

GENERATING SENSE: SCHIZOPHRENIA AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL PRAXIS

Bryan Smyth

University of Memphis
basmyth@memphis.edu

Abstract: The aim of phenomenology is to provide a critical account of the origins and genesis of the world. This implies that the standpoint of the phenomenological reduction is properly extramundane. But it remains an outstanding task to formulate a credible account of the reduction that would be adequate to this seemingly impossible methodological condition. This paper contributes to rethinking the reduction accordingly. Building on efforts to thematize its intersubjective and corporeal aspects, the reduction is approached as a kind of transcendental practice in the context of generativity. Foregrounding the psychotherapeutic encounter with persons suffering schizophrenic delusion as paradigmatic of the emergence of shared meaning, it is argued that this is where we may best come to terms with the methodological exigencies of phenomenology's transcendental aim. It follows that phenomenologists across all disciplines may have something important to learn from how phenomenology has been put into practice in the psychotherapeutic domain.

Keywords: Phenomenological Reduction, Schizophrenia, Worldhood, Psychotherapy, Generativity

1. INTRODUCTION

The basic task and fundamental aim of Husserlian phenomenology is to provide a critical account of the world through an exploration and articulation of its origins and genesis. So construed, it follows that phenomenology is—at least in some sense—a *transcendental* project, and that it requires a methodological '*Einklammerung*' or 'bracketing out' of the world in order to open up the larger realm of phenomenological experience upon which its account would be grounded. This is, of course, the phenomenological reduction. But just what it involves is not clear. Husserl himself was continually preoccupied with thinking and rethinking the reduction, and yet even he did not reach a definitive formulation of it. Phenomenologists ever since have thus continued to address this problem. And for good reason. For inasmuch as the reduction remains methodologically indeterminate, the precise sense in which phenomenology is a transcendental project remains obscure—a situation that has the disquieting implication of directly calling into question the validity of the putatively deeper insightfulness claimed by phenomenology over other approaches.

In this paper I offer a contribution to current efforts to rethink the basic methodological sense of phenomenology. My remarks fall into two main

parts. The first part deals with phenomenology in broad terms. Here I maintain both that the transcendental character of its basic problem saddles it with a potentially devastating methodological problem, but also that there can be no coherent *non*-transcendental formulation of phenomenology that might evade the force of the problem. The viability of phenomenology thus depends on a resolution of this problem—which is to say, on an adequate formulation of the reduction.

In the second part I take steps toward such a formulation. The basic strategy is to approach the reduction as a kind of *transcendental practice*. To this end, beyond recognizing its intersubjective and intercorporeal character, I foreground a specific form of *encounter*, namely, the psychotherapeutic encounter with persons suffering schizophrenic delusion. It is here, I will claim, that we can perhaps best come to terms with the specificity of the transcendental character of phenomenology—that is, with what it could possibly mean actually to ‘bracket out’ the world, and truly to face up to the question of its ‘origin’. It is not that this goes on in the psychotherapeutic context *exclusively*, but rather that it is here manifested *paradigmatically*, with the result that phenomenologists across all disciplines may have something important to learn methodologically from how phenomenology has been put into practice in this particular domain.

By way of conclusion I will briefly sketch out in very general terms the substance and direction of this methodological lesson.

2. THE METHODOLOGICAL PREDICAMENT OF PHENOMENOLOGY

It is a truism, albeit an important one, that phenomenology is, first of all, a *descriptive* project. The idea is to free ourselves from metaphysical and ontological presuppositions, in order to gain an unbiased, intuitional awareness of what is *originally* given in pre-scientific experience. The canonical formulation of this idea is Husserl’s ‘principle of all principles’, which states that propositions are scientifically admissible just in case they are demonstrably based on the *what* and *how* of the intuitional self-evidence of lived experience.¹ That is, if they do not overstep or otherwise misrepresent the intentional object as such. This principle expresses a commitment to initially consider all experience on equal terms, a commitment that is especially important with respect to those experiences, consideration of the reality or significance of which may

¹ As Husserl expressed it, this principle states “that every originary presentive intuition is a legitimizing source of cognition, that everything originarily [...] offered to us in ‘intuition’ is to be accepted simply as what it is presented as being, but only within the limits in which it is presented there. [...] Every statement which does no more than confer expression on such [originary] data by simple explication and by means of significations precisely conforming to them is [...] called upon to serve as a foundation.” See *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book* [1913], trans. Fred Kersten (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1982), §24.

otherwise be unduly discounted by unchecked bias.² The hope is that such a program of radical description would afford a new ground of irrefragable self-evidentness, on the basis of which theoretical disputes could be lucidly clarified and non-dogmatically resolved.

Reaching such a realm of original self-evidence is the matter of the reduction, the idea of which derives from the analysis of sensory experience. Here it is clear that experience is not restricted to the discrete phenomenon. Rather, all particular acts of perception are accompanied by and occur within horizons of apperceptive belief bearing upon both the intentional object and its spatio-temporal surroundings. Consequently, in order to reach—in accordance with ‘the principle of all principles’—the intentional object as such, it is necessary methodologically to neutralize the role played in experience by these broader horizons inasmuch as they overstep the intentional object. The reduction simply generalizes this necessity, based on the recognition that the neutralization in question must ultimately bear upon the common basis of all possible horizons—the world as the ‘horizon of horizons’.³ Thus it is that the reduction comes to be seen as a suspension of the apperceptive belief in the existence of the world—the setting out of action of the primordial, passive *Urdoxa* according to which, simply, *the world is*.⁴

This means that definitive for phenomenology is the boundary between *mundane* and *extramundane* (or *worldly* and *extra-worldly*).⁵ On the one hand, *non-phenomenology* is essentially mundane, in that despite whatever critical insight it may achieve with regard to intra-mundane things, it still takes the world *itself* uncritically for granted and grounds itself upon it. Phenomenology, on the other hand, in pursuit of its basic task, *surpasses* the world by making *its* ground—that is to say, the *world’s* ground—the object of its concern.⁶

Thus understood as a radical effort critically to comprehend the world itself, phenomenology has, I think, a certain *prima facie* attractiveness. (And I would say that any serious enthusiasm for phenomenology must be at least implicitly committed to something like this.) It is, at any rate, an ambitious project. But perhaps *overly* ambitious. Indeed, it would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that the predominant view among critical observers is that the project so construed

² Cf. Husserl, “Philosophy as Rigorous Science” [1911], in *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, trans. Quentin Lauer (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 147.

³ Cf. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* [1945], trans. Colin Smith [rev. Forrest Williams] (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 330.

⁴ See *Ideas I*, §30; cf. *Erste Philosophie* (1923/24). *Zweiter Teil: Theorie der phänomenologischen Reduktion*, ed. Rudolf Boehm (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959), pp. 44–50.

⁵ Cf. Gaston Berger, “Les thèmes principaux de la phénoménologie de Husserl,” *Études de métaphysique et de morale* 49 (1944), p. 39.

⁶ This line of reasoning was developed by Eugen Fink in “The Phenomenological Philosophy of Edmund Husserl and Contemporary Criticism,” [1933], trans. R. O. Elveton, in *The Phenomenology of Husserl: Selected Critical Readings* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970), 73–147. But whereas Fink understood it in objective theoretical terms—that is, in his view the world’s ground would become “the *object of theoretical experience and knowledge*” (p. 97)—the account that I will outline approaches phenomenology in intersubjectively and intercorporeally *practical* terms.

is sheer lunacy. The basic objection is that it would be methodologically impossible to attain an appropriate extramundane standpoint from which to carry out the ostensible program—that such a reduction is a practical impossibility because all living experience, *including phenomenological experience*, occurs within horizons.⁷ Or, what effectively amounts to the same thing, that actually to reach a realm of original experience beyond all worldly horizons would in any case leave one trapped in a state of ‘transcendental solipsism’.⁸

Phenomenology thus threatens to founder on the tension within the being of the phenomenologist as both (a) an empirical, mundanely-situated individual, and (b) as an extramundane phenomenological spectator.⁹ This represents what Fink once called phenomenology’s “methodological ‘schizophrenia’” [*methodische ‘Schizophrenie’*]*—the radical Ich-Spaltung, or splitting of the I, at the heart of phenomenology.*¹⁰

This might seem to recommend the rejection of the transcendental path and settling for some form of mundane hermeneutic phenomenology. This, however, would be misguided. For if phenomenology remains, to use a Husserlian phrase, ‘*transcendentally naïve*’ with respect to the world as ultimate horizon, then by implication it would remain so with respect to all subordinate horizons. It would thus be incapable—*in principle*—of undertaking any sort of reliable self-critique of *any* of its phenomenological claims.¹¹ Phenomenology would, in other words, be left naïve—transcendentally or otherwise—*all the way down*. It is for this reason that if phenomenology is to have any critical coherence *at all*, then a ‘complete’ reduction must be possible *in some sense*, and a methodological basis must be worked out on which to reconcile its dual foci—in other words, deal with (or ‘*cure*’) its ‘methodological schizophrenia’.

Yet how to do this? How to ‘transcend’ the world in a way that does not founder on the sort of objection I just mentioned? The key here will be to

⁷ Rightly or wrongly, this idea is often associated with Merleau-Ponty’s suggestion that a ‘complete’ reduction is impossible—see *Phenomenology of Perception*, xiv.

⁸ See Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic* [1929], trans. Dorian Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), §107.c; and *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology* [1931], trans. Dorian Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), §42.

⁹ See Sebastian Luft, “Husserl’s Theory of the Phenomenological Reduction: Between Life-World and Cartesianism,” *Research in Phenomenology* 34 (2004), 198–234.

¹⁰ Eugen Fink, “Operative Begriffe in Husserls Phänomenologie” [1957], in *Nähe und Distanz* (Freiburg: Karl Alber, 1976), p. 192.

¹¹ Husserl was unequivocal about the importance for phenomenology of such second-order self-critique. See *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, §107.c, where he writes: “*The intrinsically first criticism of cognition, the one in which all others are rooted, is transcendental self-criticism on the part of phenomenological cognition itself*” (p289). See also *Cartesian Meditations*, §13 (p29), where Husserl affirms that the “*second stage of phenomenological research would be precisely the criticism of transcendental experience and then the criticism of all transcendental cognition.*” And §63 (pp151f): All transcendental-philosophical theory of knowledge as ‘*criticism of knowledge*’, leads back ultimately to criticism of transcendental-phenomenological knowledge (in the first place, criticism of transcendental experience). On this, cf. Sebastian Luft, *Phänomenologie der Phänomenologie: Systematik und Methodologie der Phänomenologie in der Auseinandersetzung zwischen Husserl und Fink* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2002), pp. 8–22.

recognize that this transcendence need not be *positive*, and that there may be a *negative* sense to the idea of phenomenological 'extra-worldliness' that can actually supply the reduction—understood as the suspension of the 'general thesis' of the natural attitude—with a meaning that is at once both philosophically radical yet also practicable.

3. PHENOMENOLOGY AS TRANSCENDENTAL PRACTICE

Although even some phenomenologists may hold that the reduction is merely a vague regulative ideal, to take it seriously surely implies regarding it as something that can in fact be performed. We should therefore not expect any solution in strictly theoretical terms. Rather, we should approach it as a kind of *philosophical practice* that may itself embody appropriate methodological principles.

Consider, for example, the problem of transcendental solipsism. This is linked to the prevalent idea that phenomenological experience is quintessentially subjective—an idea that is reinforced by the emphasis commonly placed, in thinking about the reduction, on the move from the natural to the transcendental attitude. There is, of course, some truth to this. But if we consider how phenomenology is actually done, then there is no good reason, first of all, not to conceive of the reduction in terms of the 'round trip', so to speak—that is, in terms of the move from the natural to the transcendental attitude *and back again* (and so on, 'zig-zag' style). And, along with that, we can recognize the mundane moment as a discursive matter of intersubjective dialogue (in various forms), in which individuals express their phenomenological experience and consider that of others. Here is where subjective perspectives can be transformed into commonly agreed-upon views that are amenable to corroboration and can serve as a secure foundation for further inquiry. Crucially, the predicative results of this process can and do play an integral role *in phenomenological experience itself*. Phenomenological 'seeing' is no solitary contemplation purified of all resources, but is instead intersubjectively mediated by the shared accumulated insights of the phenomenological community.¹²

Such considerations that highlight the intersubjective role of language in phenomenology are a step in the right direction.¹³ But this does not yet offer the account of phenomenological practice that we need.

Taking this further, recent work by Nathalie Depraz aims to show that in addition to having an intersubjective character, the phenomenological reduction is a "disciplined embodied practice."¹⁴ An important motivating idea here

¹² See David Koukal, "The Rhetorical Impulse in Husserl's Phenomenology," *Continental Philosophy Review* 34 (2001), 21-43.

¹³ Cf. Françoise Dastur, "Réduction et intersubjectivité," in *Husserl*, eds. Eliane Escoubas and Marc Richir (Grenoble : Jérôme Million, 1989), 43-64.

¹⁴ Nathalie Depraz, "The Phenomenological Reduction as Praxis," *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 6 (1999), 95-110. See also "What About the *Praxis* of Reduction? Between Husserl and Merleau-Ponty," in *Merleau-Ponty's Reading of Husserl*, eds. Ted Toadvine and Lester Embree (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2002), 115-125.

is that the reduction must be more than a reflective conversion: “the power of the mind alone is not enough to render [the] experience effective if corporality and affect do not contribute their share.”¹⁵ Depraz thus approaches the reduction on the basis of what she calls a “reductive community” understood in terms of an intercorporeal sort of primordial praxis or *Urpraxis*. This allows Depraz to describe the reduction as a concrete self-transformation which, because it is based on “an immersion in an embodied sensibility in which we all share as incarnate subjects,” de-centres individual experience, thereby opening up specifically trans-individual dimensions of the reductive experience.¹⁶ The reduction is thus in principle a *co-reduction*, in that the intuitional capacities it actualizes simultaneously invoke radically inter-affective and co-empathic capacities of communication.¹⁷ This communicativity—which, being deeper than discursive language, ensures the defeat of transcendental solipsism—reflects that the *being* of the phenomenologist is now *plural*—or, as Depraz puts it, “co-singular”—which is a deeper way of situating the ‘double life’ of phenomenology.¹⁸

The point of Depraz’s account of the reduction is to show how the dual foci of phenomenology can be brought together in terms of embodied praxis. And there is much to recommend such a view. However, I would argue that her account, while satisfying in a certain formal sense, remains abstract. It is fair say, I think, that it amounts to a sophisticated elaboration of Merleau-Ponty’s repeated call to ‘plunge’ [*s’enfoncer*] into ‘the living present’.¹⁹ The idea is that the structures of mutual insight and understanding requisite for phenomenological cognition and communication are *already there*, latent in our co-existence—that is, in the intercorporeal *Urpraxis* on which our co-existence in the pre-scientific lifeworld is based—and that we just need to attune ourselves properly and return to this.

Where the abstraction lies, as it often does, is in the first-person plural pronoun—the question of this ‘*we*’. The assumption is of a certain degree of sameness in terms of social attunement—as Depraz herself put it, she is talking about “an immersion in an embodied sensibility *in which we all share* as incarnate subjects.”²⁰ In other words, a considerable measure of ‘common sense’ is being taken for granted, making this *co-reduction* little more than an

¹⁵ Depraz, “The Phenomenological Reduction as Praxis,” p. 105.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.* Cf. Depraz, *Transcendence et incarnation. Le statut de l’intersubjectivité comme alterité à soi chez Edmund Husserl* (Paris: Vrin, 1995), 198–238. See also Herbert Spiegelberg, *Doing Phenomenology: Essays On and In Phenomenology* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975), 24–34.

¹⁸ Depraz, “The Phenomenological Reduction as Praxis,” p. 107. Cf. Rudolf Bernet, “Phenomenological Reduction and the Double Life of the Subject,” trans. François Renaud, in *Reading Heidegger From the Start: Essays in his Earliest Thought*, eds. Theodore Kisiel and John van Buren (Albany: SUNY, 1994), 245–267.

¹⁹ It is “by living my time,” he wrote, “by plunging into [*m’enfonçant*] the present and the world [...] that I am able to understand other times,” i.e., accede to the universal—for “the solution of all problems of transcendence is to be sought in the thickness of the pre-objective present” (*Phenomenology of Perception*, pp. 456, 433).

²⁰ Depraz, “The Phenomenological Reduction as Praxis,” p. 105 (emphasis added).

iteration and multiplication of *my* reduction. (Or *hers*.) Doubtless there are some such homogeneous communities into which it could very well make sense in terms of doing phenomenology to ‘plunge’ in. But these are by no means the standard case, and such a special state of affairs can never be legitimately assumed—especially in the course of phenomenological work.

We can conclude from this that the kind of *Urpraxis* that Depraz invokes is not ultimately primordial, and that how *it* is constituted is no less important for phenomenology to consider. (In fact, as will become clear, I would contend that investigating the conditions of such intercorporeal *we*-ness is tantamount to phenomenology’s fundamental task regarding the origin of the world.)

3.1 Concerning the natural attitude

Before continuing, some brief remarks on the natural attitude are required.

(1) It is useful in this context to consider Husserl’s notion of *Heimwelten*, or ‘homeworlds’.²¹ In particular, it is useful to observe that what we typically call ‘the lifeworld’ actually takes concrete form as so many geo-historically and normatively specific ‘homeworlds’. These are constituted in mutual relation, and by those living in them, whom Husserl termed the *Heimgenosse*, the “home-comrades.” Now, without making any strong commitment to the general cogency and validity of these ideas, I would want to maintain that they are helpful because they foreground concrete *normative* considerations when thinking about the lifeworld and the natural attitude. For example, they allow us easily to locate the abstractness of Depraz’s view in its failure to account for the normative specificity of the lifeworld (*as* a particular homeworld).

(2) Following a suggestion by Sebastian Luft,²² I want to distinguish between the “naturalness” of the natural attitude and its “naïveté”—that is, between its immediate ‘taken-for-grantedness’ and its uncritical ‘dogmatism’. The former has to do with a basic condition of perception and practical comportment, and as such is normatively benign. This is not the case with naïveté. This is more akin to what Schutz called “the epoché of the natural attitude”—the suspension, not of belief, but of doubt, that serves to maintain a particular, normatively reified abstraction from phenomenal concreteness as a ‘natural’ experiential framework.²³ The natural attitude is thus not simply a matter of an *urdoxic* commitment to the *existence* of the world. Rather, the primordial belief involved implies a *practical* commitment to its specific instantiation as a ‘homeworld’.

²¹ See Klaus Held, “Heimwelt, Fremdwelt, die eine Welt,” in *Phänomenologische Forschungen* 24 (1991), 305–337. Cf. Anthony Steinbock, *Home and Beyond: Generative Phenomenology after Husserl* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1995), 173–185.

²² Sebastian Luft, “Husserl’s Phenomenological Discovery of the Natural Attitude,” *Continental Philosophy Review* 31:2 (1998), 153–170.

²³ Alfred Schutz, “On Multiple Realities” [1945], in *Collected Papers 1: The Problem of Social Reality*, ed. Maurice Natanson (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962), 207–259.

(3) Scrutiny of the natural attitude thus shows that issues of world-origin—or of what Steinbock (following Husserl) calls ‘generativity’—are vitally alive at its core.²⁴ And this in such a way that in transgressing naïveté phenomenological intervention, far from engaging in any sort of immersion, necessarily takes on, not simply a normative, but also what I would describe as an *institutive* character. For at this level phenomenology cannot but work *within* the phenomena it considers, with the result that it ineluctably participates within and contributes to their development. As Steinbock put it, just by inquiring into its constitution, the phenomenologist “must take a position with respect to the way sense is constituted [...] she must be engaged in how sense should, ought to or must take shape.” This is because, on account of its normative and teleological character, the constitution of sense “concerns the future orientation of sense, which is to say, the *generation of new historical meaning structures*.”²⁵

Recognition of this conception of generativity and its significance for phenomenology is especially crucial when *the* world as such is what is at issue. But the urgent methodological question is: how are we to think about the reduction in this context?

3.2 *Encountering schizophrenia*

To answer this question, I want to consider (in broad terms) the practice of phenomenological psychotherapy, in particular with regard to schizophrenic delusion.

First of all, following Sass and Parnas, among others, I take schizophrenia as denoting in general terms a spectrum of disturbed attunement between self and world in which intentionalities normally inhabited operatively become objects of “hyperreflexive” thematic awareness (the experience of internal processes of passive synthesis, for example, as external and alien), combined with a converse weakening of the self-affective sense of existing as a particular subject of awareness.²⁶ Schizophrenia can thus be described as a disorder of apperception, a restructuring of the tacit-focal structure of conscious awareness, that manifests itself in altered boundaries between inner and outer, subject and object. As a result, sufferers may undergo a disruption of the naïve self-evidence of the natural attitude—leading to a kind of reduction quite a bit like the methodical reduction of the phenomenologist, albeit *involuntary* and possibly (relatively more) delusional.

²⁴ See Anthony Steinbock, “Generativity and Generative Phenomenology,” *Husserl Studies* 12:1 (1995), 55-79.

²⁵ Anthony Steinbock, “Spirit and Generativity: The Role and Contribution of the Phenomenologist in Hegel and Husserl,” in *Alterity and Facticity*, eds. Nathalie Depraz and Dan Zahavi (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1998), pp. 189f, 196.

²⁶ See, for example, Louis Sass, “Self-Disturbance in Schizophrenia: Hyperreflexivity and Diminished Self-Affection,” in *The Self in Neuroscience and Psychiatry*, eds. Tilo Kircher and Anthony David (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 242-271; Louis Sass and Josef Parnas, “Schizophrenia, Consciousness, and the Self,” *Schizophrenia Bulletin* 29:3 (2003), 427-444.

It is in terms of the core disorder of schizophrenia that schizophrenic delusion must be understood.²⁷ As Erwin Straus had originally argued, such delusions are not problems of perception or perceptual judgment, but rather transcendental modifications of sensing that occur at the pre-objective level.²⁸ For in these cases, schizophrenia can be thought of as involving the loss, not simply of ‘perceptual faith’ about the world, but of a deeper ‘ontological faith’,²⁹ the *Urdoxa* of having a stable world at all (this is related to the idea of a ‘complete reduction’). For it is not the case, at least at pre-psychotic stages, that schizophrenics believe without reservation in the reality of their delusional experience, nor even that they cannot clearly distinguish the delusional from the real.³⁰ Rather, as Jaspers had argued, and others have elaborated since, schizophrenics live out a “double orientation to reality,” at once believing and disbelieving *both* the realm of intersubjectively validated phenomena and that of their own delusions.³¹ This is tied to what Laing called the “ontological insecurity” suffered by schizophrenics: caught, as it were, *between* worlds, their attempts to formulate and embody a robust first-person perspective are without ground, and there can be an anxious tendency toward a non-perspectival solipsism.³²

Schizophrenic delusion can thus be described as the loss of naturalness, and hence the isolation of natural-attitudinal naïveté—and thus an *intensification* of the ‘epochē of the natural attitude’.³³ Consequent to the loss of naturalness, the world is *naïvely* reconstituted in exaggeratedly reified ways (although in the ordinary sense there’s nothing *naïve* about it). Schizophrenic delusion is

²⁷ See Pierre Bovet and Josef Parnas, “Schizophrenic Delusions: A Phenomenological Approach,” *Schizophrenia Bulletin* 19 (1993), 579-597; Josef Parnas, “The Self and Intentionality in the Pre-Psychotic Stages of Schizophrenia: A Phenomenological Study,” in *Exploring the Self: Philosophical and Psychopathological Perspectives on Self-Experience*, ed. Dan Zahavi (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2000), 115-147.

²⁸ Erwin Straus, *Von Sinn der Sinne: Ein Beitrag zur Grundlegung der Psychologie* (Berlin: Springer, 1935). See Josef Parnas, “Self and Schizophrenia: A Phenomenological Perspective,” in *The Self in Neuroscience and Psychiatry*, 217-241; Amedeo Giorgi, “A Phenomenological Psychological Approach to Research on Hallucinations,” in *Imagination and its Pathologies*, eds. James Phillips and James Morley (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), 209-224.

²⁹ See James Morley, “The Texture of the Real: Merleau-Ponty on Imagination and Psychopathology,” in *Imagination and its Pathologies*, 93-108.

³⁰ See Osborne Wiggins, Micheal Schwartz, and Georg Northoff, “Toward a Husserlian Phenomenology of the Initial Stages of Schizophrenia,” in *Philosophy and Psychopathology*, eds. Manfred Spitzer and Brendan A. Maher (Berlin: Springer, 1990), 21-34.

³¹ Karl Jaspers, *Allgemeine Psychopathologie*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Springer, 1923). See Micheal Schwartz and Osborne Wiggins, “The Phenomenology of Schizophrenic Delusions,” in *Phenomenology, Language and Schizophrenia*, eds. Manfred Spitzer, et al (Berlin: Springer, 1992), 305-318.

³² R. D. Laing, *The Divided Self: An Existential Study in Sanity and Madness* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965). Cf. Josef Parnas and Louis Sass, “Self, Solipsism, and Schizophrenic Delusions,” *Philosophy, Psychiatry, and Psychology* 8:2/3 (2001), 101-120.

³³ Cf. Jean Naudin and Jean-Michel Azorin, “The Hallucinatory Epochē,” *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 28:2 (1997), 171-195. This idea stems originally from Wolfgang Blankenburg, *Der Verlust der natürlichen Selbstverständlichkeit: Ein Beitrag zur Psychopathologie Symptomarmer Schizophrenien* (Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke, 1971).

thus 'abnormal' inasmuch as it represents a kind of exaggerated normative reification as part of an attempt to make or remake a world by way of recovering some measure of the sort of 'ontological security' that underlies 'normal' (or 'normalized') existence.

This ultimately points back to an impairment of temporal integration that leaves the individual in the relatively ahistorical stasis of a prolonged or distended present,³⁴ a situation that manifests itself in particular in a lack of coherent self-narrative.³⁵ Although I cannot explore these aspects here, I would suggest that what is fundamentally disturbed by the core disorder of schizophrenia is *the historicity of the affected individual's narrative self-identity*.

3.3 Worldhood as an intersubjective achievement

By challenging the priority that phenomenologists (among others) have traditionally assigned to the perceptual horizons of reality, the psychotherapeutic encounter with schizophrenic delusion radically calls into question the existence of a shared interpersonal world. This is why it is so methodologically significant—it represents what I would call *a negative transcendence of the world*. For here there is no shared world (or lifeworld), the structures of which could be taken for granted and uncritically put to work in terms of mutual comprehension. This situation thus presents in a more—if not the most—general and paradigmatic way, the problem faced by phenomenology. For this encounter occurs in a dialogical space where perception is precisely contested, thus prompting an exploration of pre-categorical ambiguity in which the distinction between the real and the imaginary is still radically at issue.³⁶ Common ground for communication is not to be *found* so much as it is to be made—or *generated*—through dialogical exchange that negotiates what may be called “the imaginary texture of the real.”³⁷

In other words, this situation casts into the sharpest relief the fact that a shared world is an intersubjective achievement, and that its normative constitution presupposes internal processes of normalization that determine *who* participates in its generation. Ultimately, this is the question of the identification of 'homecomrades', that is, of *who* belongs to '*our* world' as an

³⁴ Osborne Wiggins, Micheal Schwartz, and Georg Northoff, “Toward a Husserlian Phenomenology of the Initial Stages of Schizophrenia,” p. 29.

³⁵ See Shaun Gallagher, “Self-narrative in Schizophrenia,” in *The Self in Neuroscience and Psychiatry*, 336-357; James Phillips, “Schizophrenia and the Narrative Self,” in *The Self in Neuroscience and Psychiatry*, 319-335; and “Psychopathology and the Narrative Self,” *Philosophy, Psychiatry, and Psychology* 10:4 (2003), 313-328.

³⁶ See, for example, Merleau-Ponty, *L'Institution dans l'histoire personnelle et publique. Le problème de la passivité: Le sommeil, l'inconscient, la mémoire. Notes de cours au Collège de France (1954-1955)*, eds. D. Darmaillacq et al (Paris: Belin, 2003), pp. 198, 208, 213.

³⁷ Merleau-Ponty, “Eye and Mind” [1961], trans. Carleton Dallery, pp. 159-190 in *The Primacy of Perception, and Other Essays on Phenomenological Psychology, the Philosophy of Art, History and Politics*, ed. James Edie (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), p. 165; cf. James Morley, “The Texture of the Real: Merleau-Ponty on Imagination and Psychopathology,” p. 105.

intersubjective sphere of ownness—the *we* are those who participate in the generation of this world, in particular in its *shared narrative constitution*³⁸ I would therefore submit that the historical self-narrativity that is disrupted in schizophrenia, along with the dialogical praxis that seeks to revitalize it, should be seen as elementary to questions of the origin and generation of the world.

4. CONCLUSION

Taking seriously the transcendental problem of the world as the ultimate envelope of phenomenological inquiry compels us to take up the problematic of the reduction anew, and to critically scrutinize the possibility of this as both intersubjectively and corporeally participatory, and yet also normatively transgressive *vis-à-vis* natural-attitudinal naiveté. The point in looking at phenomenological psychotherapy is not to find an approach that could simply be fitted directly onto phenomenology in general. Rather, it is to look for an appropriate model of the creative praxis that is implied by the transcendental parameters of phenomenology—a model for the generation of sense through the institution of common (especially *narrative*) horizons of meaningfulness.³⁹

It might be objected that this would wrongly make of phenomenology a ‘therapeutic’ discipline. While that certainly *could* be very problematic—in ways, perhaps, that are analogous to certain problems, say, in psychiatric disciplines—I think that it could just as well be a quite salutary result, one that could even be helpfully conducive to the articulation of an approach to various *social pathologies* or *pathologies of reason*.⁴⁰ That is something at which Husserl strongly hinted in referring to crisis-ridden modern society as ‘sick’,⁴¹ and I doubt that any phenomenological approach that genuinely engages with the problem of the world could ever be anything *essentially* different from this, i.e., could ever fail to recognize that this problem normatively implies the world’s being otherwise.

At any rate, what is fundamentally at issue could be posed in terms of a debate between those who would rigorously uphold the letter of Husserl’s ‘principle of all principles’ with respect to intuition, and those who recognize that the work of phenomenology, precisely in its concern for the worldliness of lived experience, itself pushes beyond this principle and necessitates a fundamental methodological revision. This debate would pivot on the question of the primacy of perception, which is tantamount to the primacy of a common natural world. It is this that is subverted in the encounter with schizophrenic delusion, and it seems that the basic orientation of phenomenology

³⁸ Cf. Steinbock, *Home and Beyond: Generative Phenomenology after Husserl*, 213–219

³⁹ Cf. Aaron Mishara, “Narrative and Psychotherapy: The Phenomenology of Healing,” *The American Journal of Psychotherapy* 49:2 (1995), 67–78.

⁴⁰ Thus suggesting the possibility of some sort of productive convergence between contemporary phenomenology and critical theory—see for example Axel Honneth, *Pathologies of Reason: On the Legacy of Critical Theory*, trans. James Ingram (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

⁴¹ See “Philosophy and the Crisis of European Man,” in *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, 149–192.

must be committed to the same sort of subversion, that is, it must encourage an analogous problematization of the world, if it is to do justice to the actual horizons of perceptual experience.⁴²

The methodological question this raises thus concerns the limits of phenomenological cognition: do these coincide with the limits of intuitional givenness? Or can we gain a critical standpoint *beyond* intuition that would encompass it within a larger frame of experience—while still remaining true to the basic spirit of phenomenology? Although historical consensus has favored the first alternative (thus upholding the ‘principle of all principles’), the implied limitation would, as I have argued, necessarily retain an unacceptable transcendental naïveté.

This means that what the reduction involves is not so much the *suspension* of the belief *that the world is*, i.e., not the neutralization of that belief in order more clearly to grasp *what* its correlate (the world) positively *is*. Rather, what the reduction centrally involves is the *recognition* that the latter, *the world*, is *not*—other than *negatively* as an (as yet) unfilled horizon of possibility, which as such can only present us with a *practical* rather than a *theoretical* task. The former (traditional) view is insufficiently radical, reflecting the still-naïve assumption of a singular universal worldliness actually already obtaining in some positive objective sense—even the sort of *Urpraxis* presumed to exist by Depraz reflects this. We should rather recognize as a basic fact, and as the necessary starting point for any phenomenological project, a multiplicity of homeworlds, alongside cases of *worldlessness*, all against the background of that larger but as yet unrealized—and, indeed, perhaps ultimately unrealizable—horizon of *the world*. In other words, it involves recognizing the material *falsity*, in this important sense, of the *Weltglaube* of the natural attitude.

To be clear, this is in no way an endorsement of any sort of relativism. On the contrary, it takes universality seriously, and this *because* it does not take it (and its conditions of possibility) for granted, but rather addresses itself directly to the task of its realization.

This is why the psychotherapeutic encounter could be so potentially illuminating. For such an encounter—at least when successful—is paradigmatic of phenomenological practice inasmuch as it presents, as it were, the molecular structure of *achieved* universality. The space of shared and mutually transformative understanding that can result from this encounter prefigures the world of which a self-consciously historical intersubjective community would be the living embodiment. In this sense, it may be paradigmatic, not just of phenomenology, but of human historical co-existence in general. For it precisely manifests the move from *non-sense* to *sense* that is—or was, or will be, or at any rate would be, for better or worse—the realization of *the world*.⁴³

⁴² Cf. Jean Naudin, Jean-Michel Azorin, Caroline Gros-Azorin, Aaron Mishara, Osborne P. Wiggins, and Michael A. Schwartz, “The Use of the Husserlian Reduction as a Method of Investigation in Psychiatry,” *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 6 (1999), 155-171.

⁴³ A version of this paper was presented at the inaugural meeting of the Interdisciplinary Coalition North American Phenomenologists held at Ramapo College of New Jersey in May 2009.