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Kantianism in Margolis’ Naturalism”

In: Dirk-Martin Grube and Robert Sinclair (Eds.) (2015). *Pragmatism, Metaphysics and Culture—Reflections on the Philosophy of Joseph Margolis* (pp. 137–157). Nordic Studies in Pragmatism 2. Helsinki: Nordic Pragmatism Network.


ISSN-L 1799-3954

ISSN 1799-3954

ISBN 978-952-67497-1-6

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Nordic Pragmatism Network,
Helsinki 2015

www.nordprag.org

In Defense of Transcendentalism: Vestiges of Kantianism in Margolis' Naturalism

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Introduction

In a relatively recent paper, Joseph Margolis characterizes his favourite view of naturalism with a list of truisms, which are such that "they will certainly be opposed by those who oppose the conception of naturalism that I favour" (2009, 36). The first one of these is that there should be no privileged cognitive faculties of any kind. Such privileged cognitive faculties, so Margolis, are relied on, in different ways, by, for example, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant and Husserl. The problem with the latter two is that their faculties of transcendental reason yield "substantive necessities of thought that empirical science must accommodate" (ibid., 28). The cornerstone of Margolis' naturalism is then that these "privileged cognitive faculties yielding indubitable or necessary synthetic truths, whether 'natural' or transcendental, must be defeated or replaced or reinterpreted along a posteriori lines; and doctrines that clearly exceed the limits of finite inquiry and intelligence and the cognition of what is true . . . must either be rejected outright or construed as no more than heuristic, rhetorical, confined to rational hope, or otherwise diminished" (ibid., 28).

In this paper, I will first show that Husserl's "faculties" do not yield necessities of thought that empirical science must accommodate. Thus I will show how transcendental philosophy is developed along a posteriori lines in phenomenology. If we then disregard the mere terminological differences between the two views, Margolis' naturalism and Husserlian

phenomenology will turn out to be in many respects remarkably similar in spirit. The differences between the two approaches are typically in the level of generality of their respective descriptions: where Margolis paints in broad strokes, on a general level, Husserl analyzes in exhausting, minute detail. A closer analysis of course reveals differences between the two approaches. To put it somewhat provocatively, I will claim, that compared to phenomenology, it is Margolis's naturalism that has some vestiges of Kantianism.

Having discussed Margolis' non-reductive naturalism and Husserlian phenomenology in general, I will focus on the discussion of normativity in both views. Margolis' criticism of the Kantian dualisms culminates in his discussion of normativity: "transcendentalism," he says,

cannot rightly anticipate the defense and vulnerability of its most compelling posits in the face of evolving empirical discoveries: it cannot, for instance, know a priori how it will be obliged to revise its conception of space or the relationship between causality and freedom in the light of unanticipated scientific findings; here, post-Newtonian physics and post-Darwinian paleoanthropology have obliged us to weigh the need for deep revisions among Kantian-like necessary conditions of cognition or the advantage of abandoning the sternest versions of Kant's entire strategy. The analysis of normativity, I claim, is profoundly hostage to such considerations. Forthcoming b, 2–3

On the other hand, Husserl's view of normativity, especially in his mature texts, is cast in Aristotelian—Hegelian terms of teleology and examined through a historical reflection of the genesis of a tradition. Again, the two approaches are similar enough to admit an interesting comparison. Both locate the norms to culture, tradition, and customs rather than to a priori reasoning. A more detailed examination reveals differences. In Husserl's view, normativity has its origin already in our pre-predicative experiences and is thus more pervasive phenomenon than what it seems to be to Margolis. Again, some aspects of Margolis's view of normativity raise in a phenomenologist a suspicion of Kantian vestiges in his view. But most important difference is that Husserl's careful analysis of normativity enables him to develop an approach with which the norms can be critically evaluated. To be sure, Husserl's criticism is *internal*, it does not rely on any external foundations. Thus it is not incompatible with Margolis's aspirations, but it goes beyond them to offer guidelines for internal criticism of the practices.

2. Transcendental phenomenology is empirical

Husserl developed the phenomenological method initially to study epistemological foundations of logic. His method as well as his explicit conceptualization of it developed gradually, but if we take the concept of “phenomenological reduction” to be essential to it, its inception can be traced to 1905. The phenomenological reduction is a change of attitude in which the philosopher moves from his everyday naturalistic attitude to the attitude of philosophical reflection. Nothing is lost in the reduction, the philosopher continues to have the same naturalistic world he/she had before the reduction. Instead of living in it, he/she now reflects upon it. Thus phenomenology is essentially philosophical reflection of the naturalistically given world.

In the phenomenological reduction the objective sciences are so to say bracketed. “Within this epoche, however, neither the sciences nor the scientists have disappeared for us who practice the epoche” (1970, §35), Husserl explains. And one indeed wonders, how else we could examine the sciences phenomenologically. While we can, and indeed, should, practice phenomenology of science, the motivation of the epoche of the objective sciences prevents us from using the methods of objective sciences in philosophy. Thus, its purpose is to safeguard phenomenology from the scientism typical to analytic philosophy and strongly opposed by Margolis. To be sure, the epoche should be performed also regarding the normal life. Again, this does not mean an annihilation of the life world, but a change in attitude with which it is studied (1970, §40).

Even though phenomenology uses various kinds of reductions, it is not reductionistic. The subject matter remains in our experience as it is initially given to us. Indeed, Husserl holds that he is more positivist than the positivists themselves (1983, §20). By this he means that phenomenology describes the experiences as they are given, *not* as reduced to mere given sense-data. The world is given as conceptualized, or in Husserl’s terms *constituted*. The constitution of our consciousness makes the world intelligible: structured in certain ways, we see things *as* something and as organized into states of affairs. The purpose of the phenomenological reduction is not to take anything away from the world, but rather to make our constitution of the world visible.

Furthermore, one of the corner stones of Husserl’s philosophy is the so-called “Principle of all Principles,” according to which one is supposed to describe only what is given (1983, §24). Thus, in phenomenology, like in

Margolis' naturalism, one should not postulate any extra-naturalist truths or objects either. In this respect phenomenology, like Margolis' naturalism, falls between hypostatizing extra-naturalism and reductionism.

Contrary to Margolis' naturalism, however, the task of the phenomenological reduction is to open the transcendental point of view from which to examine the naturalistically given world. This does not call for any extra-naturalist modes of cognition, as Margolis seems to suppose. Transcendental phenomenology is transcendental because it examines the conditions of the possibility of the naturalistic experiences. In other words, transcendental phenomenology examines what is required of consciousness in order for us to have the experiences we have. The consciousness constitutes the experiences and the task of the transcendental examination is to make the constitution explicit. The examination is a posteriori, it starts from the fact of experience and from it goes back to the constitutive activities of the consciousness. Thus the transcendental phenomenologist asks transcendental questions that range from "what is required of consciousness that we can perceive objects?" to "what are the conditions of possibility of perceiving other persons?", or to "what are the conditions of possibility of logic itself?"

The answers to such questions aim at giving general structures of such constitutive activities. It would not make sense to give a detailed account of every individual experience, but the attempt is to describe experiences in general so that we can all agree to have such experiences. The answers are the so-called eidetic structures of the constitutive activities: for example, that the experiences have a certain structure in time with their protention and retention, that we are embodied and aware of, e.g., whether we are in an upright position, and that we have a history of previous experiences. To be sure, the description of experience does not yield indubitable truths:

The possibility of deception is inherent in the evidence of experience and does not annul either its fundamental character or its effect; though becoming evidentially aware of deception 'annuls' the deceptive experience or evidence itself. The evidence of a new experience is what makes the previously uncontested experience undergo that modification of believing called 'annulment' or 'cancellation'; and it alone can do so.

Husserl 1969, §59

Description of the constitution of our consciousness characterizes Husserl's approach in the *Ideas I*. In Husserl's more mature texts transcendental phenomenology remains empirical, but it is complemented and extended by

further aspects that are additionally taken into account in the descriptions. First of all, Husserl realizes that the achievements of the previous generations are present as sedimentations in our experience. For example, sciences are not constituted from the beginning by ourselves, but we inherit the scientific world view from the previous generations. For Husserl we are "second-natured" as Margolis puts it.

In his later texts Husserl divides the world of natural attitude into the life-world and the scientific world. We live in a life-world, and the sciences are included in it in various ways. Yet their view of the objective reality is different from the one we have in our life-world. For example, in our life-world the sun rises in the morning, yet we know that, scientifically speaking, the earth revolves around the sun. Moreover, when we conduct a scientific experiment or examine, say, archeological findings we are in the life-world and construct the picture of the objective reality on the basis of the experiences we have in our life-world. Indeed, the life-world is a presupposition of the sciences. As Husserl puts it:

science is a human spiritual accomplishment which presupposes as its point of departure, both historically and for each new student, the intuitive surrounding world of life, pregiven as existing for all in common. Furthermore, it is an accomplishment which, in being practiced and carried forward, continues to presuppose this surrounding world as it is given in its particularity to the scientist. For example, for the physicist it is the world in which he sees his measuring instruments, hears time-beats, estimates visible magnitudes, etc.—the world in which, furthermore, he knows himself to be included with all his activity and all his theoretical ideas. 1970, §33

Guided by the norm of truth, the scientists collaboratively examine the objective world on the basis of the evidence found in the life-world. The scientific objectivity thus becomes constituted in the scientific institutions that have been established for the sake of finding out the truth about the objective world. The questions in science "rest upon the ground of the elements of this pregiven world in which science and every other life-praxis is engaged"(1970, §33). Margolis expresses this as follows:

[s]cience and knowledge are themselves critical constructions of some kind relative to what, presuppositionlessly, but affected in ways that are admittedly prejudiced and horizoned nevertheless, *is* admittedly *given*, reportorially, in public experience. 2009, 36

Like for Margolis, also for Husserl our view of reality is constituted from what is given in the thoroughly historicized life-world. Nevertheless, we

do not construct reality into existence, it is found to be this or that way. Even though Margolis does not isolate the transcendental point of view, the outcome of his analyses is largely in agreement with the phenomenological ones: The world is constituted but not constructed. Margolis probably finds a phenomenologists' attempt to capture structures of any kind to border on postulating suspicious "fixities." However, phenomenologists do not posit them but find them in experience. They are not eternal but revisable fixities. The necessity related to them has been characterized as "factual". Accordingly Husserl's Kantianism is Kantianism in the sense of the Third Critique, not in the sense of the First Critique (cf. Tengelyi 2014).

3. Margolis' naturalist view of culture and vestiges of Kantianism

Like in phenomenology, in Margolis' view, the definition of the human self and the analysis of the human world and the form of life have a central role. Margolis analyses the self as a "second-natured transform" of a natural kind. The self is enlanguaged and encultured like it is in Husserl's mature philosophy. Margolis finds Kant to fall prey to "fatal dualism of causality and autonomous agency" and holds that it cannot "pretend to have remained faithful to its strongest empirical intuitions" (2015, 19). Similarly Husserl complains that

Kant does get involved in his own sort of mythical talk, whose literal meaning points to something subjective, but a mode of the subjective which we are in principle unable to make intuitive to ourselves, whether through factual examples or through genuine analogy.

1970, 114

In the attempt to overcome the Kantian dualism, Margolis argues that the humans are "hybrids", thoroughly historied natures, shaped by the *Bildung* that has taken place for centuries. Likewise Margolis describes the world to be artifactual, and like Husserl, Margolis is quick to point out that it nevertheless is not a construct (2015, 4). Persons are hybrid artifacts: they are culturally formed natural kinds. They are, like artworks, sentences, and histories, thoroughly interpretable and discernible by and only by persons (2015, 7). They are not like it when they are born, but a human neonate starts acquiring the artifactual practices and shared forms of understanding of historically evolving societies from birth. To become functioning persons they have to master the culturally invented language. We "emerge as persons through the mastery of language, freighted with the contingent baggage of societal memory and entrenched habits and

beliefs that language makes possible" (26), Margolis writes in his article for the present volume. A phenomenologist would not disagree on this either, but would try to make more fine-grained distinctions among the developing accounts of intersubjectivity.

But, most importantly, a phenomenologist would argue that in viewing persons as hybrids, made out of humans as natural kinds and their acquired second nature, the dualism between mind and body is not completely overcome. Already the term "hybrid" suggests that the person is made out of two different, even if interdependent, kinds. Phenomenology teaches us that only a transcendental approach to personhood helps us overcome the dualism between mind and body. A transcendental clarification of a person shows him/her to be thoroughly encultured but also embodied. We are in the world in a certain place, in a certain position with certain distances from others, and, most importantly, with a bodily awareness of all that. In comparison to phenomenological approach to persons, Margolis' "hybrids" seem to be rather theoretical constructs. Margolis bases his view on post-Newtonian physics and post-Darwinian paleoanthropology, which he then combines with a Hegelian view to form his hybrid account of a person.

The problem with the scientific views of human being is that they offer only narrow glimpses to one particular dimension of the personhood. Rather than focusing on a person as a whole, they look at her through the lenses of different methodologies. It is not clear whether one can reach a complete account of personhood in such a roundabout manner. Instead of relying on the fractured views of a person given by different sciences, the phenomenologist draws from our own experience of what it is to be a person in a life-world. Somewhat ironically, when looked at from the phenomenological point of view, Margolis' criticism of Kant's dualism and Kant's "profound limitation [. . .] of what it is to be a flesh-and-blood person" (Forthcoming, 9) can be directed at himself. Margolis' view has a vestige of some sort of Kantian intellectualism: He draws on the results of the several empirical sciences and then tries to combine them into a coherent and whole picture of the person. That is a complicated detour to analyze a person, which we are to begin with. In response to this, a phenomenologist could well claim that such Kantianism should be reinterpreted along a posteriori lines and be replaced with a direct analysis of experience. We find ourselves to be embodied persons, here and now. It is the sciences that give narrow and fragmentary views of persons, the views that are important but secondary to what the persons are in the life-world.

Hence, Husserl writes that Kant should have “tackled in a truly radical way the problem of a priori knowledge and its methodical function in rational objective knowledge. This would have required a fundamentally and essentially different regressive method from that of Kant, which rests on those unquestioned assumptions: not a mythically, constructively inferring method, but a thoroughly intuitively disclosing method, intuitive in its point of departure and in everything it discloses” (1970, §30).

4. Margolis on normativity

Let us next examine the issue of normativity. Neither naturalists nor phenomenologists can postulate extra-naturalist norms. The vexing question is where do they locate them? Margolis, the naturalist, holds that the Kant’s view of normativity is entirely incompatible with his project. He develops his view of normativity by way of critique of the Pittsburgh School, Wilfrid Sellars, John McDowell, and Robert Brandom, in particular. His main criticism is that their views are too Kantian and thus based on a dualistic account of persons that sees persons as mere sites for linguistic intentions. In contrast, Margolis admits “perception-based concepts, non-discursive forms of rationality, intentionality, agency, valuative and (at least some) evaluative capacities (taste and simple preference, for instance)” (Forthcoming, 16–17). As we will see, a phenomenologist would agree with all this. On the basis of evolutionary and paleoanthropological grounds, Margolis then claims that the human primate is not able to engage neither discursivity nor normativity, even though it is capable of some rationality (ibid., 29). Margolis agrees with the Pittsburgh school Kantians in holding discursivity and normativity to be inseparable. But since normativity is inseparable from discursivity, it is artifactual, culturally generated “second-natured” transform of animal valuation (ibid., 35). The problem with Kant and the Pittsburgh school is that they fail to link their accounts of discursive and the normative to the issue of the formation of the human person (ibid., 30). Consequently, to Margolis, normativity is not a matter of an a priori reasoning, but it builds on the “sittlich” forms of normativity that happen to prevail in the society, confined to the form of life to which the person belongs.

Margolis divides normativity into two forms: enabling and agentive. The enabling norms relate to the questions of truth, meaning, inference, evidence, and pragmatic consistency. The agentive norms, in contrast, relate to questions of commitment, the choice of goals and purposes, and,

for example, the appraisal of competing visions (*ibid.*, 36–37). The enabling norms are acquired together with the mastery of language. In contrast to them, the agentive norms bind us in a way that requires practical conformity to an independent obligation (*ibid.*, 38, 41). Both, having a language and agentive behavior, are entirely natural in being second-natured. Thus Margolis' answer to the location problem is entirely naturalistic.

Margolis believes that we cannot provide the compelling conditions by which to validate our having found the objective norms of human life. Instead, he holds we are within a form of life, bound to certain *sittlich* norms. These *sittlich* norms are continually tested and challenged in terms our understanding of the history of such efforts. We may also try to rationalize them in many ways. They may conflict with other norms. Possible higher-order norms, such as those behind repudiation of slavery, are simply the ones that are valid on grounds apart from the mere *sittlich* sources. If I understood Margolis' view correctly, there are no independent higher-order norms, but arguments to change our *sittlich* norms. Norms are embedded in cultural formations and as such revisable.

5. Husserl on norms

In Husserl's view, normativity is a more general and pervasive phenomenon than what it is to Margolis. He discusses normativity in terms of teleology and strivings related to it. To him intentionality is pervaded by normative strivings. Indeed, Husserl writes that

[i]ntentionality is not something isolated; it can be observed only in the synthetic unity that connects every single pulse of psychic life teleologically, in the unity-relation to objectivities—or rather in the double polarity, toward Ego-pole and object-pole.

1969 §100, 262/232

For Husserl, the normative strivings can be on a very "primitive" passive level, such as when, as if automatically we read a book or look at the computer screen from such a distance that we can see the text optimally. Our activity is geared toward optimality that gives a norm for perceiving something well. We may have momentary and changing goals. In the other end of spectrum there are overall goals, "highest ends" that we may subject our lives to and which determine a structure of the lower level goals. For example, we may be guided by an overall goal in life to live a life of a philosopher. Such a goal determines other goals we may have, such as writing a paper for an edited volume. It may be something we

have chosen for ourselves as a life-vocation, "or it can be one that we have somehow drifted into through our upbringing" (1970, 379). In such a case, our environment has chosen our goals for us. Furthermore, we may have contradictory goals, as we have different goals as parents, citizens, and professional philosophers. "We are at once fathers, citizens, etc." (1970, §35). These vocations may determine their own "worlds" and what is correct and true or what is mistaken and false in them. Ultimately the situation is typically unfortunately messy:

The scientific world... , like all other worlds [determined by particular] ends, itself 'belongs' to the life-world, just as all men and all human communities generally, and their human ends both individual and communal, with all their corresponding working structures, belong to it. 380-1

Husserl uses the term "teleology" to describe the normative structures that direct our conscious life. Margolis has written that his naturalism favours the denial of teleologism and fixed or final values (2006, 8). I take it that by teleologism he here means a fatalistic development towards certain predetermined telos, where the telos is fixed and given from the outset. This sense is very different from the way in which Husserlian teleology should be understood. Husserl's teleology refers to the norms that guide the practices, to what the given practice aims at. Husserl's teloi do not predetermine us, at least not necessarily. We may choose our goals by ourselves, although sometimes we do not choose them but adopt them more passively.

Whereas Margolis distinguishes between the enabling and agentive norms, Husserl makes no such distinction. To be sure, Margolis remarks that in pragmatic contexts the distinction between the two is not easy to make (Forthcoming, 38). Yet he complains that Habermas, for example, conflates the two (ibid., 41-42). Early in his career Husserl was primarily focused on what Margolis calls "enabling norms," i.e., with the notions like meaning, truth, consistency, etc. At the time, for Husserl they *were* enabling, their role was to give the necessary conditions for the possibility of sciences. For Husserl, logic is the field that studies these norms. Husserl's famous arguments against psychologism aimed at showing that logic gives an independent foundation for sciences, and thus provides the norm for sciences. The *Logical Investigations* then give detailed analyses to the notions like meaning, truth, evidence, consistency, etc.

Later, and to some extent already within the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl changes his view of logic as an enabling norm setter to view it

more like an agentive norm that relates to agents' choices of goals. Husserl thus starts to regard the notions like meaning, truth, consistency as "agentive norms", as agents' desiderata. Especially in his later texts logic is a norm setter for the views that belong to persons who live in the life-world. The meanings are construed as "ideal exemplars" and coherence and truth are something striven for. The change in Husserl's view is connected to Husserl's development towards more "personalistic" approach both in logic as well as in ethics. In terms of the former, he realizes that the persons and the life-world are the fundamental presuppositions of logic. To him, logic still examines meaning, truth, evidence, coherence, and the like, but these norms are regarded as agents' goals rather than as conditions for possibility of knowledge. Margolis, presumably finds such a view problematic. I will discuss this in more detail below, but let me here express the initial suspicion that perhaps Margolis' view of the enabling norms as distinguished from agentive norms is another vestige of Kantianism in Margolis' view.

6. Anthropology of norms

What distinguishes Husserl's and Margolis' approaches is that Husserl is continuously extremely conscientious about the methods with which he approaches his subject matter. Not only does he formulate the phenomenological reductions, but he also specifies an empirical method with which to examine the normative structure of individual and communal activities. He does this in his *Formal and Transcendental Logic* (1929) where he introduces the notion of *Besinnung*, translated into English as "sense-investigation". It is hermeneutic reflection with which to critically examine an activity with respect to the norms guiding it. The sense-investigation aims at finding out the goal, the sense of the activity. The senses as norms determine the activity and guide them as providing the goal for the activity in question. According to Husserl, if we are to find out the norms governing the activity we have to participate in the activity in question, so that we can understand what it aims at, explicitly or only implicitly. Husserl writes:

whether sciences and logic be genuine or spurious, we do have experience of them as cultural formations given to us beforehand and bearing within themselves their meaning, their 'sense': since they are formations produced indeed by the practice of the scientists and generations of scientists who have been building them. As so produced,

they have a final sense, toward which the scientists have been continually striving, at which they have been continually aiming. Standing in, or entering, a community of empathy with the scientists, we can follow and understand—and carry on 'sense-investigation' [Besinnung] 1969, 8–9

Thus, logic does not offer us the conditions of possibility of knowledge but we have to find out the norms governing the scientific enterprise by going out into the field, to carry out an anthropological study of the sense of the activity in question. In *the Formal and Transcendental Logic* Husserl claims, apparently on the basis of such *Besinnung*, that logic divides into three strata: on one level it establishes the goal for grammatical correctness, on another level it establishes the goal of coherence, and yet on the third level the goal of truth amounts to empirical verification. If indeed Husserl's analysis is based on *Besinnung* as he claims, this means that Husserl has found out, in "a community of empathy with the scientists" that they strive toward grammatical correctness, coherence, and in empirical sciences also truth. Since the basis for Husserl's claim is empirical *Besinnung*, even more norms guiding the scientific research could be found out, but these are what Husserl takes to be most universal.

In principle, I think, Husserl's strategy of basing the analysis of norms on *Besinnung* is presumably largely compatible with Margolis' naturalism. It shows how norms are embedded in cultural formations that have developed for generations. Likewise, Margolis construes them as "the formative Sitten of diverse societies" (Margolis 2006, 246). On both views, the norms are internal to the practices. They are not found out by a priori reasoning, but they are located in people's explicit or implicit intentions. This allows for a kind of pluralism in Husserl's approach that Margolis also defends. But whereas Margolis' approach is rather abstract and general, Husserl suggests that in order to carry out a philosophical study of normativity one should go into the field, to "enter the community of empathy" with whatever group one is examining. Husserl is also more specific about where the norms are located. Whereas Margolis speaks about the Sitten of the society, for Husserl the norms are ultimately located in persons' intentions. To be sure, these intentions are historically and socially conditioned, and they may overlap and even contradict each other in various ways.

Margolis would agree with this, but to him this suggests that the bivalence of logic should be given up. For example, we may find out that

alternative incompatible claims may both be valid. Margolis holds that such beliefs are incongruent,

meaning by that that they would be incompatible on a bivalent logic but not on a many-valued logic in accord with which the alternative claims cannot be jointly true but may yet be reasonable or objectively valid or the like, without producing a paradox. 2006, 247

To Husserl in different life-worlds different "facts" may pertain: he explains that in the life-world, together with those we live with, we arrive at "secure" facts that are undisturbed by any noticeable disagreement. But, he holds,

when we are thrown into an alien social sphere, that of the Negroes in the Congo, Chinese peasants, etc., we discover that their truths, the facts that for them are fixed, generally verified or verifiable, are by no means the same as ours. 1970, §36

Our life-world and an alien world may thus have incompatible facts. According to Husserl, we may recourse to science for rescue:

if we set up the goal of a truth about the objects which is unconditionally valid for all subjects, beginning with that on which normal Europeans, normal Hindus, Chinese, etc., agree in spite of all relativity—beginning, that is, with what makes objects of the life-world, common to all, identifiable for them and for us (even though conceptions of them may differ), such as spatial shape, motion, sense-quality, and the like—then we are on the way to objective science. 1970, §36

In the sciences objectivity is made a goal so that the relativities of the life-worlds are surpassed. Such a goal is governed by already mentioned norms of truth, coherence and grammatical rigor.

Whatever may be the chances for realizing, [...], the idea of objective science in respect to the mental world... , this idea of objectivity dominates the whole universitas of the positive sciences in the modern period, and in the general usage it dominates the meaning of the word 'science.' Husserl 1970, §34d

Part of what it means to be a science is to be guided by truth, coherence, and verification. There are presumably other more local norms that determine sciences as well.

Husserl's view of the world is thus rather pluralistic, but so that the idea of the universal objectivity in the sciences offers us an ideal limit and thus an eternal task. But, does it mean that we should abandon the principle of bivalence that the statements are either true or false? According to

Husserl, principle of bivalence is in fact a presupposition of the sciences, and hence holds in logic. The scientists' enterprise would not make sense, if they could not think that their claims are either true or false. The transcendental analyses show that we have such a presupposition already in our life-world. Indeed, the life-world shares the same general structures as what the objective sciences presuppose: "these are the same structures that they presuppose as a priori structures and systematically unfold in a priori sciences, sciences of the logos, the universal methodical norms by which any knowledge of the world existing 'in itself, objectively' must be bound" (1970, §36). Thus even though different worlds in which we live may have different facts, there is a universal a priori that demands coherence and truth from us. Principle of bivalence pertains in it, and indeed, is an important presupposition of the scientific inquiry. Husserl however is not claiming that our claims are actually true or false. Rendering them so is the eternal task that we are facing. Truth is thus to Husserl like an ideal point in geometry: postulated for the needs of investigation.

Margolis on the contrary writes that his relativism "obliges us to retreat from bipolar truth-values or *tertium non datur*—but *not* globally, not indiscriminately, not on an all-or-nothing basis" (Margolis 1987, 7). A consequence of this view for Margolis is that we may inquire into an independent world but we cannot state its nature as it is independently of our inquiries. At least the latter claim is also very much Husserl's claim. Thus, the ultimate difference between the two on the matter of the bivalence resides presumably in their respective views of logic and the role of logic in their overall views. Whereas for Husserl logic gives the agentive norms, towards which the scientists should strive, for Margolis, logic is an enabling condition for expression of the theories. This difference is related to their respective views about the role of logic. For Husserl, the primary role of logic is to describe coherent structures, whereas Margolis presumably views logic as the first order predicate logic which emphasizes the deductive role of logic (cf. Hintikka 1996). Husserl had an algebraic view of formal logic the task of which was to study forms of possible theories (see Hartimo 2012). Whereas, for Margolis, logic is the source of rules for valid reasoning, for Husserl it unravels patterns that we aim at in our investigation. Hence, the concepts related to logic in Margolis' view are enabling norms, whereas Husserl would view them as agentive norms, being agents' goals. Thus, in Husserl's view the principle of bivalence is perfectly compatible with Margolis' view that the world is not cognitively transparent. When the two discuss the principle of bivalence, they are talking about different issues.

In general I find the views of the two quite similar with respect to realism—anti-realism issue. Admittedly, Margolis proudly calls himself “relativist,” while Husserl argues against psychologism and historicism in favor of objectivity and holds that the realism-idealism debate does not really apply to his philosophy. To a considerable extent the disagreement however appears to be merely verbal.

Nevertheless, Husserl’s view of our different vocations and different norms that create different “worlds” suggests that even a single person may be conflicted with “incongruent” sets of validities. To overcome such a situation Husserl’s solution is to refer to the eternal negotiation between different universal norms. Ultimately, we can rely on nothing else but reason:

[R]eason is precisely that which man *qua* man, in his innermost being, is aiming for, that which alone can satisfy him, make him ‘blessed’; that reason allows for no differentiation into ‘theoretical,’ ‘practical,’ ‘aesthetic,’ or whatever; that being human is teleological being and an ought-to-be, and this teleology holds say in each and every activity and project of an ego; that through self-understanding in all this it can know the apodictic telos; and that this knowing, the ultimate self-understanding, has no other form than self-understanding according to a priori principles as self-understanding in the form of philosophy.

1970, 341

7. Internal criticism

We found out above that Husserl’s analysis of the norms reveals a possibility that we are not necessarily entirely clear about what we are doing and why. For Husserl, this is roughly a source for the Crisis in the European Sciences, and demands *Besinnung* and critical reflection of the norms that guide us. Thus Husserl offers us a method with which the fatalism that comes with the straightforward acceptance of the inherited *sittlich* forms could be avoided.

As encultured and embedded individuals we inherit most of the norms from the previous generations. This holds of both Margolis’ and Husserl’s view. But I am not sure I completely grasp Margolis’ answer to the question of how, on basis of what, we could criticize the inherited normative practices. He seems to think that we certainly can argue that an activity is wrong. That is how slavery was denounced in the United States and more recently the views about the same sex marriage are being discussed.

But what are we then referring to? Margolis does not explicate in more detail on what basis the activity can be criticized in the absence of external criteria to do so. It just can be done, and has been done.

Husserl would agree with Margolis in holding that we cannot recourse to the dictates of reason or external points of view when discussing rightness or wrongness of an activity. Instead Husserl offers a detailed and subtle method with which such criticism could be carried out. The criticism is entirely internal: it does not require any extra-naturalist posits or foundational points of view. Instead it requires transcendental clarification of our experiences as well as examining the historical genesis of the activity in question. I will start by discussing the transcendental reflection.

7.1 Transcendental reflection

Besinnung as such is not transcendental reflection, but it should be carried out in tandem with transcendental clarification. Transcendental clarification examines the presuppositions of the sciences from within the activity. For example, sciences, as any other experience, presuppose the constitution of objects on part of consciousness. We do not experience data, but a structured and intelligible world where there are objects. Furthermore, scientific investigation presupposes that there is truth to the matter. Without such presupposition sciences would not make sense. Furthermore, it shows that the sciences presuppose the life-world in which everything takes place.

The transcendental examination of the norms of sciences show for example that there are different kinds of evidences that yield fulfillments to the intentions in question. Husserl distinguishes between the three different kinds of evidences that belong to the different levels of logic. The fulfillment one receives from a grammatical articulateness and correctness of a sentence is a different kind of evidence than the fulfillment that one experiences in connection of a non-contradictory sentence. Both of these differ from the experience one goes through when one perceives a state of affairs that agrees with one's intentions.

Husserl's further analyses of pre-predicative experiences show that the norms of logic guide us already in our prepredicative experiences. For example, the origin of negation is in the disappointment of an intention, when the observed object turns out to be something else than what was initially expected. Such experience presupposes a prepredicative process of *explication* where objects are determined as objects that belong to a type

that is already known, even if vaguely. Also the relative determinations, such as that the pencil is beside the inkwell, or that it is longer than the penholder are apprehended prepredicatively (1973, §22). In general, the origin of logical categories is already on this prepredicative level.

It is true, we can only begin to speak of logical categories in the proper sense in the sphere of predicative judgment, as elements of determination which belong necessarily to the form of possible predicative judgments. But all categories and categorical forms which appear there are erected on the prepredicative syntheses and have their origin in them. Husserl 1973, §24a

The transcendental examination shows that the logical categories are not applied to formless contents, but the origin of logic is in perception. What is interesting is that in Husserl's analyses the norms do not appear as rules that guide us. No rules or principles are found in the consciousness. No rule-following or obligation can be detected in it. Indeed, to discuss rules or principles governing the constitution of a judgment, it seems, one should enter into a view point external to the pre-predicative consciousness. Rules or principles appear to be a part of an *explanatory machinery* used to *explain* the normativity, i.e., what Husserl only *describes* from within.¹ In his approach the norms do not tell the ego what to do, rather they serve as goals or ideals towards which we are pulled. Husserl speaks of an interest that is awakened when we start looking at an object. According to him, it is "a *moment of the striving* which belongs to the essence of normal perception" (1973 §20). It is linked to feeling of satisfaction that guides us to take a better look. According to Husserl, on a higher level, this act of striving becomes a *will to knowledge* (*ibid.*, §20). It is thus something that we, human beings, as rational beings do. Margolis in contrast construes the enabling norms by means of rules. That is not necessarily incompatible with the phenomenological description of them. Yet, without going deeper into that (massive) discussion, I would want to express a suspicion that viewing normativity in terms of rules and laws is another Kantian vestige, further fueled by the Fregean tradition of

¹ In the *Formal and Transcendental Logic* Husserl discusses the norms, i.e., the logic, that governs the transcendental description itself. Transcendental investigation is governed by certain norms: in it judgments are made, it is supposed to be coherent, one has empty and fulfilled judgments. This logic furnishes logic for the transcendental investigations. It is transcendental-solipsistic doctrine, with subjective logic "with an a priori that can hold good only solipsistically" (§102, 270). This logic again does not postulate principles but it is the source for norms that guide the view of what we think is a good explication. Logic gives us norms as desiderata, not as rules.

viewing logic as a study of inference rather than as a study of possible forms of theories discussed above, that prevails in the 20th century view of normativity. In such a view norms are expressed by rules or laws that give the external and "objective" conditions of rationality, whereas in the Aristotelian-Hegelian-Husserlian view norms are related to the teleological view of human beings who by their nature aim at the fulfillment of reason.

7.2 Historical genesis

Aside from the transcendental reflection on the used concepts, norms, and evidences, Husserl thinks that we should examine the historical genesis of the activity in question. While we inherit much of our habits and customs from the previous generations, the inherited baggage may conceal the original sense of the activity in question. In the *Crisis*, Husserl applies *Besinnung* to philosophy itself discussing the development of the sciences and the role of philosophy with respect to them. According to him, still in the Renaissance, according to Husserl, European humanity is guided by the ancient model of rationality, in which philosophy and universal knowledge are striven for as the telos of the mankind, thus providing the mankind the autonomy of being guided by reason. But, today, sciences have lost their original sense. Instead, they emphasize whatever can be calculated and have become techniques that are efficient in producing facts but are one-sided and empty in meaning. Margolis's complaints about the attempts to eliminate the human factor from the scientific inquiry appears to converge with Husserl's views in this regard.

Husserl's historical reflection thus shows, according to him, the distress of the present situation. It also reminds us of the original task of philosophy. Thus the quest for the Rückfrage:

What is clearly necessary [...] is that we *reflect back*, in a thorough *historical* and *critical* fashion, in order to provide, *before all decisions*, for a radical self-understanding: we must inquire back into what was originally and always sought in philosophy, what was continually sought by all the philosophers and philosophies that have communicated with one another historically; but this must include a critical consideration of what, in respect to the goals and methods [of philosophy], is ultimate, original, and genuine and which, once seen, apodictically conquers the will. 1970, 17–18

The historical reflection gives us a point of view from where to reflect on the present situation and the sense of our activities in it. Its task is

to remind us of why we engage in certain practice to begin with. Thus while Margolis emphasizes the positive effects of enculturation and the *Bildung* across the generations, in Husserl's view what Margolis refers to as the "*sittlichkeit*" embedded in the social activities can be misguided. The original sense of the activity in question may have been forgotten a long time ago, and whatever we do may have become a blind habit.

7.3 Radical sense-investigation

In critical *radical sense-investigation*, sense-investigation and transcendental phenomenology meet: both examine the same phenomena, for example, the norms of the sciences, but from different points of view. One examines the norms of the sciences as they are given to the scientists in their strivings, from a natural, if not anthropological, point of view, taking into account their historical genesis. The other examines these norms from a transcendental point of view, making explicit the presuppositions and achievements of our consciousness that make the sciences possible. The two methods are interdependent and they proceed "zig-zag", back and forth from one to the other. By combining the two methods they can be used for critical purposes so that this or that phenomenon is found to be *genuine* or not, that is, whether it agrees with its essence, original sense. The norms guiding the practice will be reflected upon and thereby renewed. To be sure, Husserl's method does not provide us with yet another *technique* to be applied. In the end we have to think through the phenomena in question by ourselves and take the full responsibility of the situation. Thus Husserl is able to say that his approach yields freedom through the autonomy of reason.

If Husserlian philosophy of science were practiced today, it would mean that we should first go among the researchers to find out what the researchers in certain disciplines are striving for. One should examine the historical genesis of the normative ideals of the discipline in question. We should find out why it was originally established the way it was. Furthermore the discipline in question should be examined transcendently. On that occasion we should for example, find out what are its presuppositions and how it constructs its objective view of the world on basis of the experiences in the life-world. The outcome should be a critical evaluation of the reality of the discipline in question. In such "radical sense-investigation" the criticism is entirely internal to the human practice, no external gods, experts, laws, principles, theories, nor mechanisms are relied upon.

8. Conclusion

Phenomenology and Joseph Margolis' naturalism share a lot: neither is reductionistic, nor, in Margolis' words, extra-naturalist. Both aim at faithful description of the phenomena without postulating any posits unfounded by intuition. Consequently, both emphasize the historicized, "second-natured" view of human beings. Similarly, the sciences are viewed as human constructs, but neither completely denounces objectivity either. Both embrace pluralism and humanism while opposing to foundationalism and scientism. Admittedly, Margolis is more comfortable about being a relativist than what Husserl would be. In closer examination, for better and for worse, Margolis' view appears to be more "Kantian" than what Husserl's transcendental phenomenology is. In comparison to Husserl's view Margolis' roundabout way of discussing persons as "hybrids" appears rather "intellectual". Husserl would base his analysis directly on our experience. Moreover, Husserl's view of normativity falls more clearly within the Aristotelian-Hegelian tradition in comparison to Margolis' view of enabling norms. In general, in contrast to Husserl's detailed and involved analyses, Margolis' view of normativity is rather abstract and general. He also seems to be more conservative regarding the Sitten embedded in our forms of life, while Husserl was troubled by the crisis of the European sciences.

There are thus also many differences between the two approaches, probably more than what I have managed to detect here, but in conclusion one can say that the two views are close enough to benefit enormously from a more intense dialogue between the two approaches.

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