

# The Concept of «Limit» in Phenomenology

ROBERTA LANFREDINI<sup>1</sup>

**Summary:** 1. The limit as boundary: the thing in itself. 2. Limit and background. 3. The limit as an idea. 4. The Ideal limit. 5. Conclusion.

**Abstract:** This paper aims to provide an overview of the theoretical uses of the concept of “limit” in phenomenology. Three general senses of this concept will be identified. A first sense, which we may call methodological, refers both to the notion of the thing itself and to “limit states of consciousness”: sleep, birth, death and the unconscious. In this case, the notion of “limit” refers to a range of problems that transcend the limits of phenomenological description because they lie beyond experience. A second sense of “limit”, which we may define as epistemic, is related to the notion of idea, understood as the limit towards which both noetic synthesis, i.e. that pertaining to states of consciousness, and noematic synthesis, i.e. that pertaining to the correlatum of noesis, are directed. This second use of the notion of “limit” is linked to the problem – clearly of Kantian origin – of the possibility or impossibility of identifying an ideal limit towards which the multiple perspectives of the object’s becoming point. A third sense of “limit” in phenomenology, which we might call ontological, is related to the notion of ideality. This third use of the notion is a way of addressing the issue of whether a mathematisation (i.e. a complete rationalisation) of nature is possible.

**Keywords:** *phenomenology, limit, boundary, synthesis, idea, ideality.*

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1 Professore Ordinario di Filosofia teoretica presso l’Università degli studi di Firenze.

## 1. The limit as boundary: the thing in itself

The common use of the concept of limit is polysemic. Indeed, we speak of going beyond one's limits when practising a sport and of not going beyond one's limits in a discussion; we can tend towards a cognitive limit or see the limit as what separates objects from each other; and we may also interpret the limit as distance (public, social, personal), with reference to the role of proxemics in communication. This polysemy is also reflected in the phenomenological attitude. There are three main uses of the term limit in phenomenology. The first refers to the notions of threshold or boundary and background, the second to the notion of the pole of identity, and the third to the notion of ideality. These three phenomenological uses of "limit" are each based on three philosophical concepts: sense, synthesis and extension.

The concept of limit as boundary is inherent in phenomenological inquiry. Phenomenological description, understood as the elucidation of experience, by its very definition inhibits any investigation that, in principle, goes beyond the experience we can make of it.

A particularly significant example of the concept of limit as boundary concerns the notion of the thing-in-itself. Husserl's denial of a metaphysical, absolute reality is in principle stronger than Kant's. For Kant, the thing in itself, though not meaningless, is unknowable (Schrandner, 1968). For Husserl, the thing in itself, though not meaningless (as for Kant), is not only unknowable but also effectively absurd. In order to understand the meaning of the expression "effective absurdity", it is necessary to return to Husserl's theory of the whole and its parts, with particular reference to the foundational relations between the moments of a whole. For Husserl, the foundational relation between non-independent moments or parts (e.g. colour and extension), which is necessary for the notion of datum, does not require the identification of an autonomous and "extractable" principle with respect to the immediate and direct relation of the parts to each other. The legality that unites parts into a whole (e.g. colour and extension) is indeed based on the material nature of the determinations themselves.

The severing of the foundational relation leads to material countersense (*Widersinn*). This is a material impossibility which is conceptually distinct

from formal impossibility or non-sense. The latter occurs when the structure of the noesis is not formally well formed, as in the sentence “green is and”. In this case, the act simply does not intend “something” because it is deprived of intentional orientation. On the contrary, the impossibility of the countersense concerns the semantic aspect of the noesis: in this case, the act is directed towards impossible objects, since the moments that constitute the sense are set “against each other”. The intention in this case has a syntactically well-formed structure, yet the object to which it is directed is not semantically formed.

It seems reasonable, however, to propose a further distinction between material countersense (e.g. colour without extension) and formal countersense (e.g. round square). The latter is impossible because it contradicts the essential law according to which two species of the same genus cannot coexist within the same singularity; the former is impossible because two species linked by an a priori material nexus are instead disjointed.

The two types of impossibility, non-sense and countersense (whether material or formal) can in turn be distinguished from a third type of impossibility, namely the notion of absolute transcendence. In this last case, neither the meaningfulness of the object (formal legality) nor the foundational relationship between the constituent parts of the object (material legality) is at stake.

The reference to a world outside our world, that is to the thing in itself, does not actually involve the violation of the material ontological law according to which two genera that are mutually grounded in experience are separate (as in the case of colour and extension); but neither does it involve the violation of the formal ontological law according to which two disjoint species cannot coexist within the same singularity (as in the case of square and round). In the case of the thing in itself, what we have is the violation of a more fundamental law: the law according to which the concept of a thing necessarily contains a reference to an experience.

The expression “thing-in-itself” thus refers to what we might call a constitutive countersense. It is a kind of countersense that no longer refers to the parts or properties of the thing, but rather to its constitution in a general sense: the thing-in-itself is a countersense because it refers to something that contains the reference to a constitutive function yet at the same time

avoids it. If we add to this the observation that it is impossible to speak of a thing without referring to an experience, we can understand why the law of constitution cannot consistently refer to a thing, namely: because the thing in itself is not *something*.

If we also consider the impossibility of a thing existing without reference to an experience, the effective absurdity of the thing in itself becomes clear. The thing in itself, insofar as it is in principle unrelated to the experience of the thing, is simply a non-thing. «The hypothetical assumption of something real outside this world is, of course, logically possible; obviously it involves no formal contradiction. [...] When that is taken into account the formal-logical possibility of realities outside the world, the one spatiotemporal world, which is fixed by our actual experience, materially proves to be a countersense» (Husserl, 1983: 108-9).

## 2. Limit and background

The notion of things in themselves, however, is not the only example of absolute ulteriority. There are others cases in which it is difficult to formulate a clear phenomenological judgement. These are what Husserl calls the boundary problems of phenomenology (*Grenzprobleme der Phänomenologie*) (Steinbock, 1995; Hart, 2015). For example, we are not and cannot be conscious of our birth or death, or of falling into a deep sleep, or of unconscious states. In this sense, boundary phenomena are those things (*Sachen*) that are «in some sense given as not being able to be given» (Steinbock, 2017: 1): unconscious, sleep, birth and death, God. Understood in such terms, limit phenomena are non-arbitrary (not just anything can become a limit phenomenon); and relative (insofar as they depend on the nature of what they limit); necessary (insofar as they are an integral part of the definition of the thing). In summary, limit phenomena are non-arbitrary, relative and essential limits to experience.

These are those phenomena that are at the limit of conscious experience, and thus constitute its latent or obscure dimension. In this sense, the “limit” (*Limes*) is easily assimilated to the “border” (*Grenze*). Boundary phenomena

can be extensive or intensive. In the former case we speak of the horizon or the background, i.e. the boundary that surrounds any experiential givenness like a halo.

One can indeed be conscious in the sense of being attentive to something, as in the case of wakeful consciousness, but also in the sense of a blurred or background consciousness. The Husserlian distinction between actuality and inactuality manifests this difference. To be conscious is indeed to be present in an attentive way, but it is also to be conscious in a diffused, indistinct and blurred way. Consciousness, then, means both attention to something and the perception of the background against which that something appears.

For Husserl, an essential law is the continuous and incessant shift from the actual to the non-objective dimension. For Husserl, the priority of presence is given by the possibility of “reactivating” the “non-objective” dimension (implicit, tacit, passive) and making it objective (explicit, manifest, active) through a change of attitude that ensures the continuous transition between the two dimensions. Non-objective actions are always potentially convertible into objective ones. Something similar is present in the distinction – a fundamental one in phenomenology – between actual presence and (in-actual) non-presence or, if we prefer, between object and background. Even in the case of the distinction between actual object and in-actual background, or of the distinction between passivity and activity, there is the possibility of the complete reversibility of one dimension into the other – of shifting from one to the other. This possibility can be considered an essential feature of experience (Lanfredini, 2018).

This thesis, which suggests the unquestionable priority of the theoretical attitude, is tempered by the acknowledgement of the fact that the limit can have not only an extensive but also an intensive or temporal sense. In this case, it is emphasised that the objectifying attitude rests on a ground of passivity, pre-categorisation and pre-dating, a ground that Husserl does not hesitate to call “confused”. «Every spontaneous act, after being performed, necessarily passes over into a confused state; the spontaneity, or if you will, the activity, to speak of it more properly, passes into a passivity, although of such a kind that [...] it refers back to the originally spontaneous and articulated performance.

This reference back is characterized as such by the I-can or the faculty, which evidently belongs to it, to “reactivate” this state» (Husserl, 1989: 13-14).

For Husserl, all consciousness is temporal, in the sense that consciousness always has a non-chronological and tensional structure, with retentions, original impressions and protensions. Time introduces a dimension that is not “present” to consciousness and therefore escapes it. The dimension that eludes the “irradiation” of consciousness is that of affect. This, combined with the element of retention, refers to «the entire realm of association and habits» (ibid: 233), which includes «sensibility, what imposes itself, the pre-given, the driven in the sphere of passivity. What is specific therein is motivated in the obscure background» (ibid: 234).

What Husserl calls «the case of the zero degree of affection» is formed by associations and habits that are proper to sensibility and impulse, and hence fall beyond the rational grasp of explicit consciousness. Yet, for Husserl, the unconscious is always mediated by intentional consciousness and a reflexive grasp. The mark of immersion in absolute passivity is denied by Husserl.

The reactivation of the retentive processes brings the “past” object back into the actuality of consciousness, restores it to its “meaning”: an object qua object is given only by an active consciousness, and passive contents must avoid sinking into absolute unconsciousness, on pain of the annulment of the unity of consciousness. Thus, through the phenomenon of reawakening, the unconscious becomes my experience in every sense. Not only is the activity of consciousness rooted in passivity, but passivity itself is already predisposed to activity. Everything in this scheme is aimed at the emergence of datitude on the one hand and the transparency of consciousness to itself on the other. The unconscious, however ingrained, is a “thing” of consciousness.

The case is different with *Grenzprobleme*: for although they constitute a necessary horizon of our experience, they are not susceptible to any conscious “grasping”. We are talking about latent phenomena such as birth and death, which by their very nature seem to preclude the possibility of direct experiential grasping because they are located precisely at the inaccessible edges of our existence. In this case «reflecting on limit phenomena requires that we describe the particular modes of givenness of the phenomena along with

the phenomenological method in which those phenomena become an issue» (Steinbock, 2017: 5).

The meaning of these phenomena is acquired when we adopt the standpoint of generative phenomenology. In moving from the dimension of the constituted to the constituting, i.e. from the standpoint of passive syntheses, Husserl incorporates a regressive, archaeological movement from the active cognitive dimension to the passive kinaesthetic dimension. Here Husserl examines how sense appears as a pre-constituted or pre-given affective dimension: the process of endurance itself cannot cease; endurance is immortal (ibid: 23).

Strictly speaking, the phenomena of death, birth and the deep unconscious are paradoxical in nature. Through such phenomena, phenomenology would cross the gap from that which is given to phenomenological reduction to that which offers itself to consciousness as what cannot possibly give itself. The content to be thematised here is that which eludes any direct, first-person thematization.

Indeed, it is only possible to experience birth and death in the third person, through the natural attitude, when we see others being born and dying. But a direct, first-person understanding of our birth and death is not granted to us. This paradox also concerns the giving of the inaccessible, whether mundane (birth and death) or metaphysical (God).

So is it possible to think of a beginning and an end? Or should we think of the flow of consciousness without beginning or end? Questions such as these presuppose a concept of limit understood as genesis, as the transformation of the obscure latency of consciousness (in a Leibnizian sense) in the direction of either the original emergence of consciousness (birth) or its final and definitive disappearance (death). The only way to address these borderline cases is to extend the scenario of phenomenological description to include a memory that is not only consciousness but also bodily memory, impersonal and not directly accessible (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, 2004).

The point is the relationship between memory and perception. Memory, for Husserl (as for Bergson) is not simply a matter of placing past data in some “box” or “register” of our consciousness, and perception is not a purely momentary state, a source of data which, slipping into memory, would gradually disappear from the horizon of consciousness (Bergson, 1921, 1946). Perception is not

a mere moment, but an act that implies a certain duration. This means that every present “now” is incessantly transformed into a retention, that is into a continuum in which the next moment is a retention of a previous moment, a kind of comet whose tail is made up of the “wake” or indistinct aura of retention. For Husserl, consciousness is nothing without impression, just as the object to which consciousness is directed is nothing without extension. The original and present impression is the necessary fulcrum without which duration cannot unfold.

However, we can also interpret the relationship between memory and impression as inverted. In this case, memory (understood as duration) takes precedence and impression (i.e. presentification) becomes subordinate and dependent on the former. In this latter case, the borderline phenomena of consciousness are such not because they are located in an elsewhere that cannot be grasped and addressed by consciousness but, on the contrary, because they are located in a genetically fundamental dimension. This impersonal dimension of duration does not constitute the conditions of possibility (as in Kant), but the conditions of the reality of experience (Bergson, 1946). Taking this step, however, means definitively leaving the transcendental approach and embracing an immanent monism in which the very concept of phenomenological limit undergoes a radical transformation.

### 3. The limit as an idea

The second use of the concept of phenomenological limit concerns the infinite synthesis of the perspectives of the appearance of an object. The perspectives through which the object of experience manifests itself are governed by a principle of cohesion and unity. The aim of phenomenology is not to justify this cohesion but, on the contrary, to make explicit the reasons that make this cohesion possible. These reasons lie in the notion of phenomenological synthesis.

The notion of noematic synthesis, as presented by Husserl in *Ideas I*, entails the assumption of a unitary pole, a determinate and determinable X around



which all appearances of the object revolve. This pole must not, however, be confused with a substratum of any substantial kind. The predicates and determinations of the thing do not in fact presuppose any substantive “pivot”. This makes the determinable X to which Husserl refers easily referable to the Kantian notion of idea. «But *perfect givenness is nevertheless predesignated as “Idea”* (in the Kantian idea) as a system which, in its eidetic type, is an absolutely determined system of endless process of continuous appearing, or as field of these processes, an a priori determined *continuum of appearances* with different, but determined, dimension, and governed throughout by a fixed set of eidetic laws» (Husserl, 1983: 342)

The object, defined as the synthesis of the predicates expressed by the noematic sense, is the central point of unity around which the indefinite determinations of the object revolve according to a “rigid eidetic legality”; the unmodified object, the identical of all appearances, the identical of all orientations constitutes a logically primary unity with respect to any determined complex of aspects of the object itself. Moreover, it is this logical priority that gives the object its determined and apparently pre-determined character. Indeed, according to this perspective, the phenomenological object seems to be characterised, on the one hand, by openness and incompleteness (it is essentially inadequate precisely because it is always capable of receiving successive determinations) and, on the other hand, by that determined and predetermined character which legitimises the use of the term “rule”.

Now, however, it is a general eidetic insight that each imperfect givenness (each inadequately presentive noema) includes in itself a *rule* for the ideal possibility of its being perfected. However, if we examine what Husserl means by “rule”, we will see that there are aspects of this notion that depart from the predetermined system that at first glance seems to define the unity or synthesis of the appearances of an object, and thus redefine the analogy between noematic synthesis and the Kantian idea that Husserl himself explicitly suggests. Indeed, Husserl’s use of the term “rule” excludes not only the idea of a substratum or substantial pivot to which the appearances of the thing refer, but also the idea of an autonomous and independent unifying principle with respect to the individual appearances of the thing. Again, as in the case of the foundation

relation, what is missing is the idea of the “extractability” of an autonomous and independent unifying principle.

The principle that makes it possible to unify, albeit in an infinitely open manner, all possible and coherent ways of giving an object is the motivational link that exists between phenomena. The object is the synthesis or unifying pole of all possible determinations motivated by actual or real experience. And it is precisely the introduction of the notion of motivational link that drastically rescales the analogy between “determinable X” and “Kantian idea”. The unified synthesis of all possible conceptual determinations of the object to which Husserl refers is in fact not formal, but essentially conditioned by material and actual elements. An object can be said to be the same object if it establishes a motivational link with an initial and original appearance in such a way that this appearance motivates subsequent appearances, from the sensible (the unseen side of the thing) to the more abstract and conceptual.

It is not necessary for there to be a particular motivational link: as Husserl acknowledges, the synthesis of appearances can “break down” and a particular sequence of experiences can disintegrate. It is necessary, however, that there be some motivational connection between the phenomena in order for us to be able to properly speak of experience. Indeed, experience requires synthesis, cohesion or integration between appearances. «It is experience alone that prescribes their sense; and, since we are speaking of physical things in fact, it is actual experience alone which does so in its definitely ordered experiential concatenations» (Husserl, 1983:106). The notion of motivation, in turn, excludes the possibility of the thing in itself, that is an absolute or metaphysical transcendence. The limit in this case is a concrete limit, set by a particular initial experience, which initiates a particular motivational chain, a particular course of experience. This makes phenomenology a kind of radical empiricism, similar to that proposed by James (1996), in which the genetic-motivational link is opposed to the causal link: for it is «in a counter sensical manner one thus connects by causality things pertaining to the senses and physical things as determined by physics» (ibid: 122).

#### 4. The Ideal limit

A third meaning of limit in phenomenology, closely related to that of synthesis, concerns the concept of the ideal limit. From a phenomenological point of view, there is an important distinction to be drawn between “essentiality” and “ideality”. The former refers to eidetic reduction, understood as an intuition capable of grasping essences, i.e. invariants, in the incessant change and flow of experience. Ideality, on the other hand, refers to the notion of the ideal limit. The complement of the essential is the individual or factual; the complement of the ideal is the inexact or vague.

For Husserl, the phenomenologist’s task is vague and inexact: it is much closer to the botanist’s tasks than that of an exact scientist, such as a geometer or mathematician. As a famous passage in *Ideas* puts it: «The geometer is not interested in *de facto* sensuously intuitable shapes, as the descriptive natural scientist is. He does not, like the latter, fashion *morphological concepts* of vague configurational types which are directly seized upon on the basis of configurational types which are directly sized upon on the basis of sensuous intuition and which, in their vagueness, become conceptually and terminologically fixed. The *vagueness* of such concepts, the circumstance that their spheres of application are fluid, does not make them defective; for in the spheres of knowledge where they are used they are absolutely indispensable, or in those spheres they are the only legitimate concepts. [...] The most perfect geometry and the most perfect practical mastery of it cannot enable the descriptive natural scientist to express (in exact geometrical concepts) what he express in such a simple, understandable, and completely appropriate manner by the words “notches”, “scalloped”, “lens-shaped”, “umbrelliform”, and the like – all to them concepts which are *essentially, rather the accidentally, inexact and consequently* also non-mathematical» (Husserl, 1983: 166).

The distinction between essentiality and ideality constitutes the fulcrum on which the relationship between phenomenological-descriptive science and Galilean mathematical science is centred, as well as one of the central themes of *The Crisis of the European Sciences*, namely the problem of the direct or indirect mathematisation of the plena. Mathematics and geometry, as long

as they are exact and ideal, allow a perfect subsumption of their objects from general principles, which makes it possible to dominate these objects rationally. Phenomenology, on the other hand, being morphological and non-ideal, does not provide for a pure deducibility and exhaustive definition of its object.

For the phenomenologist, what is essential is not so much the description of the general as the description of the singular. What manifests itself in experience, i.e. what phenomenology is called upon to investigate, is a singular event that can in no way be deduced from general principles or axioms. Compared to such principles, the phenomenon is irreducibly singular – it is something exceeded.

In this respect, Husserl famously formulated a lapidary judgement on Galileo: Galileo is as «at once a discovering and a concealing genius (*entdeckender und verdeckender Genius*)» (Husserl, 1970: 51). That Galileo discovered something seems undoubtedly true. Less obvious is the fact that he simultaneously discovered and concealed something relevant. What, according to Husserl, did Galileo conceal? The answer to this question is closely related to Husserl's argument about the mathematisation of the *plena*. The *plena* constitute the actual qualitative dimension of experience, what it is like to be (as Nagel puts it) (1974) experience: seeing colours, hearing sounds and smelling smells.

The reason for the impossibility of a direct mathematisation of the *plena* lies in their non-ideal, though essential, nature. From this point of view, in applying a science of pure ideality – such as geometry or mathematics – to the world of sensible data we encounter an obstacle that is difficult to overcome. The sensible datum is characterised by its typicality, its morphological, vague character. The eidetic reduction, far from contradicting this idea, fully confirms it. The invariants that this reduction highlights are themselves inexact, typical, morphological essences, and certainly not exact idealities like mathematics and geometry. Ideality, understood as the limit-form towards which the experience of something tends, as an unchangeable yet at the same time unattainable pole, is in reality only proper to the extensional or spatial dimension.

Only extension actually has a tendency to limit form. Extension involves differences of degree and not of nature (Bergson, 1946; Deleuze, 1966); that is, only in the case of extension does gradualness move in the direction of

greater or lesser perfection. It is precisely the limit towards which this greater or lesser perfection tends that we call ideality. In contrast to extension, the plena inhabit the dimension of more or less, of imprecision and singularity. There is no ideal red, just as there is no ideal sound, although it is possible to imagine an ideal triangle.

The impossibility of directly mathematising the plena was also known to Galileo, who for this reason excluded secondary qualities from the ontological order of the world. Only the primary qualities (motion, extension) are actually mathematical. In order to mathematise sensible data, it is therefore necessary to “empty” the material ontology of all content in order to obtain entities that are unambiguously determinable and thus measurable.

In the indirect mathematisation of the plena lies the “surprising Galilean hypothesis”. The physical thing, composed of extension and plena, is “unbundled”, so to speak. The next step is to consider each change in the plenum as having its own counterpart in the sphere of forms, which in turn is interpreted as having a necessary causal connection with the former.

Each phenomenon will thus have a mathematical index corresponding to the idealised events. The indirect mathematisation of the plena now makes it possible to determine all events objectively.

With geometric and scientific mathematisation, the concrete and imprecise world of life is given an ideal form, that of so-called objective scientific truths.

This method is certainly well equipped as a forecasting model, but it is less adequate to satisfy a more open and uncertain concept such as foresight. The forecasting model is a comprehensive model that allows the representation of future phenomena based on a stable but inert notion of data. The foresight model, on the other hand, explores the future starting not so much from an inert datum as from the virtual openness of the present moment. In other words, anticipation, unlike prediction, is based not on stasis but on change.

To summarise what has been said so far, we might argue that the notion of the limit as an ideal limit refers to the possibility of idealising and thus mathematising natural phenomena (with the consequent measurements and predictions). This possibility only applies to the dimension of extension. The extension and its coordinates (size, height, shape, etc.) include the possibility of an ideal

limit (the ideal triangle, the ideal circle, etc.) and are therefore quantifiable and mathematical. However, this possibility does not apply to plena (there is no ideal red, for example), which, although essential (i.e. the result of eidetic reduction), are not ideal and therefore not measurable or quantifiable.

The distinctions between extensive and intensive, form and content, extension and plenum, exactness and vagueness, ideality and essentiality, prediction and anticipation, possible and real, actual and virtual, etc., all concern the notion of limit as an ideal limit. Phenomenology, while being an eidetic and essential science, is not ideal, either in a material sense (like geometry) or in a formal sense (like mathematics).

## 5. Conclusion

To describe things in phenomenology is to clarify experience. This operation is closely related to the notion of limit, in at least three senses. A first sense is related to the notion of limit as boundary or border. In this sense, phenomenological description cannot go beyond the boundary within which the thing of experience manifests itself. The thing-in-itself in thus becomes an effective absurdity, since it denies in principle the connection with a possible experience.

By its very definition, the notion of boundary includes the notion of background. The introduction of such a notion makes the phenomenological refutation of a thing-in-itself more nuanced and problematic. Background can indeed be conceived in an extensive or an intensive sense. In the former case, the principle of reversibility that governs the relations between actuality and the unactual background is maintained, i.e. the transformation of the unactual dimension into an attentional grasping and vice-versa. If there is a principle of reversibility, there can be no absolute background. On the other hand, the intensive (or temporal) interpretation of the notion of limit, present in the theory of passive syntheses and in genetic phenomenology, again raises the problem of the limit or threshold. Indeed, there are certain phenomena (birth, death, deep sleep) which in principle exclude the possibility of direct

experience or conscious “grasping”. However, it is difficult to deny these events a phenomenological status.

The second idea of limit concerns the notion of a synthesis of perspectives and the possibility that this synthesis is directed towards a goal (the idea in the Kantian sense, understood as a pole of identity). Here too, the notion of rule, which is capable of guaranteeing a limit towards which the ways of giving oneself to the object tend, is gradually replaced by the notion of motivation, which is open and not predetermined. Motivation, always bound to an initial concrete experience, cannot be “extracted” from it.

The third phenomenological use of the concept of limit relates to ideality and the possibility of idealising (and thus mathematising) experience. In this case, the limit plays the role of a “stand-in in the realm of forms” rather than of a description of experience from within.

According to all the meanings outlined so far, the notion of limit suggests the possibility of leaving the experiential dimension and taking a position outside experience itself. A position that the phenomenological method in no way allows. Phenomenology thus embraces the negative and restrictive sense of the concept of limit precisely in order to remain within the limits of a description from within experience and its multiple manifestations.

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