Limit-Phenomena and the Modality of the Absolute Ought in Husserl[1)]

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Vocation is something that everyone deals with in one way or another, even if it does not occur under that particular heading. It seems to be such a common experience, and yet it is so radically peculiar to each individual person. Often the problem of vocation arises in the form of existential questions like: "Who am I?," "What is my place in the world?," "Where am I going with my life." It comes to the fore in implicit affirmations like, "I could be doing something else that is more 'me'," or in having a predilection or aversion for one activity over another. It surfaces in feelings of being "at home" with what I am doing now or in feeling "ill at ease" in a job, or again, in a negative affirmation: "I cannot do otherwise and still be myself." It emerges in repudiations as we face irreconcilable choices. It can also emerge in decisions that can affect both who I am and who others are. It comes to the fore in certain emotions like shame or guilt, emotions that throw us back on ourselves—and give us a sense, at least implicitly, of who we are.

In a recent collection of writings given the main title, "*Grenzprobleme der Phänomenologie*" or "*Limit-Problems of Phenomenology*," we see Edmund Husserl confronting the experience of vocation and a series of related problems like those mentioned above.[2)] He does not arrive at these through abstract speculation or metaphysical commitment, but through phenomenological descriptions of sometimes unrelenting worries and personal concerns. At times he resorts to terms, expressions, and concepts that he appropriates from others, pressing them into service for his own expositions.[3)]

For Husserl, the problem of vocation is related to the problem of evidence, namely, how I am given to myself and how others are given to me in a personal manner. Vocation is centered around four main and intertwining notions in this work: the ought as the "absolute ought," the call, loving, and person. The absolute ought is given through a call, where most profoundly the call and the reception of it in terms of callings or vocations is qualified through loving. It is this dynamic, and specifically loving that yields the genuine core of the person as interpersonal and opens the problem of vocation for a phenomenology of the person. In this way, Husserl's evocation of an absolute ought as the manner of givenness of the absolute value of person, given in the interpersonal nexus of loving, is suggestive of a phenomenology of vocational experience.

Just as descriptions of experience that transcend a static phenomenology (i.e., genetic phenomena) required Husserl to distinguish and formulate a genetic phenomenology; just as the evocation and description of generative phenomena suggested and demanded the formulation of

a generative phenomenology, so too, in my view, do we have a similar situation here.[4] If we are not simply to dismiss these very rich experiential discussions by Husserl as indiscriminate subjective musings, then the constellation of concepts and experiences articulated by Husserl require putting them into play with one another, making appropriate new distinctions, and providing a phenomenological context in which they not only take their place, but make overall phenomenological sense.

In order to take this next step in phenomenological analysis, I take Husserl's writings in this article as leading clues to phenomena that have to be developed. This is why I rely, in part, on my previous development of phenomenology and the problem of evidence in recent work concerning verticality and vertical givenness. In particular, I suggest that the notion of person as absolute value, the absolute ought, the call in the vocational sense, and loving belong to a mode of givenness that is distinctive from presentational givenness; they presuppose a style of givenness that has its own structure of evidence, modality, and modalization. It is a kind of givenness I have begun describing in an earlier work, the "revelation" of the person as interpersonal.[5]

Husserl addresses the problem of evidence within new territory, that is, within territory that is different from that which we tend to associate with Husserl, and in relation to what phenomenology was able to handle outside of a generative phenomenology. That is why the cluster of experiences mentioned above like loving, the person as absolute, the absolute ought, and the call and callings might appear as "limit-problems" or "limit-phenomena."

The problem of evidence is articulated within the personal sphere of experience as it concerns the unfolding dynamic givenness of both another person and myself as absolute value in the manner of an absolute ought. When Husserl tackles the matter of the absolute ought and its related notions, he is dealing implicitly with a different style of givenness and evidence than that with which he customarily deals. Because Husserl's own contributions are not very extensive or developed in this regard, it will be necessary in some instances to interpret more freely with an eye to how Husserl's observations fit into the whole of this work, understood within a generative phenomenology. Allow me to explain the context in which these peculiar notions take on sense so that it will better elucidate their possible meanings.

What I term "presentation" is that style of givenness and evidence that yields perceptual (bodily, kinaesthetic) sense and judicative meaning. However, Husserl evokes matters that do not fit squarely into this style of givenness. One option is to see all other kinds of experience (what he would call "non-objectivating acts") as founded in presentational givenness (to which belong what Husserl calls "objectivating acts"). However, I have attempted to show elsewhere that there are experiences that do not map onto a presentational style of givenness and indeed are not founded in objectivating acts in this (Husserl's) way, precisely because they have their own "intentional" style of givenness, their own structure of evidence, etc.[6] Interpersonal or "moral" emotions are examples of such acts that have a distinctive structure, and among them is loving.[7] This style of givenness, to which such intentional experiences belong, I have called

"revelation."

By revelation, I understand a distinctive *mode of givenness* peculiar to the "person," who is not given in the manner of an object; revelation is a kind of givenness that has its own style of evidence, corroboration, modality, modalizations, temporality, relation to otherness, etc.[8] Where the revelation of the person is concerned, we can discern primarily two types: Revelation can be qualified as self-revelation, namely, the revelation of what Husserl calls my "true" or "genuine" self, issuing in the phenomenon of vocation.[9] There is also a mode of revelation where the other person is given as revealing-revealed and thus as "model" exemplifying the order of loving, values, the norms, and an ethos of a homeworld. This type issues in the phenomenon of exemplarity. In this article, however, I focus on the phenomenon of vocation and the complexity of issues relating to it. I reserve the discussion of exemplarity for another work.[10]

My contention is that since the mode of revelation has its own structure of evidence, it will also have its own structures of "modality" and its own problems of "modalization." Let me put it differently. If there are experiences that are given in a perceptual manner, and if they have a logic of evidence, modalities, modalizations, etc., we cannot assume that the modalities and modalizations peculiar to a different mode of givenness will have the same shape, form, or content that they do in presentational experience. In particular, my contention is that where the givenness (or revelation) of the person is concerned, there is a distinctive mode of givenness that is not susceptible to the traditional concept of modality belonging to a presentational mode of givenness. Or again, evidence, modality, and modalization have to be "rekeyed" according to the givenness of person. One such modality concerns the "ought," and in particular, the "absolute ought" and its givenness. A vocational experience is one in which I am given to myself *in the manner of an absolute ought*. When Husserl uses the expression of the "absolute ought" in this way, as I suggest below, he is attempting to evoke a compelling demand that weighs on me to become who I "truly" am, but in a way that cannot originate simply from my own self-sufficiency.

For me, following Husserl, *modalities* are the *ways* in which experiences are lived in a straightforward manner. Within the sphere of presentation, they include necessity, possibility, contingency, motivation, etc. *Modalizations* are disruptions or challenges to a straightforward acceptance of the given. To make this point, and to show the *distinctiveness of this modality of the absolute ought*, allow me to give a very brief background into the problem of modality. This is important because the evocation of an absolute ought is precisely a novel qualification of the phenomenon of modality as it appears in the mode of revelatory givenness. After this background (I), I distinguish in Husserl the ought-modality in the practical, praxical, and personal spheres (II). I then address directly the absolute (personal) ought as the modality peculiar to vocation (III), and examine the call as loving (IV). Distinguishing modality from modalization, I suggest five ways in which the experience of the absolute ought is susceptible to modalization (V).

I. Modality in Brief Historical Perspective

1. Modalities

To my knowledge, Aristotle was the first to have designated what the philosophical tradition knows as "modality"—which later came under the rubric of *tropos* and which Boethius translated with "*modalis*." Aristotle distinguished the possible (*dunaton*), the contingent (*endechomenon*), the impossible (*adunaton*), and the necessary (*anagkaion*).[11]

Because Ockham thought that modalities should relate to propositions as a whole, and that any term that can be predicated of a whole proposition is a mode, rendering a proposition modal, he maintained that there were more than four (Aristotelian) modalities. This expanded list includes the "true," "false," "known," "unknown," "expressed," "written," "grasped," "believed," "opined," "doubted." A proposition is modal because a mode is added to the proposition, though not any mode is sufficient to make a proposition modal, for the mode has to be predicable of the whole proposition.[12] Accordingly, for Ockham, "That which is possibly running is a man who is sitting" is not modal; it is non-modal or "de inesse" or "assertoric." However, "Every cat is necessarily an animal," and "That every cat is an animal is necessary" are modal propositions. Joachim Jungius (the German mathematician and logician), however, includes the true and the false as modal, but distinguishes a general mode (to which the true and the false belong) from a simple mode, which includes the possible, impossible, necessary, and not-necessary; there is also for Jungius a composite mode, namely, the contingent.[13]

The modern philosopher, C. A. Crusius, distinguished three modalities: the essential, the natural, and the possible.[14] More significantly for us, but with different content, the influential philosopher/scientist J. H. Lambert proposed three modalities: the possible, the actual, and the necessary.[15] These modalities, Lambert writes, belong not to propositions (in contrast to Ockham), but "these concepts belong in ontology" and do not depend merely upon the external form of knowledge.[16]

By contrast, Immanuel Kant, consistent with his transcendental turn, interpreted modalities not within an ontology, but within an epistemology as belonging to the province of the knower. Where the Table of Categories is concerned, he cites as modalities: possibility—impossibility, actuality—non-actuality, necessity—contingency (A 80/B 106).[17] Where the Table of Judgments is concerned, he cites the problematic, assertoric, apodictic judgments in relation to the modalities of the content (the what) of judgment: as possible [can], actual [is], and apodictic [must]. Thus, Kant distinguishes modes of judgment form the content of the judgment such that modality applies not only to judgment, but to things.[18]

R. P. Wolff, rightly I think, insists that Kant wishes to convey that there is a *subjective* distinction among the three modal notions (possibility, actuality, necessity) whatever their objective identity. "The function of the categories of modality is to express 'the relation of the concept [of an object of knowledge] to the faculty of knowledge [A 219]." Wolff draws from this that modality is a characteristic of the knower rather than the known. More precisely, he contends,

for Kant modality is a characteristic of the relation between the knower and the known viewed from the side of the knower.[19)]

I do not take issue with Wolff's characterization of Kant regarding modality. In fact, I think he is correct, at least where the "metaphysical" Kant in concerned.[20)] However, if we examine modality phenomenologically with the insights into the structure of intentionality, and with the observation that the presentation of the object is the way in which the thing itself gives itself, then modality will have to be understood as a characteristic of the relation between the perceiver and perceived, the knower and the known, both from the "side" of the perceiver/knower *and* from the "side" of the perceived/known.[21)]

At the very least, we can gather from the preceding gloss that concept of modality sketches a basic problem-field, but it has anything but a strictly unanimous history yielding a consensus among philosophers.

When we bring this discussion back to Husserlian phenomenology, we can assert that modalities are the ways of being that pertain to the experienced and the experiencer. We can find many examples of modality in Husserl: actuality, possibility (i.e., the eidetic range), impossibility, reality, contingency, necessity, probability, likelihood, motivation, and—on the side of the experiencer—the "I can" as the ability-to-do or kinaesthetically as the ability-to-move—as well as their contraries.[22)]

2. Modalities and Modalizations

Although Husserl sometimes uses modality interchangeably with modalization, there is an important distinction to be made, one that helps to clarify our experiences for all modes of experience, presentational or vertical. *Modalities* are the *ways* in which experiences are lived in a straightforward manner. Within the sphere of presentation, they include necessity, possibility, contingency, motivation, etc. *Modalizations* are disruptions or challenges to a straightforward acceptance of the given. Thus, for example, if our standard of givenness were complete, adequate givenness in the "now," then the "possible" would not be a modality, but a modalization. In a different register, while impossibility might be considered to be a modality, frustration at the impossibility of realizing a practical ought (or goal determined action) might be a modalization, depending upon the context.

But if experience entails the fullness of the living present, or genetic self-temporalization, or generativity, then what is experienced as a modality and a modalization could shift (in the manner of what Eugen Fink calls an operative concept).[23)] This is why the situation even internal to Husserl is ambiguous! Generally speaking, modalizations concern the deviation from the experienced norm of lived-experience. Accordingly, experiences like questionability, doubt, and conflict can be preeminent examples of modalizations. Whereas "the possible" might be a modalization for a static phenomenology, an open or enticing possibility could be experienced as a modalization, but from a broader perspective, I suggest, as a modality. Husserl is not unaware of such an ambiguity in understanding.[24)]

Within a genetic phenomenology, where the normal is understood in the modalities of concordance, optimality, typicality, and familiarity, modalizations would be discordance（rupture, disappointment, etc.） the "non-optimal" or the "worse," the atypical, and the unfamiliar. However these, too, are ambiguous because a modalization as a rupture on the level of concordance（namely, a discordance） can simultaneously become a new norm as "hypernormal," and thus be understood as a modality of experience, to which the former norm now refers as its index（becoming, inversely, a modalization）.[25] For example, my inability to see the table in dim light, the surprising color of the ball, my inability to make the climb, etc., could be modalizations of the "I can" and would be such if they deviate from a constituted or experiential norm of experience. But a new pair of glasses could be both a rupture of concordant experience and usher in a new optimal, instituting a new norm, and constituting the former norm as abnormal or modalization.

I do not dwell here on these kinds of modalities. Instead, I want to inquire into how it is the case with different modes of givenness, those that cannot be subsumed under the mode of presentation, and that concern the phenomenon of personal vocation and the constellation of issues peculiar to it.

Let's begin with the question of modality. How are we to understand modality in this case? We will see that in the revelatory sphere where persons are concerned, the traditional categories（such as necessity, possibility, contingency, etc.） are not entirely expressive of vocational experience within the sphere of persons. Instead, the modality concerns what Husserl calls the "absolute ought." Allow me first to begin this exposition by describing the ways in which Husserl uses the expression "ought" [*Sollen*].

II. Husserl and the Ought: Modality in the Practical, Praxical, and Personal Spheres

Husserl gives us many examples of the experience of the "ought" in the collection of writings entitled, *Limit-Problems*, not all of which are the same.[26] Although Husserl does not *explicitly* make these distinctions I am drawing here, his descriptions do require making a distinction between at least three different kinds of ought-modalities—modalities that belong to distinctive modes of givenness and spheres of experience.

One of them can be understood as founded in a presentational structure; it is one to which Husserl refers as the "practical" ought. The other two, which differ from presentational experience, belong to the order of "vertical" experiences. I call one of these the *praxical* in distinction to what Husserl terms the *absolute*. Praxical and absolute oughts belonging to the sphere of the person. In terms of modes of givenness, the praxical belongs to what I have designated as "manifest" givenness, and the absolute or personal belongs to the revelatory mode of givenness.[27] The latter admits of two kinds of revelatory givenness: (i) being self-revelatory and (ii) being revelatory of the other person. These correspond respectively to the

vocational and the exemplary absolute ought. Again, I focus here on the vocational dimension of revelatory givenness.

Practical Ought

For the purposes of a later contrast, let me summarize what Husserl calls the practical ought（that which belongs for me to the sphere of presentation）. Husserl associates a practical ought with a range of experiences peculiar to practical intelligence: a task I undertake in order to achieve an end, a problem I solve concerning a practical possibility, and something that gives me pleasure doing it. He further tends to place the practical ought in the rank of use values [*Nützlichkeitswerte*]. Thus, the practical ought is that ought that stands in the range of instrumental doings, functionality, pragmatic endeavors, or technical achievements. The experience of reliability, for example, is a modality that concerns the practical functionality of something and that follows the temporal and possibility structure（as founded in）a perceptual presentation.[28)]

For example, when I engage in a professional trade, I enter into an historical tradition and submit to a standard of norms and set of practices that are already established according to which my doings must conform. There are steps I *ought* to take in a particular way, a way I *ought* to do them in order to reach that goal in the right way for that tradition and practice. In fact, I develop a skill-set in order to achieve the desired end, guided by the task and according to the practical obligations stemming from the tradition. Furthermore, where the practical ought is concerned, I can choose this way or that as the best way to attain this or that goal. This "ought" modality can be qualified in a relative and conditional manner because it admits of an "in order to" structure（i.e., I "ought" to do this in order to achieve that end.）

These values that guide my practice, which become for me the practical oughts or obligations, are susceptible to being "absorbed" by higher values of pleasure and satisfaction because these oughts are relative to each other and can be compared to each other, predicable of being better or best within that sphere（H 42: 345-46）. Correlative to the practical ought is a distinctive "call" of practical value and of the practical best（H 42: 350, 356）. This is why conformity to the ought can be gauged as a "job well done," as a "I could have done better," or as a "that is the best outcome." Conforming to these external criteria can give me satisfaction in varying degrees, but this is also something *anyone* could do as well and something from which he or she could derive satisfaction. As suggested by Husserl, because practical oughts are susceptible to a comparative relation and are oughts relative to one another, one ought can be "absorbed" by another in the *choice* between the two such that a practical ought can simply be abandoned for another practical ought. On a practical level of oughts, we can experience polar opposite values that lead us in two distinctive directions, and our task would be to choose the most "reasonable," the "best" among practical aims.

Praxical Ought

In distinction to the practical ought, we can discern in Husserl's descriptions another phenomenon that qualifies the ought as a *praxical* ought—though Husserl does not use this

term. I call it "praxical," however, not because it concerns *techné*, but because this ought concerns the integration of "spirit and action."[29] These oughts are given within a spiritual value-range and are not susceptible to an if/then instrumental or pragmatic structure (like we find in the practical ought). Artistic activities like playing music, political events, playing sports, or the pursuit of truth by the scientist are included here. Their value is intrinsic to them, and they bear an "ought" insofar as I live them as enriching, not because (or simply because) they are a means to some end. I can go on a wildflower hike simply because of the intrinsic value of hiking or the beauty of the wildflowers that brings me joy. The value of hiking is realized in the performance of hiking, as it were; it is not intrinsically a value or an ought "because" it is therapeutic or good for my health. Although the latter might be a consequence, the praxical ought cannot be reduced to this; it still has its value independently of such a functional result.

In addition to the former praxical activities, Husserl gives the example of reading scripture. I read scripture, contends Husserl, not because it gives me one pleasure relative to another, or because it is a means to make me into a good person; however, insofar as it bears on me as *person*, like other "spiritual" activities, it is edifying, enriching, and yields a joy in and of itself. Unlike the practical value that may be gauged in terms of the pleasure it brings in accomplishing something (or fails to bring, in which case it is to be abandoned), the praxical ought given in such spiritual values may instead serve to admonish me and make me feel my unworthiness (H 42: 345, 388). (This is similar to how shame might be deemed "indispensible" even if it is always given with a negative valence.[30]) Alternately, I may never feel satisfied in following out a praxical ought (and perhaps even less so with respect to an absolute ought). For example, I may be fully guided by the praxical ought of reading Shakespeare, experience joy, but never feel satisfied that I have gotten all of the nuances or done it justice in explaining it—though it continues to beckon me all the same.[31]

However, a praxical ought is susceptible to comparison, it seems, like when one performance of "Purple Rain" does not measure up to an earlier performance of the same—for whatever aesthetic reasons. This is because although it is a spiritual value, the work of art, say, does not attend its own manifestation "absolutely" in the way that a person attends her or his own revelation (as revealing-revealed).

Personal or Absolute Ought

We also find in Husserl's reflections discussions of the absolute value of person and absolute ought, which are distinctive from practical and the praxical values and their ought-modalities (H 42: 375-76). The absolute ought relates to the person as absolute value.

The notion of person that we find in these writings differs in certain, though not in all, respects from earlier expositions. In *Ideas II* (1912-1917), for example, "person" is the correlate given within the personalistic attitude. Here, the person is understood as an ego or subjectivity who lives in acts and who can reflect on acts as a member of the social world. As centers of an environing world, persons not only exist in relations of motivations (and to this extent belong to a practical attitude); they also exist in relations of mutual understanding and communication,

constituting a world of spirit.[32)]

In the period of the *Kaizo* articles (1922-1924), Husserl develops the notion of person as ego act-center who executes free actions, but now the articulation appears more centered on the constitution of an ethical human being.[33)] It is the ethical form of life that guides what can become a genuine person and as a consequence, for instance, the genuine artist. For example, the genuine artist, writes Husserl, is not necessarily the genuine human being, but the genuine human being can (and can only) become the genuine artist when the way demands an ethical self-regulation. To say that the genuine human being is the human being of reason, or the rational person, means that the person exhibits the consciousness of the responsibility of reason and ethical conscience. It is in this context that the reader encounters the normative idea of the "best possible" with ethical resonance. As already mentioned previously, this is a concept that Husserl developed in his earlier genetic phenomenology as the "optimal," where it concerns perceptual and kinaesthetic normativity; it is applied here in terms of ethical normativity, the essential norms of reason, and in relation to the rationally responsible human being who lives in an attitude of radical critique.[34)]

It is not that the notions of culture, religion, God, love, and vocation are absent in these former writings,[35)] but in the current set of writings under consideration, the notion of person acquires a different specificity. The person is explicitly described in Schelerian terms as absolute value and as given in the modality of an absolute ought. Furthermore, the person is given in acts of loving, is a member of an interpersonal loving community, and oriented by the teleology of loving within a divine entelechy. Again, Husserl's allusions to "person" mark not so much a different "Husserl" as much as different strands of his thought and analyses, offering different guiding threads and possibilities of development for phenomenology.

All absolute oughts are essentially grounded in persons as absolute value such that I am directed toward them in an absolute way (H 42: 377). To say that I am directed toward persons in an absolute way means that this directedness (which Husserl calls loving) is never a momentary act, but lived toward the dynamic core of the person "infinitely," despite other types of finite limitations.[36)] These absolute oughts are expressed in norms only insofar as they are embodied in the person who exemplifies them.[37)] This intrinsic normativity that we find in the absolute value of person as expressed in the absolute ought is irreducible to practical or empirical foundations. Normativity as oughtness—and here a personal absolute oughtness—is not a statistical normativity.

Although Husserl tends to use the expressions "absolute value" and "absolute ought" nearly synonymously as a kind of shorthand, strictly speaking, we have to understand their relation in the following way: I am directed toward an absolute value (a person: self or other) in the *manner* of an absolute ought. It is not "my manner" being imposed on another person, but it is the person as absolute who reveals herself or himself (as we will see: "calls" concretely as loving) *in the manner* of an absolute ought. This is how the problem of the absolute ought belongs to a phenomenological investigation of modality. Husserl, then, sees the absolute ought as rooted in

the absolute value of the person; it is neither "subjective," since it is given from another, and it is not "objective," since it can concern me, myself as not self-grounding, and another person as interpersonal.

Further, whereas anyone can in principle respond to a practical ought (within the parameters of material limitations and skill-sets, of course), only "I" or only "You"—from the personal uniqueness of who I am or who You are—can be responsible toward the person appealing to us in the way of the absolute ought. It can never be a matter of im-personal indifference.

In the case of absolute oughts, Husserl suggests that there is no "comparison" possible between persons or, say, between the individual person and the collective person; one is not compared as better or best, since persons as absolute are neither things nor goals relative to one another. While a practical value can be absorbed or outstripped by another according to the context of usefulness, the absolute value itself cannot be absorbed by another in the sense of being made relative to it, or being made to serve as an index to the "higher" preferred practical value. Rather, if there is what Husserl calls a conflict between absolute values, absolute values remain absolute with absolute insistence, without one serving as an index to another. I take up this issue further under the section concerning modalizations.

III. The Absolute Ought as the Modality Peculiar to the Revelation of Person: Vocation

The sphere of the absolute ought is grounded in the person as absolute value. It is the manner in which the absolute value of person is revealed as within the vertical mode of givenness, "revelation." (Again, these are my terms, not Husserl's, but they help to clarify and to underscore what is going on implicitly in his descriptions.) Revelation is similar to other modes of vertical givenness in the sense that vertical modes of givenness are de-limiting and "give" absolutes of some kind; though these modes are distinctive, they are all, like revelation, essentially distinct from presentational givenness.

Revelatory givenness, which pertains to the givenness of the person, has two dimensions: (1) the interpersonal dimension in the sense of the other person, who is given as absolute value and unique, and (2) the givenness of Myself as absolute value. I employ the concept of the "Myself" that I have developed elsewhere in order to evoke the dynamic, relational sense of the "true" or "genuine" self that Husserl uses.[38] The former is not the direct topic of this article because I am concerned here with the problem of vocation as a personal elaboration of individuation, and the distinctive modality that bears on this dimension of experience. However, I do mention the former because Husserl regards it as a problem of loving, and this is peculiar both to the givenness of the other person and to "Myself"—and the latter is related to receiving and constituting the "call" and "callings" vocationally.

I understand the "true" or "genuine" self, as it relates to the problem of vocation, as the

relational notion of the "Myself." The "Myself" is the way in which I receive myself as from another, as I am given to myself as not self-grounding, and which therefore already includes a relation to some kind of "otherness." I am revealed to Myself dynamically—where this revelation is a revealing and thus creative.[39] It is important to note that even the "Myself" is interpersonal in the sense that I receive "myself" as from another. (I capitalize the "Myself" to emphasize the active reception of myself as not self-grounding, and as immediately interpersonal, which is foundational for the nominative "I.") Thus, it is not the case that I simply posit myself in self-sufficiency (which would be symptomatic of pride), but I receive Myself as not self-grounding in relation to another such that I, as "Myself," am unique, and originate myself in a unique way, personally, through creative acts as a dynamic orientation.[40]

Loving in an entirely *personal* way (i.e., on the level of my personhood) is being open in devotion to what I love in the deepest sense (H 42: 397). This is the case whether it is a loving toward the other person or toward myself as Myself. It is what Husserl calls an "absolute love" in the sense that it is an opening to an absolute value in the manner of an absolute ought, and in the sense that the tenor of the loving is itself absolute, unconditional, and toward infinity (H 42: 344). Personal loving is the opening to the person as revealed in his or her *uniqueness or "Einzigkeitswert"* [value of uniqueness]. Loving in this regard "lets" other persons be/become who they are as absolute value in the manner of their absolute ought.[41]

As suggested above, personal loving can be (1) directed toward another person, "the pure and genuine love of person to person," such that the core of the person can be given or revealed in this *way* as absolute value in the manner of an absolute ought (H 42: 354, 358). This can be understood as the love of neighbor or as the appreciation of the value of the other person (H 42: 287, 333, 337, 423, 432-35). It can also be (2) a process of living a life fully as a loving that is directed toward Myself as my absolute ought, *vocationally*, as from another, and as not self-grounding. Again, my task here is to clarify the modality peculiar to revelatory experience where vocation is concerned.

Husserl writes that the broadest concept of vocation coincides with the concept of this ought, namely, the absolute ought that has arisen in an absolutely personal manner (H 42: 354, 391). The absolute ought as "My" absolute ought bears on me uniquely in a way that it can impact no other, even if others have that same external shape of the ought. In my creativity, in my "freedom," I originate this ought in a style like no other.

On the one hand, what exerts an unreserved claim on me from the beginning is "only there for me," as a priori and absolutely, but not universally. It "individuates" me not as a particular thing or as a singular being of practical intelligence, but as unique. Even if this personal ought is the same "thing" for others too (Husserl cites being a teacher, a skier, a mother) and even if it can be a general type in this sense, insofar as it bears on me as *person*, it is for me absolutely, uniquely, and "for me alone," that is, as for me bindingly, like no other (for example, H 42: 355, 391-92, 396).

The vocational Myself, given in the modality of an absolute ought, is what Husserl

tentatively calls my personal "essence." He writes: "Corresponding to the absolute demands of the ought is an absolute in the personhood [of the person], a centrality of the [personal] essence" (H 42: 377, cf. 355). The term, essence, however, is misleading, cautions Husserl, because this "essence" of the person is neither a thing nor a universal feature that could be the same for everyone. The person is absolute, unique, not universal, and never an object. The person becomes essentially-dynamically, *generatively*, who she or he is uniquely through acts; in this sense, the person is a "core" or "center" of acts. Furthermore, these oughts are absolute, again, not because they would be "universal" as the same for everyone, but because their *bindingness* issues from their own intrinsic quality pertaining to the unique becoming-being of the person. This is why Scheler employed the expression the "good-in-itself-for-me" (which could only be paradoxical for Kant), which is determinative of my personal *way of being* in a binding, absolute, and unique way.

On the other hand, I appropriate this "good-in-itself-for-me" in acts I initiate creatively through the values guiding me, through who I am, "Myself," and as receiving, accepting, or rejecting Myself in my originating freedom. What is required of me through the pull of an absolute ought (as vocational experience) is not the same as a practical comparison of goods to discern what is better or what I could adjudicate from the outside as a disinterested observer or from multiple intersubjective perspectives. The pull of the absolute ought can demand of me something that bears on the value of personhood and that I in no way would recognize in the value comparison of what is better or best (H 42: 390). So although there are values relative to who I am or to what I do, being susceptible to comparison, and playing a role in choosing between particular actions, there is a distinctive realm of the absolute ought that bears absolutely on who I am vocationally. It is predicable neither of the singular nor of the plural because it is unique. There is simply no value calculus to determine an absolute or to determine which one could putatively be absorbed by another.

Since this vocational "Myself" is how I am given to myself as *not self-grounding*, Husserl can assert that I have an "absolute responsibility" to myself as "before God": "the ought can only have sense when it is the call of God" (for example, H 42: 353, 391 fn.2). Here Husserl's idea is that my individual personal, absolute ought takes on its fullest significance as interpersonal when I actively receive myself as not self-grounding, when I love according to this core, and when I, according to my abilities, cooperate in the generativity of values through the love of others and through the love of Myself as "before God." As Jim Hart notes in relation to these writings, for Husserl "divine entelechy" is that expression for "the hidden but lived functioning ground of all that comes to light in terms of the teleology of presencing and agency." Insofar as divine entelechy names this, "there is nothing more basic nor of greater interest nor more important for transcendental phenomenology."[42)]

When I experience an absolute ought of this kind, I "ought to" recognize it in such a way that I cannot go against it without abandoning the deepest core of Myself. The responsibility bears on not damaging or betraying my overall or deepest personal ought; other oughts

pertaining to me, Myself, are not so much integrated with each other horizontally as they are expressive of the fundamental ought, and unified vertically in this de-limiting way（H 42: 396）.[43)]

An absolute ought is experienced as unconditional in a unique value ordering that can only be overcome through values and oughts on this level of experiencing as lived by this person（H 42: 377）. It is not open to intersubjective adjudication in the way a perceptual object might be. Certainly, there can be "oughts," even absolute oughts, that reveal themselves as on the way to "My" absolute ought; I could live them as one after the other. But in the case of the latter, they would never be lived in way that could be open to intersubjective objective inspection. Nor could they be lived as something relative to be eventually overcome, like a finite task could be（H 42: 395）.

Not only is there a loving the other person, as love of neighbor, there is also a *genuine self-love* that is irreducible to pride, a genuine self-love to be open to Myself as who I am to become. This entails the essential possibility that I can experience multiple absolute oughts for Myself, vocationally（H 42: 344, 401, 433）. Thus, there can also be multiple oughts that bear on me absolutely, and even if they cannot be realized in an integrated manner, they would still be more than just "multiple," since they could be lived as conflicting（H 42: 396, and see below under modalization）.

At this juncture, it is helpful to invoke a terminological distinction that Husserl makes between the *call* and a *calling* [*Ruf* and *Berufung*]. This suggests a conceptual distinction between *the* vocation *to be* who I "am" and *a* vocation to be who I am in a particular way or ways as styles *of doing*. These are irreducible to one another, but intertwined and complementary. Employing the concept of loving that Husserl introduces in these writings in the context of vocational experience, we could say（again in my terms, not Husserl's）, that there is *the* vocational call "to be-love" that permeates or can be realized uniquely in and through *a* calling to do this or that as my vocational path or paths... in loving. This is how, following Husserl, pursuing one's（personal）vocation or vocations gives a life that higher value of dignity（H 42: 353 fn. 1）. Ultimately, it is the same "whole" matter of vocational experience, but with two distinctive, phenomenologically discernable moments.

The vocational absolute ought therefore may be experienced negatively as "I don't know who I am, but I am not that," or more positively in the modality of an absolute otherwise: "I cannot be otherwise than this," or "I cannot do otherwise"（than this way）, or still negatively, "I wish I could do this, but I cannot." The "I have to do something else now," or "I have to improve myself" is an absolute ought that is founded in the absolute ought of vocation as call（H 42: 389）. "Absolute striving," "absolute willing, absolute doing"—these are absolute for Husserl because they are revealed in a personal manner—again, not because they are universal; "absolute life" is that to which I am called and makes my life not only meaningful, but genuine（H 42: 408）.

Husserl asks whether the absolute ought can be revealed and even realized if it appears as a mere coincidence or chance, e.g., a chance of environment, of education and upbringing, of health and sickness, or mental illness. I have not chosen my life, and cannot place my life in a

choice—my entire natural world-life with all its callings of absolute oughts (H 42: 409). The difficulty one faces here is that loving and the absolute ought (according to his analyses) are not arbitrary; the modality of chance does not fit the absolute ought like it would a practical ought. Thus, questions Husserl: "What overcomes death and fate? What constitutes "genuineness? A life in absolute ought, that is structured through and through by absolute oughtnesses [*Gesolltheiten*] ... that I embrace myself absolutely. What does this mean: deciding for an absolute ought (H 42: 434)?" All objects and values of objects that are created from our vocational actions, "vocational creations," stem from an absolute ought (H 42: 353-54).

It is not entirely accurate to say that those oughts that find their place behind others lose "all their weight"; it is rather the case that their value remains value, only now they are held either in tension with other values that are also lived as absolute and unconditional, etc. (H 42: 377). The absolute ought revealed in the absolute value, e.g., of the child is not susceptible to a choice that one could make by weighing another absolute value against the child. This is not because it is based in an individual decision that falls under a universal norm, as if she were accessible to just anyone as a disinterested observer; nor would she putatively be a "legitimate" absolute value now because her value became a product of a communal deliberative decision; it is not because, say, the mother has an instinct or a duty for her child; rather, ultimately, it concerns the irreplaceable and incomparable *value-uniqueness* of the child as person and the absolute ought that reaches through the call of loving to, say, the person *as* mother or father (H 42: 351, 354, 455).[44)]

Husserl does seem to recognize that the value of my vocation, and what gives my life dignity, can also be *accessible to others* such that following out what constitutes an absolute ought for me can be given to others as an "objective value." This could not be a kind of intersubjective adjudication, as if there were a disinterested panel of people overviewing my life. Rather, it could only be accessible in the loving (personal loving) of another toward my "value-essence." This would demand what Husserl calls a "loving community" *Liebesgemeinschaft* (again, a term Scheler uses), or in more familiar Husserlian terms, a loving "homeworld"— a homeworld that also has a co-responsibility for the individual following out his or her absolute ought (cf. H 42: 353, fn. 1, 377-78). Only in this way could my vocation, for example, be lived interpersonally as my "absolute" for us all.[45)]

Thus even my own absolute ought is not a "private matter" writes Husserl; absolute oughts are intertwined in the moral universe so that even if they do not build a single "universal" framework, as Husserl suggests at times, they do co-constitute what we can term a moral solidarity with one another and a religious solidarity with the Holy. This is correlative to a loving community or a union of loving.[46)] These absolute values constitute a realm of absolute oughts for all other empathizing persons (H 42: 377). My absolute striving is a branch of a communal striving, each lived in its own unique way as absolute toward the Absolute (H 42: 408).

IV. Call as Loving

We can ask phenomenologically *how* such an absolute ought can be given, how I can be responsible to Myself, before others, and before God. The modality of the absolute ought as it concerns the core of Myself as not self-grounding is given as or through the call. Husserl terms this the "call of an absolute ought," or the "absolute call of the ought" (H 42: 376, 389). The absolute call in the manner of an absolute ought is given and received in a radically personal way. This way, which is peculiar to the sphere of the person, is what Husserl calls *loving* (H 42: 346, 357, 377). We can extrapolate: This absolute ought as it pertains to Myself reveals me, Myself, as beloved. Loving is absolute in the sense that the nature of loving is open unconditionally, toward infinity, in an infinite manner, binding me to others and to Myself as absolute; it constitutes a moral universe of beloveds.

The genuine "I" loves, writes Husserl; and a genuine life is through and through a life in loving such that the genuine life in loving is a life animated by my (personal) absolute ought (H 42: esp. text 28 and specifically, 395, 397, 423-24). While there are other ways of revelatory givenness (like trusting, shame, guilt, repentance, etc.), it is most profoundly revealed in and through *loving*. Living as person fully in the loving toward an absolute value that gives itself in the manner of an absolute ought is not just having a mere tendency toward something, Husserl observes. In loving, I am fully, but inexhaustively a presencing with the beloved, as living actively oriented, freely, dynamically, or creatively engaged in this devotion toward what is given as value. Loving, which exists only in this creative revealing-revealed orientation, cannot be reified, mechanized, calculated, partial, or disengaged, and remain loving (H 42: 436). The person who lives in the call of loving toward her or his calling in a loving manner (absolutely) essentially resists objectification.

When Husserl uses the shorthand of the "call of the absolute ought," or the "absolute call of the ought" (e.g., H 42: 200, 376, 389, 409), what he means is that the call is received or experienced as an ought, which when "personal," has a uniquely distinctive absolute weight or tenor, vocationally speaking. Absolute values are such that I can only love myself when I follow them, and recriminate myself when I abandon their validity for me. But this is nothing that can be commanded or that can be undertaken as a joyless duty, since what bears on me as an absolute ought is taken up *freely* (H 42: 397, 434-35). Accordingly, I am free in hearing the call/calling and in pursuing it, in refusing it, halfway hearing it, or in turning away from it; but in all these cases, the value still flashes forth; and if it comes to me as an absolute call/calling, then it is received as an absolute ought (H 42: 359). For me, this is precisely because the absolute ought claims me in a non-violent, insistent, compelling manner that invites a decisive appropriation. It is not necessity, possibility, contingency, motivation, etc. that constitute the modality of vocational revelation; rather the *absolute ought is the modality of vocational revelation* (the nuances of which I only hint at in the summary of this section).

Even though it is not like an experience in a perception or judgment, the absolute ought

peculiar to the person given in loving can still be considered to be an "experience" (Husserl also asserts that the givenness of God can be considered an "experience" [H 42: 242]). We can ask after the evidence of the absolute ought that is given in this loving/calling non-calculative, but also non-perceptual and non-judicative absolute ought. Husserl gives a curious reply: "Every original absolute ought has something irrational about it" (H 42: 384).

What Husserl means by this statement, I propose, is that if evidence is equated with the presentational givenness of things in an epistemic manner (perceptual or judicative), and if this is "rational," then anything outside of this cannot be received as a rational demand, and therefore cannot be "given" (H 42: 239). It is irrational in the sense that it is not universally accessible to all in the same way, namely, as "intersubjective objectivity."

Yet, there is also at least an implication by Husserl that even being on the *limit* of (rational) givenness still somehow *counts as givenness*, and thus has its own cognitive (if not rational) structure. He is getting to an experience that is so radically unique, that it is "above" the universal, as it were. The only other term Husserl seems to have at his disposal is "irrational" in order to convey another order of givenness. However, this does not mean that it does not have its own structure or that it is not given in evidence, that it is not an experience, and that it does not have its own modalities and modalizations that are susceptible to phenomenological description.

If we hold to a dualism of reason and sensibility, then naturally this kind of evidence would have to have an "irrational" grounding. Husserl's writings suggest, however, that there is different evidential grounding that is not rational, but also is not irrational either, since it pertains to a different cognitive order. Scheler calls this order, which has its own style of cognition and evidence, the "order the heart."[47] The order of the heart has its own "vertical" modes of givenness, and revelation is one of those in which an absolute ought is given (though it can be susceptible to a disorder of the heart (see below, under "modalization"). It belongs to the emotional sphere and specifically and most profoundly, as revelatory of the person, loving. Life in the absolute ought is a life in pure loving that is becoming more and more complete and that becomes more and more expansive (H 42: 201).

The call, as suggested above, is ultimately connected to loving, since it is directed toward the person as absolute value (again, Myself included, through a genuine self-love); and as loving, it is oriented in an absolute manner (H 42: 202, 357, 344, 346, 385, 423). When this ought bears on the core of my being as person, it takes the form of an absolute ought because it is personal as interpersonal. Accordingly, Husserl insists that this is never just a private matter because it is intertwined with others in what we can term a solidarity of absolute oughts of unique persons.

Vocational experience is not a private matter because loving for Husserl is personal as interpersonal, "ambiguous" in positive, manifold ways. (1) It is a circulating co-loving as a unity of being-bound through loving and being called for one another in loving. I follow the *call* that penetrates to the deepest core of who I am, and through this or that *calling*, the love that is directed toward the personal core of the other in her or his calling. (2) As not self-grounding and

as from another, Husserl holds that these responsibilities toward others and toward Myself are all in relation to a responsibility before God (cf. H 42: 354, 358-59). Within the ethical sphere, then, we can assert that everyone has the general vocation of becoming a "true person" (or what Paulo Freire would call the "ontological vocation" of becoming more fully human[48]) that imbues his or her special vocation or vocations, which in its turn, brings to expression creatively the true or genuine person. Accordingly, what we do in our particular *vocations or callings* as absolute oughts is aligned with *the call* of the absolute ought of personhood (H 42: 389, 454-55).

Where the other person is concerned, I can love her or him likewise as Herself or Himself vocationally in the dynamic sense of an absolute ought; this is irreducible to appreciating the value of the other according his or her psychic beauty, education, or proficiency at his or her occupation—even though these might indeed be involved in my appreciation of her or him (H 42: 354). Still, I do not love the other person because only she can *do* this—this would reduce the personal/absolute value to the practical or praxical, at best. While it is not a matter of the other's qualities (what Jim Hart would call her "sortal" self[49]), it is also not just a matter of *what* the person is as an abstract person-pole. Rather, the core or absolute value of the person is given—for Herself/Himself and for others—in the way of the absolute ought. The absolute *value* of the person pertains to the core of the person in the *way* of this person. This is how her or his "good-in-itself-for-me" is simultaneously a "good-in-itself-for-us." The binding character of the absolute ought does not mitigate my freedom. In fact, it issues in a new kind of freedom as being bound to another. Though Husserl does not put it in this way, some of his formulations suggest that my freedom is realized in being bound to others' becoming who they are as we are becoming who we are before God.

Loving is directed toward this individual person who flashes forth in the manner of an absolute ought. The vocational absolute ought unfolds on three interrelated levels: I experience it (1) as bearing on who I am to be as an individual unique person, (2) as who I am in the moral universe with others interpersonally, and related to these, (3) in terms of how I become who I am through what I do in my life (like the calling of an artist, a father, a mother, a scientist, etc.). I pursue in this love the "call" of a "calling" such that I devote myself to the vocation.[50]

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As a brief summary and extrapolation of what has been presented so far, let me say that the modality peculiar to the revelatory sphere is the "*ought*," not necessity, possibility, impossibility, etc. More specifically, where it concerns revelatory givenness, it is not a necessitating "must," a duty, nor a commissive "shall," nor even the deontic volitive "wish," but the "*absolute ought*." The absolute ought is a dimension of *freedom* since it is neither predetermined, nor compulsory, nor capricious, nor arbitrary. The sense of freedom is not one of sheer autonomy, but it introduces another sense of freedom as being bound to the person given in the manner of an absolute ought (another or Myself) interpersonally.

This absolute ought can further be qualified as *compelling* without being something compelled, or again, as *non-violent insistence*. It is the insistence of the call "to love" as to be-love in and through each calling, constituting me Myself as person in a loving community. In distinction to the presentational because/so "motivation," and the practical if/then structure, we would have revelatory "*insistence*."

Temporally speaking, the absolute ought as the manner of the absolute value of person does not share the temporal demand of "realize this now" as if that meant that a command to be done with it and to simply move on from it. Of course, even a perceptual fulfillment in the living-present does not conclude in a punctual present. In terms of the genesis of sense, it is retained as past with a concordance and an unfolding of protended fulfillment. But there is an important albeit subtle difference where the absolute ought is concerned. It is given temporally as *urgency* or *exigency* and from the perspective of our finite circumstances, "for always." The urgency does not pertain to the past accomplishment, but to my personal becoming-being as who I ought to become, and as how I ought to turn from or toward myself to become this person.

V. Modalization

In the final section of this article, I interpret briefly the phenomenon of modalization as it pertains to *revelatory givenness*, that is, to personal as interpersonal givenness, and more specifically as it relates to the modality of the absolute ought. Where the absolute ought is concerned, we can discern five main types of modalization. Some of these are suggested by Husserl, though even these remain undeveloped in Husserl's own explication and description: (1) clash of absolute oughts, (2) ressentiment, (3) falling short or a betrayal of who I am (4) contravening a preference, and (5) pride.

1. Clash of Absolute Oughts

The first modalization to consider is what Husserl introduces as a conflict between or a clash of absolute oughts. One of the most common examples he cites is the clash between the absolute value of child and of the country—no doubt alluding to his own personal experience of having lost his son to the German effort in World War I. Because persons are "absolute"—either as individual persons or collective persons—Husserl suggests that there is no comparison or essential choice between them; similarly, a so-called "doubt of oughts" does not figure here, either.

The experience of a multiplicity of absolute oughts does not necessarily constitute a modalization. That is, precisely as absolute, what is of absolute value is not necessarily limiting, but is *essentially de-limiting and opening* to other absolute values. Absolutes therefore "should" be inclusive, unifying in difference; they should not be exclusive. In fact, the deeper the absolute, the more inclusive it should be lived.[51] As we saw above, Husserl wants to avoid using

the expression of "absorption" when describing absolute oughts because, in part, it would imply that one absolute value would be subsumed by another. For lack of a better expression, we can say that it is possible for an absolute experience and absolute value to be more "encompassing" without this meaning that one absolute excludes another, subsumes it, or reduces it to a relative value.

While absolute values as absolute can be reconciled, a modalization arises when absolute oughts cannot be reconciled. If the latter is the case, it can issue in what Husserl calls a "tragedy of sacrifice" vis-à-vis absolute oughts as they retain their respective, unique absolute value (see for example H 42: text 14, H 42: 352-53; see also 466.); or again, it is experienced as a "tragedy of personal conflicts."[52] Given this situation of possible irreconcilability, Husserl asserts in an almost Kiekegaardian fashion: "And if I want to hold fast with all the might of my soul to the absolute ought—and this is itself an absolute volition—then I must believe absolutely that God exists. Faith is the absolute and highest demand" (H 42: 203).

2. Ressentiment

In order to explain the phenomenon of ressentiment as it relates to Husserl's reflections, let me go into a little more detail in what I presented above under point 1.

In an explicit reference to Scheler, Husserl suggests that we *prefer* an absolute value without entering into a comparison, and without depreciating the one in order to prefer the other. Hence, if I "remain true to myself," and if there is a personal/absolute conflict, I can prefer one absolute value without devaluing the other as absolute. If, however, a choice constricts the preferring movement (preferring as founded in the movement of loving), a tragedy and sacrifice could ensue (H 42: 435).

Art Luther suggests that preferring is the openness of the person ultimately toward God. Preferring is founded in loving and moves within the basic loving orientation; it is a movement in that full openness that takes note of distinctions in a hierarchical ordering as higher and lower, or deeper and more superficial, and it does not "stop" in the movement of displaying values. If the "preferring" were to hesitate or stop in this movement, this discerning movement would no longer be preferring, but would become a "choice" between or among values. Thus, preferring, say, clarinet to saxophone does not have to issue in a choice between them. In loving, I have the whole value range giving itself, ever deeper in loving in a way that cannot be predicted in advance. Thus, we can have loving without preferring, and preferring with the hierarchy present, without choosing. Choosing is the "pausing," as it were, within the full loving orientation.[53] The circumstances that Husserl describes as a tragedy or a sacrifice are due to the fact that we are in the presence of multiple absolute values exerting in their own ways their absolute oughts.

A different modalization from what was mentioned above can occur in the following way, a way that can be discerned as "ressentiment."[54] Ressentiment is a kind of implicit or unconscious deception of the heart lived implicitly as a reversal of values. Ressentiment occurs,

e.g., if I depreciate one value (e.g., strength) and elevate, say, "meekness" because I cannot obtain or realize strength. Ressentiment can occur in the inversion of value-spheres, e.g., promoting use values over vital values in a preference and choice for functionality over life. In the situation at hand, ressentiment can occur as a devaluation of an absolute value in order to feel better about the preference or choice that concerns another absolute value, or even to alleviate guilt or a sense of tragedy, like Husserl described in the example above. All of this can remain quite unconscious in the sense that I may not know explicitly that I am doing this.

3. Falling Short or Betrayal of Myself

A third possible modalization where the realm of the absolute ought is concerned is when I fall short of Myself (my true or genuine self), and in a moral modalization, "sin against myself." There are at least two possible variations of this phenomenon. In one instance, following Husserl's lead, I may have to do what is "not right" for me due to other absolute obligations, like choosing between absolute values when "there is no choice" possible. Going against an absolute ought constitutes a betrayal of my "true self," and I find myself in a radical discord (H 42: 352, fn. 3; 356).

In another scenario, I can have clearly before myself my "absolute ought" in a vocational sense, and for whatever reason, I may be untrue to it and thus stray from my true self (H 42: 395). I would betray Myself in this case when I would not follow out with urgency and devotion my absolute ought. In both instances, not allowing myself to be most fully who I am is also not allowing others to be most fully who they are. There is likewise a genuine responsibility for other persons to become who they are, which is a genuine responsibility to Myself.

4. Contravening a Preference

What comes to me as value no doubt depends upon my hearing the "value-call" of the ought, and this is peculiar to my "order of the heart," and culturally speaking, an ethos.[55] There is a value-order that has its objective ranking, but in my actual life, I can prefer a lower value over a higher or deeper one, and live it as if the lower were higher or deeper (or as if the higher or deeper were lower) and *not realize this consciously*. This, again, would fall under the province of "ressentiment" (see above pt. 2).

However, I could also *contravene a preference* toward a lower value such that I choose to live it as over a higher or deeper one. Although Husserl does not discuss this possibility, his invocation of value preference invites this consideration. I call this "contravening" a preference because while the preferring discloses the hierarchy—and presupposing that it is given with the well-ordered heart—one could still in his or her freedom go against this movement explicitly and in full recognition of what is taking place. (Some of the resulting symptoms of this might be embarrassment, shame, or guilt.) Like ressentiment, it is possible for this (1) to take place between value-dimensions, say, choosing a use-value over a life or spiritual-value, or (2) it could occur within the same value range (e.g., within absolute values giving themselves in various depths of

absolute oughts.)

Now, when I examine the contravening itself, I open myself to what Husserl suggests is a "self-recrimination." Self-recrimination in relation to such a contravening would be, for us, another kind of a modalization on this dimension of experience because it would arise from the experience of having affirmed a lower value over a higher one. It would be a modalization to the extent that it remains there and not be lived as a path to what we can call a "rectification."

Rectification could be understood as a re-orientation toward my "true self," and if this were the case, it would be similar to what Husserl describes in the context of his passive synthesis lectures as a restored concordance.[56] Such self-recriminations could lead to such re-orientations, issuing in rectifications like *repentance*. Repentance, which is grounded in humility, is the way I receive Myself in the love of another.[57]

5. Pride

Finally, let me call attention to a modalization that concerns the modality of the "ability-to-be"—related to the phenomenon of the "ability-to-do" (the "I can") that I cited above.[58] The ability-to-be is not itself pride; it is not itself a modalization of freedom, responsibility, to say nothing of devotion, love, or humility. It is a basic experience that can be taken up, however, as a "lure" for pride. By pride, I understand the self-salient fixation on my ability-to-be, including others paradoxically by excluding them from the constitution of meaning and sense.[59] It includes them because pride presupposes an interpersonal nexus in and through the exclusion of their contribution to the very advantage of "my" self-salience. Thus, pride would be a modalization in the interpersonal constitution of world meaning; it becomes a modalization by reifying what is given as absolute value and as not self-grounding, namely, Myself; but it is a form of self-dissimulation because it asserts myself as self-grounding in various ways and as if I were the sole or main source of meaning. Put differently, what is otherwise Myself as absolute value—as interpersonal, not self-grounding, and de-limiting—pride reifies as exclusive and as significant over others and their contributions. In this way, pride is a modalization of the modality my unique ability-to-be.

Notes and References

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2) Edmund Husserl, *Grenzprobleme der Phänomenologie: Analysen des Unbewusstseins und der Instinkte. Metaphysik. Späte Ethik. Texte aus dem Nachlass* (1908–1937), Husserliana 42, eds., Rochus Sowa and Thomas Vongehr (Dordrecht: Springer, 2014).

3) I have in mind here Schelerian notions like "loving," "loving community," "value," "value preference"—implying an "order of the heart"—and perhaps a specific employment of "person" and "absolute person"—although Husserl did have a notion of person and absolute independently of these reflections.

4）See my *Home and Beyond*, especially section 4.

5）See *Moral Emotions*. It is a mode of givenness that I am currently explicating in two other works: *The Schema of the Heart: Loving and Hating* and *Vocations and Exemplars: The Verticality of Moral Experience*.

6）See Steinbock, *Moral Emotions*.

7）For example, I analyzed pride, shame, guilt（and related experiences）as emotions of self-givenness, repentance, hope, and despair（and related experiences）as emotions of possibility, and（loving, trusting, and humility and related experiences）as emotions of otherness.

8）"Revelation" belongs to the "order of the heart" and is unique to the sphere of persons. It is not intended as a "religious" or theological notion. Further, revelation in the sense that I use it here figures as a Western or at least "Abrahamic" notion, and cannot be presupposed to be peculiar to a Zen Buddhist insight into "emptiness."

9）See the discussion below under section III.

10）*Vocations and Exemplars: The Verticality of Moral Experience*, in preparation.

11）We read: "As these distinctions have been made, we must consider the mutual relation of those affirmations and denials which assert or deny possibility or contingency, impossibility or necessity: for the subject is not without difficulty"（*De Interpretatione*, I 12, 21a 34-37）, ed., and trans., Richard McKeon, *The Basic Works of Aristotle*（New York: Random House, 1941）. Although when Aristotle considers contradictory propositions, he adds, "It is true"/"It is not true"（I 12 22a 11-13）; see *Analytica Priora* I 2-3, 25a1- 25b25. In *De Caelo*, Aristotle shows how the impossible does not mean the same thing as the false（I 12, 281b）, but that what was, is and always will be true is necessarily true（I 11-12）.

12）William of Ockham, *Ockham's Theory of Propositions: Part II of the Summa Logicae*, trans., Alred J. Freddoso and Henry Schuurman（Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980）. For me, the designations that Ockham gives seem to be either kinds of straightforward "giving" of some kind（e.g., believed, grasped, meant, written）, and on the other hand, what might be called modalizations of the latter（e.g., unknown, doubted）. See also, Elizabeth Christiane Karger, *A Study in William of Ockham's Modal Logic*（University of California, Berkeley, Dissertation, 1976）.

13）Joachim Jungius, *Logica Hamburgensis additamenta*, ed., Wilhelm Risse（Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977）.

14）Christian August Crusius, *Weg zur Gewißheit und Zuverlässigkeit der menschlichen Erkenntnis*（Leipzig: 1747; Hildesheim, 1965）, 430.

15）Johann Heinrich Lambert: *Philosophische Schriften: Neues Organon Band 1*, ed., Hans-Werner Arndt（Leipzig 1764/ Hildesheim 1965）, § 137, 89-90. "*Diese Bestimmungen beruhren überhaupt auf dem Unterschiede des möglichen, wirklichen, notwendigen und ihres Gegensatzes*."

16）Lambert: *Neues Organon 1*, 90: "Da aber diese Begriffe in die Ontologie gehören, und nicht bloß von der äusserlichen Form der Erkenntnis abhangen, so werden wir sie auch nur in so weit hier mitnehmen, als die Form der Erkenntnis selbsten Anlaß dazu geben wird."

17）That which agrees with the formal conditions of experience, that is, with the conditions of intuition and concepts, is *possible*; that which is bound up with the material conditions of experience, that is, with sensation, is *actual*; that which in its connection with the actual is determined in accordance with universal conditions of experience, is（that is, exists as）*necessary*. See Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*（Hamburg: Meiner, 1965）, A 70/B 95 – A 83/B 109, A 218-19/B 266-67.

18）Kant, *Kritik*: A 74/B 99-A 75/B 100, A 219/B 266, A 233/B 287.

19）Robert Paul Wolff, *Kant's Theory of Mental Activity*（Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1973）, 293-94. Wolff notes as well that the unknowable possibilities that Kant did not cite as such are God, freedom, immortality. See Kant, *Kritik*, A 218/B 265-66.

20）For the distinction between a possible metaphysical and phenomenological Kant, see George Schrader, "The Thing in Itself in Kantian Philosophy," in *Kant: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed., Robert Paul Wolff（Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968）, 172-88.

21）If indeed we have understood modality as related to both vectors of the intentional relation, we could consider "belief"—as does Ockham—as a modality. This would be correlative to the *what* that is "posited" in belief as a "modality." It is from this perspective that we can treat actuality as a modality, but also imaginability would be another modality, having an "as if" structure.

22）Actuality（and non-actuality）is more complicated for phenomenology than it seems at first glance. I reserve the explication of this for a more extended study. In short, however, there are four "meaning-distinct" sub-modalities of modality, "actuality," and in one case, two names for the same actuality depending upon the perspective [*irreal* in contrast to the "*real*" and *irreell* in distinction to the *reell*]. The "real" is what is given *as* taken for granted in the natural attitude. This belongs to a phenomenological attitude insofar as the "real" as belonging to the natural attitude only arises from the perspective of a phenomenological reduction.

23）Eugen Fink, "Operative Begriffe in Husserls Phänomenologie," in *Nähe unde Distanz: Phänomenologische Vortäge und Aufsätze*（Alber: 1976）, 180-204.

24）Husserl writes: "But I said 'in a certain respect.' For speaking of 'modalization' is ambiguous. On the one hand, we can mean each transformation of the mode of validity as distinct from the original mode of validity, naive certainty, so to speak, that is not ruptured by discrepancy or doubting. And on the other hand, we can mean a transformation where the validity-mode of certainty is concerned, where it ceases to be certainty. The primordial mode is certainty, but in the form of the most straightforward certainty. Just as an affirming decision occurs by passing through a period of doubt, so too do we have a restoration of certainty; when something turns out to be real "in effect" I become certain of it anew. And yet, consciousness is altered now. Passing through a period of doubt to a decision gives to consciousness precisely the character of resolved consciousness, and it gives to its noematic sense the corresponding character that expresses itself in the "yes," "in effect," "truly so," and in similar turns of phrase.（Husserl, *Analyses,* 37-38.）

And again: "The most direct expression for these possibilities, however, is enticing possibilities. It is completely clear that they designate a totally different kind of modalization than the modalization of open possibilities. For modalizing consciousness in each instance has a fundamentally different origin.

We can even characterize open possibility as a modalization of certainty."（Husserl, *Analyses*, § 12, p. 43. See § 11）.

25）See Steinbock, *Home and Beyond*, esp., Sections 3 and 4.

26）See H 42. James G. Hart has written an excellent review of this work in *Husserl Studies*（2015）, Vol. 3, No. 3, 245-60. Also on this volume, see also Mariano Crespo, "Husserl on Personal Aspects of Moral Normativity," in *Ethical Perspectives* 22, no. 4（2015）, 699-722. See also Sophie Loidolt, "The 'Daimon' that Speaks through Love: A Phenomenological Ethics of the Absolute Ought. Investigating Husserl's Unpublished Ethical Writings" in *Ethics and Phenomenology*, eds., M. Sanders and J. J. Wisnewski（Rowman and Littlefield, 2012）, 1-29.

27）See my distinctions in *Phenomenology and Mysticism*, "Introduction."

28）See my *Moral Emotions*, the chapter on "Trust."

29）I developed this sense of the "praxical" ought in conversations with Andrew Barrette.

30）See my *Moral Emotions*, ch. 2 on "Shame."

31）This can be the case all the more so with respect my calling or the absolute value of another person and the ought, compelling me toward her or him.

32）See Husserl, *Ideen II*, esp., 172-211.

33）See Husserl, *Aufsätze und Vorträge*, esp., 3-94.

34）See Anthony J. Steinbock, "The Project of Ethical Renewal and Critique: Edmund Husserl's Early Phenomenology of Culture," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 32/4,（Winter, 1994）: 449-64.

35）Regarding the *Aufsätze und Vorträge*, see especially the appendices.

36）For example, the meaning of loving is such that when I love another, I cannot set predetermined limits on that loving: "I will love you for five years; after that we will see." This makes no sense where the internal movement of loving is concerned. This holds likewise for forgiveness, repentance, and similar experiences.

37）See also, Max Scheler, "Vorbilder und Führer," in *Schriften aus dem Nachlaß, Vol 1,* [*Gesammelte Werke,* Vol. 10] ed., Maria Scheler（Bern: Francke, 1957）, 255-344.

38）See my *Moral Emotions*.

39）When this relation and givenness is understood as loving, the Myself is qualified most profoundly as the "beloved." I develop this in another work, *The Schema of the Heart: Beloved, Loving, and Hating.*

40）A calling never takes place from the starting point of the "I." This is the illusion of the "self-made man," which is symptomatic of pride. I never call myself; we always take up a givenness, a calling as from another. The limit-case of a fully free person vocationally speaking is an abstraction, not because it is ideal, but because it misses the dynamic of being given to myself that I co-originate creatively（cf. H 42: 493）.

41）In his exposition of Husserl's "Phenomenology of Intersubjectivity," Iso Kern has pointed out, for example, that Husserl describes several kinds of love: sexual love as a community of pleasure; nonsexual personal love and the personal community of love; the ethical community of friendship and Christian love and community of love, and related expressions of love such as forgiveness.

42）See Hart's "Review" in *Husserl Studies* of Husserliana 42.

43）For the notion of de-limitation, ch. 1, Steinbock, *Limit-Phenomena and Phenomenology in Husserl*; see also, my *Phenomenology and Mysticism*, "Conclusion."

44）One problem in my view with Husserl's exposition is that he sometimes treats the intersubjective value as something objective and accessible to all（H 42: 351）. But this is a very limited sense of intersubjectivity, and does not broach his generative understanding of intersubjective generativity of homeworld and alienworlds. Nor does it introduce the personal and interpersonal meaning of radically unique callings, or the ought of a collective person, which however he does suggest in his writings.

45）Husserl does tend here to write of an ever more encompassing synthesis of a most complete world and an expanding absolute ought. But to understand this, and the potentially problematic character of this view, we would need an explication of a generative phenomenology of homeworld and alienworld.

46）See H 42: 175, 224, 301-2, 313, 317, 391, 398, 432, 456. Although there can be a multiplicity of oughts and an absolute ought that guides a person in loving, so too can a homeworld be a understood as a collective person that has its own absolute ought in an interpenetration and overlapping of homeworlds（H 42: 194, 342-43; 384 fn. 1）.

47）This is of course in reference to Scheler, and I do this here because Husserl himself makes frequent allusions to Scheler's insights in such a context. I have tried to show elsewhere that we do have an experience of this distinctive order of givenness that can be cognitive, but yet does not follow *this* order of epistemic rationality, hence the subtitle: *Moral Emotions: Reclaiming the Evidence of the Heart*.

48）Paulo Friere, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans., Myra Bergman Ramos（New York: Continuum, 2001）.

49）James G. Hart, *Who One Is. Book 1: Meontology of the "I": A Transcendental Phenomenology*（Boston: Springer, 2009）. And James G. Hart, *Who One Is. Book 2: Existenz and Transcendental Phenomenology*（Boston: Springer, 2009）.

50）Husserl, H 42: 358, 384-85, 417. See esp., texts 25, 27, 31, 32, 37 and their respective appendices.

51）"Religious wars" are all the more tragic because they ostensibly concern the "Holy" as infinite absolute.

52）See for example, H 42: 333, 352, fn. 3, 356, 391, 407, 492, 624.

53）See A. R. Luther, *Persons in Love: A Study of Max Scheler's* Wesen und Formen der Sympathie（The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972）.

54）Max Scheler, "Das Ressentiment im Aufbau der Moralen" in *Vom Umsturz der Werte*, [*Gesammelte Werke*. Vol. 3], ed., Maria Scheler（Bern: Francke, 1955）, 33-147.

55）Max Scheler, "Ordo Amoris," in *Schriften aus dem Nachlaß, Vol 1,* [*Gesammelte Werke,* Vol. 10] ed., Maria Scheler（Bern: Francke, 1957）, 362-65.

56）See Husserl, *Analyses*, § 6.

57）See my *Moral Emotions*, ch. 4.

58）Shame, guilt, embarrassment, and other diremptive experiences could, depending upon the context, be considered modalizations of this kind. The clue to their status as modalizations occurs in their essential negative valence, and more specifically in the tenor of the way in which I am given to myself: They reveal me to myself as having departed from "Myself." This is, in part, why they are called diremptive experiences. See *Moral Emotions*, esp., section 1. A reaffirming revelatory experience that would not be a modalization can be seen in the experience of repentance in which I "turn" to my "true self" as is expressed in the Hebrew term, "*t'shuvah*," or in the Greek term "*metanoia*." See *Moral Emotions*, ch. 4.

59）See my *Moral Emotions*, ch. 1 and ch. 9. There are still other factors and experiences that can mitigate vocational experience, ones that I cannot consider here. I have in mind being coerced to do something or undertaking activities through compulsion. It is also possible to consider the roles of "distraction" and "inattentiveness." As temporal modalizations, we could examine "waiting," "avoidance," or "putting off."

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