TRANSLATOR AND EDITOR’S INTRODUCTION

The present volume is rich in essential phenomenological descriptions and insightful historico-critical analyses, some of which cannot be fully appreciated, however, except by close examination on the part of the reader. Accordingly, such a task ought to be left to the consideration and judgment of the latter, save where such discussions are directly relevant to the topics I will be dwelling upon. I prefer, then, to approach the matters and questions contained here otherwise, namely, archeologically. In this I follow José Huertas-Jourda, the editor of the corresponding French volume, in his felicitous terminological choice, although I adopt it here for my purposes in an etymological sense, i.e., as signifying a return to principles or origins. This, after all, is consistent not only with the spirit and practice of phenomenology, as acknowledged by Aron Gurwitsch often enough, but as well with what he has actually said, to wit: it is a question of

1 Cf., e.g., infra, in *An Outline of Constitutive Phenomenology*, Chapter 4, pp. 185 ff. (Henceforth I shall refer to this book as *Outline.*) This essay will be devoted to the study of selected parts of the contents of this volume, although, when necessary, use will be made here of other works by various authors, including Gurwitsch.

2 Cf., e.g., *ibid.*, Chapter 3, pp. 107 ff. and infra, in “Husserl’s Theory of the Intentionality of Consciousness in Historical Perspective,” pp. 351 ff. (Henceforth I shall refer to this essay as “Husserl’s Theory.”) In these notes, once a piece contained in this volume has been referred to, Gurwitsch’s name shall be omitted.

3 I use the word “corresponding” simply to indicate that most of the contents of the French edition (*Esquisse de la phénoménologie constitutive*, ed. J. Huertas-Jourda [Paris: J. Vrin, 2002]) are found in the present volume, which however exceeds the former, as it contains many essays and studies not found in it. (Henceforth I shall refer to the French edition of this work as *Esquisse*.)


the principle of phenomenological idealism, according to which everything that exists and everything that is valid exists and is valid due to certain acts and groups of acts, and it cannot derive its radical clarification and its ultimate justification except from an analysis of conscious life in which it presents itself in its existence and in its validity.\(^6\)

The analysis in question should begin with the object taken as the product of the acts of consciousness to which the object is relative and “disclose, step by step and layer by layer, . . . [its] phenomenological constitution . . . for consciousness,”\(^7\) understood as an act. In other words, in such a reflective regression, the “object, taken as the point of departure, serves as one’s transcendental clue,”\(^8\) the said object-analysis deserving the title “transcendental,” for it “bears on the necessary conditions for the nature, unity, and existence of the object.”\(^9\)

§I. The Empiricist Conception of Consciousness

Gurwitsch is fundamentally concerned with conscious experience. In order to bring about its examination, he starts by identifying the basic conception of consciousness found in modern philosophy, focusing primarily as he does on the empiricist tradition thereof. For the


\(^7\) A. Gurwitsch, “Some Fundamental Principles of Constitutive Phenomenology,” infra, p. 307 ff. (Henceforth I shall refer to this essay as “Principles.”)
