



Methods of Analysis
Phenomenological Analysis

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In many ways, phenomenological analysis is the epitome of analysis, with its procedure of “eidetic reduction.” Hence, it is not clear why Merleau-Ponty (1956) thought otherwise, stressing that phenomenology “is a question of description, and not of explanation or analysis” (p. 60). Certainly for phenomenologists, “the world is there before any analysis,” but he insists that “the relation with the world as it utters itself indefatigably in us is nothing which can be rendered clearer by analysis” (pp. 61, 67). Perhaps Merleau-Ponty was over-reacting to the fabrication of an analytic-continental divide in philosophy during the 1950s and 1960s. After all, phenomenology was considered constituent to “continental philosophy.” The truth is that Husserl, who passed away in 1938, would never have juxtaposed phenomenology against “analytic philosophy.” As much as any “analytic” philosopher, he (1910/1956) wanted to reconstitute philosophy as a rigorous science. Emphases on the *epoché* (*ἐποχή*) and grounding knowledge on experience make phenomenology a milestone in the history of objectivity.

Husserl (1925/2011) was clear on the coupling of description with analysis. “Description did not only mean an expression of the seen (*Geschauten*),” he clarified, but rather “also an analysis, so far as possible, of the description of the seen (*Geschaute*) in its moments of its unfolding” (p. 281). The “phenomenological method,” he continued, “is conceptualized in the pure description on the basis of pure intuition of the essence (*Wesensintuition*) and intentional analysis” (p. 303). Although “phenomenological analysis” was not quite interchangeable with phenomenology itself for Husserl, for many researchers they are interchangeable (pp. 290, 291).

Husserl (1913/1983) established and defined phenomenology as “a science of essences (as an ‘eidetic’ science)” (p. xx). Since then, researchers have tried to resolve basic questions: What is an essence (*Wesen*)? What are their ontological status? How can this be empirically demonstrated? What role do essences play in the life-world (i.e., “the world in which we are always already living and which furnishes the ground for cognitive performance”) (Husserl, 1938/1973, p. 41)? Like everyone else, Husserl struggled with these but stressed time and time again that essences are intuited rather than observed or sensed. Hence the emphasis on “essential intuition” (*Wesensintuition*) (Husserl 1910/1965, p. 112). It “is of decisive significance to know that essential intuition is in no way ‘experience’ in the sense of perception,” he stresses.

Intuition grasps essence as essential being, and in no way posits being-there.... The grasp of essence is thereby in no way touched; as “grasp of essence” it is intuitive, and that is precisely an intuition of a different kind from experience. Obviously, essences can also be vaguely represented, let us say represented in symbol and falsely posited; then they are merely conjectural essences. (p. 112)

Phenomena and their eidetic reduction rely somewhat on abstraction. As an example, Husserl (1938/1973) says, “many red things belong to the generic essence ‘redness’” (p. 262). The signifier “redness” is a “generic universality,” not an essence. Abstraction can nonetheless yield “generalities, species, and essences [categorical, i.e., redness] that admit of insight”

(1906/1999, p. 65). However helpful *Researching Lived Experience* is, van Manen (1990) mistakenly confuses description with essence:

By essence we do not mean some kind of mysterious entity or discovery, nor some ultimate core or residue of meaning. Rather, the term “essence” may be understood as a linguistic construction, a description of a phenomenon. A good description that constitutes the essence of something is construed so that the structure of a lived experience is revealed. (p. 39)

A detailed description of sensory appearances and lived experiences, the bread and butter of phenomenology, should help readers and listeners intuit an essence but the essence is *not* the “linguistic construction.” To be sure, how well a description resonates intuition of an essence is key to judging phenomenological analyses. Essences are transcendent. “Experience *as lived* is plainly immanent; but the essence is a thematic object of knowledge, an enduring nexus for a certain modality of synthesized experiences; hence it is always transcendent (in the fundamental and broad sense), relative to immanent, purely lived acts of consciousness” (Levin, 1968, p. 7).

If the aim of phenomenological analysis is description of lived experience to understand humans’ involvement in the life-world through intuition of essences, then how is this done? Husserl was first and foremost a methodologist especially clear on procedural matters. Phenomenology begins with a reduction of an experience of things to phenomena— “an experience of this house, of this body, of this world” as they appear as such, for instance, rather than just mere taken for granted objects or things (Husserl, 1929, p. 700). The first step in this reduction is “systematic and radical *ἐποχή* of every objectifying ‘position’ in an experience, practised both upon the regard of particular objects and upon the entire attitude of mind.” Systematic *epoché* (*ἐποχή*) challenges researchers to withhold or bracket judgment concerning the phenomena at hand. “Our comprehensive *ἐποχή* puts, as we say, the world between brackets, excludes the world which is simply there from the subject’s field.” The second step is “expert recognition, comprehension and description of the manifold ‘appearances’ of what are no longer ‘objects’ but ‘unities’ of ‘sense’” or phenomena. “So that the phenomenological description will comprise two parts, description of the ‘noetic’ (*νόεω*) or ‘experiencing’ and description of the ‘noematic’ (*νόημα*) or the ‘experienced’” (p. 700). A third step following “eidetic reduction” is “transcendental reduction” to essences and “the bare subjectivity of consciousness in general” (p. 701). “Husserl is careful to distinguish eidetic reduction (proceeding from fact to essence) from transcendental reduction, according to which the phenomena are characterized as ‘irreal,’ and are not ordered in the ‘actual world’” (Farber, 1940, p. 16).

In the 1920s, Heidegger (1923/1999; 1927/1996) demonstrated the method in various ways and to eidetic analysis added hermeneutic analysis and interpretation, so evident in *Being and Time*. But once Heidegger got Nazi politics and power and was appointed Rector of the University of Freiburg on 21 April 1933, he commenced to enforcing the Civil Service Act of 7 April, which dismissed Jews from university positions and removed Husserl’s emeritus status, as he was born a Jew. Heidegger (1931-1938/2016) sketched out Nazi phenomenology through the 1930s, evident in the *Black Notebooks*, and was silent about the holocaust the remainder of his career. Husserl (in Farber, 1940, p. 19) concluded with dignity near the end of his life: “And we old people remain here. A singular turn of the times.... I prove *sub specie aeterni* my right to live.”

1. What is Analysis?

- a. Hegel (1830/2010, pp. 80-81, s. 38): In order to have experiences, empiricism principally utilizes the form of *analysis*. In perception, one possesses something concrete in multiple ways whose determinations one is supposed to take apart like peeling away the layers of an onion. This process of splitting them up [*Zergliederung*] is therefore intended to dissolve the determinations that have grown together, breaking them up [*zerlegen*] without adding anything but the subjective activity of breaking them up. Analysis is, however, the progression from the immediacy of perception to thought, insofar as the determinations, which the object analysed contains amalgamated within itself, receive the form of universality by being separated. Because empiricism analyses objects, it is in error if it believes that it leaves them as they are, since it in fact transforms the concrete into something abstract. By this process, it happens at the same time that life is taken from the living, for only the concrete, or one, is alive. Nonetheless, this severing [*Scheidung*] must occur in order to comprehend, and spirit is itself the severing in itself. This, however, is only *one* side, and the chief point consists in the unification of what has been severed. Insofar as analysis remains committed to the standpoint of separation, the word of the poet applies to it:

Encheiresin naturae, says Chemistry now,
Mocking itself without knowing how.
Then they have the parts and they've lost the whole,
For the link that's missing was the living soul.

Analysis takes its point of departure from what is concrete, and with this kind of material it has an enormous advantage over the abstract thinking of the old metaphysics. It establishes the differences, and this is of great importance. These differences, however, are in turn merely abstract determinations, that is, thoughts. Now, insofar as these thoughts count as what things are in themselves, we are back with the presupposition of the old metaphysics, namely that the truth of things is to be found in thought. (Trans. K. Brinkmann & D. O. Dahlstrom)

- b. Hollands (1905, pp. 508-509): This is chiefly interesting as a more detailed and logical account of the method of psychological analysis. Analysis is of three kinds, descriptive, causal, and logical. Only the first two are of use in psychology. In some sciences, such as physiology, descriptive analysis, or the mere separation of an object or phenomenon into its distinguishable elements, forms a necessary and separate preliminary stage. In psychology, however, descriptive and causal analysis are practically coincident. Like physics, it begins with the simplest facts, the causal explanation of which is immediately evident.
- c. Johnson (1933, p. 570): The dictionaries tell us that analysis is the process of separating a thing or a concept into its constituent parts, in order to arrive at the essential or ultimate elements, causes or principles; that it is the tracing of things back to their sources; and that it is designed to clarify and test knowledge. The chemist analyzes a complex substance to determine its precise composition. For the purposes of our discussion I would define scientific analysis as "the process of separating observations, arguments and conclusions into their constituent parts, tracing each part back to its source and testing its validity, for the purpose of clarifying and perfecting knowledge."
- d. Psathas (1973, p. 10): Eidetic analysis aims at seeing through the particulars (concrete, existential) to discover what is essential (ideal, typical).
- e. Luepnitz (2009, p. 974): The word 'analysis' comes from the Greek verb *ἀνάλυειν* [*analyein*], meaning to loosen or untie. Lacan writes: "Psychoanalysis alone recognizes this knot of Imaginary servitude that love must always undo again or sever" (1949, p. 7).

For Winnicott, analysis may untie or free the True Self from its moorings in compliance. For Alvarez Stein, psychoanalysis began to "loosen the bars" in a way that speaks both to the development of the self and to the transformation of subjectivity.

2. What is Phenomenology?

- a. Husserl (1906/1999, pp. 19, 61, 70): Phenomenology: this term designates a science, a complex of scientific disciplines; but it also designates at the same time and above all a method and an attitude of thought: the specifically philosophical attitude of thought, the specifically philosophical method.... The method of the critique of knowledge is the phenomenological method, phenomenology as the general doctrine of essence, within which the science of the essence of knowledge finds its place.... the method of the analysis of essences within the sphere of immediate evidence.
- b. Husserl, *Ideas II* (1913/1983, p. xx):
 - i. *Psychology* is an experiential science. Two things are implied in the usual sense of the word "experience:"
 1. It is a science of *facts*, of matters of fact in David Hume's sense.
 2. It is a science of *realities*. The "phenomena" that it, as psychological "phenomenology," deals with are real occurrences which, as such occurrences, if they have actual existence, find their place with the real subjects to whom they belong in the one spatiotemporal world as the *omnitude realitatis*.
 - ii. In contradistinction to that, *pure or transcendental phenomenology will become established, not as a science of matters of fact, but as a science of essences* (as an "eidetic" science); it will become established as a science which exclusively seeks to ascertain "cognitions of essences" and *no "matters of fact" whatever*. The relevant reduction which leads over from the psychological phenomena to the pure "essence" or, in the case of judgmental thinking, from matter-of-fact ("empirical") universality to "eidetic" universality, is the *eidetic reduction*. *Secondly, the phenomena of transcendental phenomenology will become characterized as unreal*. Other reductions, the specifically transcendental ones, "purify" psychological phenomena from what confers on them reality and, with that, their place in the real "world." Our phenomenology is to be an eidetic doctrine, not of phenomena that are real, but of phenomena that are transcendently reduced.
- c. Linke (1926, p. 248): Husserl defined phenomenology as "eidetic" in character, as the science of essences. To utilize the terminology of others, he conceived of it as concerned not with *Dasein* [being-as-there; there-ness] but with *Sosein* [being-as-such; suchness]. The latter, Husserl refers to as the "essence" which we can immediately apprehend or intuit; he speaks of *Wesensschauung*. Connected with this doctrine is that of a "pure (transcendental) consciousness" which, after we abstract from all actuality, is supposed to remain as the factor that provides meaning.
- d. Husserl (1929, p. 699): Phenomenology denotes a new, descriptive, philosophical method, which, since the concluding years of the last century, has established (1) an a priori psychological discipline, able to provide the only secure basis on which a strong empirical psychology can be built, and (2) a universal philosophy, which can supply an organum for the methodical revision of all the sciences.
 - i. (p. 700): Phenomenological psychology's comprehensive task is the systematic examination of the types and forms of intentional experience, and the reduction of their structures to the prime intentions, learning thus what is the nature of the psychical, and comprehending the being of the soul. The validity of these investigations will obviously extend beyond the particularity of the psychologist's own soul. For psychical life may be revealed to us not only in self-consciousness

but equally in our consciousness of other selves, and this latter source of experience offers us more than a reduplication of what we find in our self-consciousness, for it establishes the differences between "own" and "other" which we experience, and presents us with the characteristics of the "social-life." And hence the further task accrues to psychology of revealing the intentions of which the "social life" consists.... The Phenomenological psychology must examine the self's experience of itself and its derivative experience of other selves and of society, but whether, in so doing, it can be free of all psycho-physical admixture, is not yet clear. Can one reach a really pure self-experience and purely psychical data?

- e. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945/2005, p. vii): What is phenomenology? It may seem strange that this question has still to be asked half a century after the first works of Husserl. The fact remains that it has by no means been answered. Phenomenology is the study of essences; and according to it, all problems amount to finding definitions of essences: the essence of perception, or the essence of consciousness, for example. But phenomenology is also a philosophy which puts essences back into existence.
- f. van Manen, *Researching Lived Experience* (1990, p. 9): *Phenomenological research is the study of lived experience.* To say the same thing differently: phenomenology is the study of the lifeworld-the world as we immediately experience it pre-reflectively rather than as we conceptualize, categorize, or reflect on it (Husserl, 1970b; Schutz and Luckmann, 1973). Phenomenology aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences. Phenomenology asks, "What is this or that kind of experience like?" It differs from almost every other science in that it attempts to gain insightful descriptions of the way we experience the world pre-reflectively, without taxonomizing, classifying, or abstracting it.
 - i. (pp. 8-13): *Phenomenological research is a/n*
 1. study of lived experience (as we experience it and not as we conceptualize it)
 2. explication of phenomena as they present themselves to consciousness
 3. study of essences
 4. description of the experiential meanings we live as we live them
 5. human scientific study of phenomena
 6. attentive practice of thoughtfulness
 7. search for what it means to be human
 8. poetizing activity
- g. Armstrong (1994, p. 562): Phenomenology is a philosophy of experience. For phenomenology the ultimate source of all meaning and value is the lived experience of human beings. All philosophical systems, scientific theories, or aesthetic judgments have the status of abstractions from the ebb and flow of the lived world. The task of the philosopher, according to phenomenology, is to describe the structures of experience, in particular consciousness, the imagination, relations with other persons, and the situatedness of the human subject in society and history. Phenomenological theories of literature regard works of art as mediators between the consciousnesses of the author and the reader or as attempts to disclose aspects of the being of humans and their worlds. https://www.brown.edu/Departments/Joukowsky_Institute/courses/architecturebodyperformance/1065.html
- h. Ahmed (2006, pp. 3, 25): A queer phenomenology might turn to phenomenology by asking not only about the concept of orientation *in* phenomenology, but also about the orientation *of* phenomenology.... Phenomenology is often characterized as a "turn toward" objects, which appear in their perceptual "thereness" as objects given to

consciousness. Rather than consciousness being seen as directed toward itself, it is understood as having objects in its view as being shaped by that which appears before it in "this here and now."

- i. Farrell (2020, pp. 1-2): Phenomenology is all about understanding the lived experience of others. It is at once a philosophy, a perspective, and an approach to research. Those who rush to adopt phenomenology as a research approach rightly encounter strong warnings to offer its philosophical underpinnings due diligence. These philosophical underpinnings, marked by daunting terminology and initially mind-bending examinations of the nature of human existence, may deter some researchers from proceeding with phenomenology as a research approach which is regrettable given the range of questions such an approach can address in education. What is a student's experience of transitioning to secondary school? What is the lived experience of children whose first language is not English? What is the lived experience of a student teacher on his first school placement? Or a teaching principal juggling the dual demands of their role? What is it like for students at risk of dropping out of college or those returning to education at a more advanced stage in life?... The word phenomenology stems from the Greek *phainómenon* meaning "thing appearing to view," showing itself, flaring up. In simple terms, phenomenology is about understanding phenomena, or "things," as they appear to, or are experienced by, others. That could be the phenomenon of English literature as it appears to a student with dyslexia. Or the phenomenon of a new curriculum to a teacher well-versed in the old one.
3. What is phenomenological analysis?
 - a. Husserl, *Ideas II* (1913/1983, pp. 150-151, s. 123): [Phenomenology] must expose to its view events of pure consciousness as examples <and> make them perfectly clear; within the limits of this clarity it must analyze and seize upon their essences, trace with insight the essential interconnections, formulate what is beheld in faithful conceptual expressions which allow their sense to be prescribed purely by what is beheld or generically seen; and so forth.
 - b. Husserl (1929, p. 700): The phenomenological reduction to phenomena, to the purely psychical, advances by two steps: (1) systematic and radical *ἐποχή* of every objectifying "position" in an experience, practised both upon the regard of particular objects and upon the entire attitude of mind, and (2) expert recognition, comprehension and description of the manifold "appearances" of what are no longer "objects" but "unities" of "sense." So that the phenomenological description will comprise two parts, description of the "noetic" (*νόεω*) or "experiencing" and description of the "noematic" (*νόημα*) or the "experienced." Phenomenological experience, is the only experience which may properly be called "internal" and there is no limit to its practice. And as a similar "bracketing" of objective, and description of what then "appears" ("noema" in "noesis"), can be performed upon the "life" of another self which we represent to ourselves, the "reductive" method can be extended from one's own self-experience to one's experience of other selves.
 - c. Schacht (1972, p. 312): Husserl and Heidegger would be the first to insist upon the importance of such description in philosophical inquiry. If there is one thing upon which they agree, however, it is the fact that phenomenology proper begins only with the attempt to *go beyond* such description in some way or other, in order to ascertain the *logos* [or *eidos* or essence] of the 'phenomena' immediately encountered or experienced. Thus for Husserl one cannot be said to be doing phenomenology unless one is engaged in *eidetic* analysis; and for Heidegger, one can be said to be doing phenomenology only if one is engaged in *hermeneutic analysis or interpretation*. It seems to me that it would be well to restrict the use of the term 'phenomenology' and its derivatives to contexts in which something of this sort— as opposed to the kind of mere description of particular phenomena.
 - d. van Manen, *Researching Lived Experience* (1990, pp. vii-viii):

- i. Turning to the nature of lived experience
 - 1. Formulating the phenomenological question
 - 2. Explicating assumptions and understandings
 - 3. Orienting to the question
 - ii. Investigating experience as we live it
 - 1. Turning to personal experience as a starting point
 - 2. Tracing etymological sources
 - 3. Searching idiomatic phrases
 - 4. Obtaining experiential descriptions from others
 - a. Protocol writing (Lived experience descriptions)
 - b. Interviewing (personal life story)
 - c. Observing (experiential anecdote)
 - d. Experiential descriptions in literature
 - e. Biography as a resource for experiential material
 - f. Diaries and Journals as resources
 - g. Art and fiction as a resource
 - iii. Hermeneutic phenomenological reflection
 - 1. Lifeworld existentials as guides to reflection
 - 2. Thematic analysis
 - a. Uncovering thematic aspects
 - b. Isolating thematic statements
 - c. Composing linguistic transformations
 - d. Gleaning thematic descriptions from art and literature
 - e. Interpretation through conversation
 - f. Determining incidental and essential themes
 - iv. Hermeneutic phenomenological writing
 - 1. Attending to the speaking of language
 - 2. Silence—the limits of power and language
 - 3. Anecdotes
 - 4. Themes
 - 5. To write is to show or reveal something
 - e. van Manen, *Researching Lived Experience* (1990, pp. vii-viii) (Brief method):
 - i. Formulating the phenomenological question
 - ii. Interviewing (personal life story)
 - iii. Thematic analysis
 - iv. Hermeneutic phenomenological writing
 - f. Lanigan (1992, p. 21): phenomenological methodology has the following structure:
 - i. Description (Thematizing the)
 - 1. Interpretation (of the)
 - 2. Reduction (of the)
 - 3. Description (of the Sign[s])
 - ii. Reduction (Abstracting the)
 - 1. Interpretation (of the)
 - 2. Reduction (of the)
 - 3. Description (of the Signifier[s])
 - iii. Interpretation (Explicating the)
 - 1. Interpretation (of the)
 - 2. Reduction (of the)
 - 3. Description (of the Signified[s])
4. What is (an) essence?
- a. Husserl (1906/1999, pp. 51, 69-70): Perception posits *existence*; but it also has an

essence, which, as a *content* posited as existing can be the same in re-presentation. But, the contrast between *existence* and *essence* means nothing other than that here two modes of being manifest themselves in two modes of givenness which have to be distinguished. In the mere imagining of a color, the existence that concerns the color as an actuality in time has no bearing on the matter; no judgments are made about it, and nothing of it is given in the content of the imagining. But the color appears, it stands there, it is a "this," it can become the subject of a judgment, even an evident judgment. Thus a mode of givenness manifests itself in the intuitions of imagination and such evident judgments as are grounded in them.... The meaning of the word "phenomenon" is twofold because of the essential correlation between appearing and that which appears. "φαινόμενον" proper means "that which appears," and yet it is predominantly used for the appearing itself, the subjective phenomenon. In reflection the *cogitatio*, the appearing itself, becomes an object, and this encourages the development of the equivocation. Finally, it need not be emphasized again that when we speak of inquiry into the objects of knowledge and the modes of knowledge, we always mean inquiry into essences that, within the sphere of absolute givenness, exhibit in their generality the definitive sense, the possibility, and the essence of the objectivity of knowledge and of the knowledge of objectivity.

- b. Husserl (1913/1983, pp. xxii): With the expressions *Idee* [*idea*] and *Ideal* [*ideal*], it is perhaps not quite so bad with respect to disconcerting varieties of significations, though, on the whole, still bad enough... I therefore use, as a foreign word, the terminologically unspoiled name "*Eidos*"; and, as a German word, the name "*Wesen*" ["*essence*"] which is infected with harmless but occasionally vexatious equivocations.
 - i. (p. 138): Concerned only with the immanent, phenomenology *in no way posits the being of such essences, makes no statements about their validity or nonvalidity, or about the ideal possibility of objectivities corresponding to them, and establishes no eidetic laws relating to them.*
- c. Gibson (1921, pp. 313-314): Husserl distinguishes in effect three main types of Object with which a Science may have to do. There is, in the first place, the real object or thing, the object with whose nature the natural and physical Sciences are concerned. There is, in the second place, what Husserl, in contradistinction to the real, natural object, calls the non-real or "irreal" object. Irreal objects are perfectly definite forms of Being. We shall see that all transcendently purified experiences are objects of this kind and possess Being, Individual Being of this irreal type. Then thirdly, there is the Essence, what Husserl calls "*Wesen*." Phenomenology is exclusively concerned with pure essences, more particularly with the essential nature of that irreal form of Being he calls Pure Consciousness. These Essences are however, on his view, quite genuine objects, perceivable through a special kind of Intuition, which Husserl, in opposition to Sensory Intuition, calls Essential or Categorical Intuition, a form of intuition peculiar to Phenomenology.
- d. Santayana (1927, pp. ix, 1-2, 4, 14, 16): [Essences] are the transcript of life into discourse, the rhetorical and emotional rendering of existence. Essence is indeed everywhere at hand; and a scrupulous scepticism, falling back on immediate appearance, is itself a chief means of discovering the pervasive presence of essences. In a volume on Scepticism and Animal Faith, to which the present work [i.e., *The Realm of Essence*] is a sequel, I have described in detail the approach to essence through scepticism.... The sceptic once on this scent will soon trace essence to its lair. He [she and they] will drop, as dubious and unwarranted, the belief in a past, an environment, or a destiny. He [she and they] will dismiss all thought of any truth to be discovered or any mind engaged in that egregious chase; and he will honestly confine himself [or herself or themselves] to noting the features of the passing apparition. At first he may still assume that he can survey the passage and transformation of his dreams; but soon, if [he she and they] is

truly sceptical and candid, he will confess that this alleged order of appearances and this extended experience are themselves only dreamt of, like the future or the remoter past or the material environment— those discarded idols of his dogmatic days. Nothing will remain but some appearance now; and that which appears, when all gratuitous implications of a world beyond or of a self here are discarded, will be an essence.... This acquaintance with essence I call intuition, whether it be passive, aesthetic, and mystical, or on the contrary, analytical and selective.... Thus scepticism, dialectic, contemplation, and spiritual discipline, all lead to the discrimination of essence; and anyone who has trodden any of these paths to the end will not need to be told what essence means, or that it is a most real and interesting realm of being... It is therefore not as a quality attributed to external things that essence is best distinguished; for the color or the shape of an apple may be supposed to exist in it, and when drawn out and imagined existing alone they may seem ghostly; neither the roundness nor the redness of the apple would be edible.

- e. Montague (1939, p. 227): I gain admittance into the world of essences by means of the eidetic *epoché*. I enclose in this bracket all the contingency of individuality and refuse to yield to my habit of forming judgments which apply to it. By bringing this sacrifice on the altar of knowledge, I now am enabled to behold in every particular object of consciousness the possible exemplification of a generic universal. The unchanging essence (*eidos*) shadowed forth in the changing particulars is also to be grasped by intuition, either directly and completely, or by intuition combined with the processes of ideation.
- f. Levin (1968, pp. 6-7): From the noematic standpoint, the essence is a structure, an object of signification; while from the noetic, it is an a priori law of necessity, prescribing that without which an objectivation of whatever sort under thematic consideration at any given time cannot be thought or experienced. However one chooses to regard it, it is transcendent in relation to consciousness. And, like all transcendents, all objectivities generally, essences are sedimentations of meaning which offer themselves for genetic a priori constitution.... Now, it becomes evident that the consequences Husserl draws from his distinction are the result of some serious confusion. First, there is the confusion of an essence with the lived experience for which it is the correlative articulation. Experience *as lived* is plainly immanent; but the essence is a thematic object of knowledge, an enduring nexus for a certain modality of synthesized experiences; hence it is always transcendent (in the fundamental and broad sense), relative to immanent, purely lived acts of consciousness.
- g. Dahlberg (2006, p. 18): An essence is, simply, a phenomenon's style, its way of being, and thus the essence cannot be separated from the phenomenon that it is the essence of. Consequently, we cannot talk about the relationship between a phenomenon and its essence, e.g. a table, in the same way as we talk about the relationship between two phenomena, e.g. a table and a chair. Moreover, we cannot talk about essences as characteristics in the same way as we talk about characteristics of "things," i.e. we could talk about the table as having four legs, being made of wood, and painted blue, without grasping its essence at all. We must make the table a figure and at the same time make something else, e.g. chairs, a dining room, background in order to see the essence of it, but that is not enough.
- h. Zhok (2012, pp. 117, 128): essences, when they are primarily intuited, are something like constitutive postulates concerning transcendence. Transcendence and essence are, in a sense, different emphases on the same: transcendence signals that something subsists beyond the powers of consciousness, while essence signals that beyond the powers of consciousness something subsists. Essences are what transform the 'enigma' of transcendence into ontological claims. One could object that essences, interpreted in these terms, could be regarded as mere hypotheses or fantasies produced to account for

sensations; but such an interpretation would make the mistake of psychologizing cognition.... Essences cannot be said to exist either merely as 'thought' or as 'matter'. What we can say is that, if we look at essences a *parte objecti*, they are primarily given as ontological thresholds, quanta, as it were, provided that we do not think of them as intrinsic features of matter. If we look at essences a *parte subjecti*, they are theses concerning transcendence that posit the existence of self-contained units (the world, natural things, etc.). But then: a *parte subjecti*, essences have no power to coerce the affecting transcendent alterity into beings, and a *parte objecti*, essences do not impose themselves on 'unmotivated' subjects. The fact that neither pole of intentional experience can 'coerce' the other implies that they must be conceived as 'co-essential'. Thus, if we attempted to depict together essences a *parte objecti* and *subjecti*, we should say that essences are the way in which we are motivated and constitutively bound to articulate being, which in turn is apt to be thus articulated.