ordered world*, a world, that is, in respect of which classificatory and descriptive sciences can be supplied. This very world, so far as its

¹ In the *Logical Studies* I took up on the question of the pure Ego a sceptical position which I have not been able to maintain as my studies progressed. The criticism which I directed against Natorp's stimulating *Introduction to Psychology* (Vol. II, pp. 340 ff.) ceases therefore to be relevant on one of the main issues. (I regret that I have not been able to read and consider any further the revised edition of Natorp's work which has recently appeared.)