

Two Paths

A Critique of Husserl's view of the Buddha

Jason K. Day

University of Fribourg*

ABSTRACT | In “On the Teachings of Gotama Buddha” (1925) and “Socrates-Buddha” (1926), Edmund Husserl claims that the Buddha achieves a transcendental view of consciousness by performing the epoché. Yet, states Husserl, the Buddha fails to develop a purely theoretical and universal science of consciousness, i.e., phenomenology, because his purely practical goal of *Nibbāna* limits knowledge of consciousness. I evaluate Husserl’s claims by examining the Buddha’s *Majjhima Nikāya*. I argue that Husserl correctly identifies an epoché and transcendental viewpoint in the Buddha’s teachings. However, I contend that Husserl’s distinction between pure theory and pure praxis leads him to misconstrue the function of the Buddha’s epoché, the extent of knowledge that the Buddha gains from the transcendental viewpoint, and the nature of *Nibbāna*. I finally suggest that the Buddha presents a way of studying consciousness that is a way of life, meaning that any distinction between pure theory and pure praxis is dissolved.

KEYWORDS | Husserl; Buddha; Phenomenology; Buddhism; Comparative Philosophy

* Correspondence: Jason K. Day – Av. de l'Europe 20, 1700 Fribourg, Switzerland. Email: jason.day@unifr.ch



1 Introduction

In “On the Teachings of Gotama Buddha” (1925) and “Socrates-Buddha” (1926), Edmund Husserl made several remarkable claims about the teachings of the Buddha (c. 563-483 BCE). In the *Majjhima Nikāya* primarily—the Buddha’s middle length discourses—Husserl recognised a way of investigating human experience of the world that intersects, at the following two points, with the phenomenological way that he established. First, Husserl identified a similar beginning: a suspension of everyday belief in the existence of the world along with the interests, values and habits according to which it is usually experienced (Husserl 2017, 403, 410, 414). He further understood the performance of this epoché to have led the Buddha, like himself, to achieve a transcendental view of the world, that is, to discover that the world is only as it is subjectively experienced as being (414).

Despite thereby aligning the Buddha with transcendental phenomenology, Husserl never again engaged with the Buddha’s teachings. For he concluded that the Buddha, unlike himself, was unable to develop a scientific approach to consciousness—subjective experience—from this transcendental viewpoint. A scientific approach, Husserl argued, can only be developed with a purely theoretical interest in gaining scientific knowledge to no other end. But the Buddha, he claimed, has a purely practical and finite interest in achieving *Nibbāna*, thus limiting his knowledge of consciousness (Husserl 2017, 407, 410, 414).

Husserl presented no evidence from the *Majjhima Nikāya* to support his claims. This has not been remedied in secondary literature. Several publications compare Husserlian phenomenology and Buddhism but entirely fail to address the texts that Husserl actually wrote on the Buddha (Larrabee 1981; Hanna 1993; Patrik 1994; Lusthaus 2002; Depraz and Varela 2003; Nizamis 2012; Prosser 2013; Li 2016; Sharf 2016; Varela et al. 2016; Hanna et al. 2017; Gokhale 2018; Depraz 2019; Bitbol 2019; Stone and Zahavi 2021; Čopelj 2022). In the few publications that do address Husserl’s texts on the Buddha, Husserl’s claims are not evaluated against the Buddha’s discourses that he read (Sinha 1971; Hanna 1995; Schuhmann 2005; Ni 2011; Lau 2016).

Husserl is known to have read K.E. Neumann’s German translation of the *Sutta Piṭaka* (the Pāli collection of the Buddha’s discourses), since “On the Teachings of Gotama Buddha” is a short review of this. Unfortunately, Husserl did not indicate exactly which of Neumann’s translated volumes he read. According to Karl Schuhmann’s archival work, however, Husserl read the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the *Therīgāthā* and *Theragāthā* (poems by nuns and monks, respectively), and perhaps the *Dhammapada* (collected sayings of the Buddha) (Schuhmann 2005, 144 n29, 148).

Given the identified gap in research, I critique Husserl’s view of the Buddha through a close examination of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, being the primary source

of the Buddha's teachings read by Husserl. My task here is philosophical rather than historical or philological: to evaluate Husserl's claims on his own terms, as he applied them to the Buddha's teachings. I first reconstruct Husserl's texts on the Buddha, identifying Husserl's idea of a purely theoretical and universal science of being as the ultimate measure against which he judges the Buddha's teachings.¹ However, as Husserl's definition of this science is vague in these texts, I draw on *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (1913) and *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology* (1929) for clarification. These are Husserl's two major works establishing phenomenology as a science, and are also those closest in date of publication to his Buddha texts.

Having defined the terms of Husserl's reading of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, I evaluate his four major claims in relation to his distinction between pure theory and pure praxis. For I identify this distinction as being central to each claim. I argue that (1) Husserl correctly identifies the performance of an epoché in the Buddha's teachings. However, Husserl misconstrues it as a renunciation of the world and misunderstands the Buddha's emphasis on bodily techniques and ethical conduct as a purely practical interest. I then confirm that (2) Husserl's characterisation of the Buddha's teachings as transcendental is feasible. Against Husserl, I contend that the Buddha's knowledge of consciousness is not limited to knowledge of its transcendental nature. I subsequently show that (3) the goal of *Nibbāna* does not limit but motivates knowledge of consciousness. I further argue that the distinction between pure praxis and pure theory is inapplicable to the Buddha's teachings, and thereby indicate that (4) the goal of *Nibbāna* is not incompatible with a scientific approach to consciousness.

In conclusion, I suggest that Husserl may have abandoned his distinction between pure theory and pure praxis in *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy* (1936) when briefly considering how phenomenological investigation can transform one's way of life. This opens up the possibility for Husserlian phenomenologists to re-engage with the Buddha's teachings in which the rigorous investigation of consciousness is already developed as a way of life.

2 Husserl's Texts on The Buddha

In "On the Teachings of Gotama Buddha," Husserl first characterises the Buddha's teachings as "a religious and ethical method" for "spiritual purification and pacification" (Husserl 2005, 145). This constitutes a way of looking at and "overcoming the world" that is "transcendental" as it "looks purely inward in vision and deed" (145). However, Husserl states that the Buddha's way of looking

¹ Husserl refers in "Socrates-Buddha" to a "universal science" (*universale Wissenschaft*) and "science of being" (*Seinswissenschaft*) (Husserl 2017, 403, 410, 411n28, 414). I summarily refer to a 'universal science of being.'

at the world remains “the complete opposite of our European one” (145). Husserl provides no explanation for these statements. He simply gives unsubstantiated praise for the Buddha’s teachings, stating that they “can be paralleled only with the highest formations of the philosophical and religious spirit of our European culture” (145).

In “Socrates-Buddha,” however, Husserl further understands the Buddha to have forged a path to “emancipation” (*Erlösung*) and “bliss” (*Seligkeit*) upon recognising that human life is one of general “unhappiness” (*Unseligkeit*). Humans continually strive for satisfaction. But since life in the world is one of unforeseeable change, and because the irrational motives, values and interests of humans are temporary and inconsistent, they are generally dissatisfied (Husserl 2017, 402-403, 412).

On Husserl’s account, the Buddha’s approach to emancipation from dissatisfaction entails performing the epoché: suspending any pre-established worldview, dissociating from daily praxis and habits, and excluding all the interests, values and goals of ordinary life (Husserl 2017, 403, 410, 414). Furthermore, the Buddha inhibits the “absolute positing of the being of the world” (414)—suspending any belief about whether the world exists independently of how it is experienced. The Buddha, thus freed of prejudice, next disinterestedly directs “a pure, knowing and universal view towards the factual world in general” (409). He then imaginatively modifies the experienced world in “fantasy” (*Phantasie*) to contemplate all its practical possibilities. The Buddha also contemplates “the most general essence of the universal life of the will” along with its interests, goals and values. He thereby determines that it is the essence of both the subject’s will and the world to be constantly changing, and that this together renders any lasting or final satisfaction impossible (405-414).

However, according to Husserl, the Buddha sees a “way out in transcendentalism” because he realises that “the world is a mere phenomenon in subjectivity” (Husserl 2017, 414). In other words, by looking inwards to the nature of his own experience, he sees that the world is only as it appears in experience and only has the sense of constant and independent existence that the experiencing subject gives to it. Consequently, one can cease believing in the independent existence of the world and, neutralising this belief, lose all interest in it. Thus, states Husserl, the Buddha realises that bliss—emancipation from striving for satisfaction—requires a categorical “renunciation” (*Entsagung*) of the world and all theoretical and practical interests therein. He consequently “averts [his] gaze away from [the world]” and “lives, turned into [himself], in the state of a volitional loss of will” (415, 414).

Husserl now clarifies why he stated in “On the Teachings of Gotama Buddha” that the Buddha’s transcendentalism is the opposite of European transcendentalism, including phenomenology. The reason lies in Husserl’s answer to these

two questions, wherein he conflates the Buddha's teachings with all Indian thought:

What is the status of knowledge in Indian thought? (Husserl 2017, 402)
 Has *Indian thought* produced a science of being or did it ever have the possibility of such a science in view? Did it deem it to be irrelevant and therefore not develop it? Was it aware of a science of being as something fundamentally new although grounded in experience just like the science that leads to bliss? (403)

For Husserl, the science of being must be developed with “a pure and authentic so-called theoretical interest” (Husserl 2017, 411) in “scientific knowledge” (403). This means that it cannot be motivated by any finite practical purposes (407). By performing the epoché, this science establishes its purely theoretical interest in consciousness, which it investigates by a specific logical form and method: the use of fantasy and the seeing or “contemplation of ideas” (*Ideenschau*) as the basis for scientific knowledge (403, 405).

Husserl argues that although the Buddha performs the epoché, is grounded in experience, achieves a transcendental view of the world, and identifies essences in fantasy, he fails to develop a universal science of being with its logical form and method (Husserl 2017, 410, 414). For the Buddha lacks the purely theoretical interest that this science first requires. Instead, he has a purely practical interest in emancipation and bliss—*Nibbāna*—and thereby remains in “the universal practical attitude” (411). Husserl further claims that the Buddha’s “knowledge of the world has significance only as a knowledge directed towards proving the transcendental standpoint” (414) and that this is proved “for the sake only of what is best in practice ... for the sake of one’s own ‘bliss’” (410). Husserl accordingly concludes that “praxis limits” knowledge and “to want to solve the tasks of knowledge that have a finite practical purpose will never amount to a science” (407).

Following this conclusion, Husserl never again engaged with the Buddha’s teachings. Throughout his oeuvre, Husserl asserted that philosophy is a scientific way of thinking that is unique to Europe, and that Indian thought is not philosophy (Husserl 1970, 16, 280-285; 2017, 403). It is therefore clear that Husserl’s main criteria for evaluating the Buddha’s teachings are the (1) distinction between purely theoretical interest and purely practical interest, and (2) idea of a universal science of being. Yet Husserl’s idea of science requires further explanation before the *Majjhima Nikāya* can be examined accordingly.

2 Husserl's Idea of a Universal Science of Being

2.1 The Phenomenological Reductions

In *Ideas 1* and *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl establishes transcendental phenomenology as a universal science of “essential being” (Husserl 2012, 3). Its aim is to gain “knowledge of essences” (*Wesenserkenntnisse*); of “transcendental subjectivity” (Husserl 1960, 18), its everyday “consciousness” (*Bewusstsein*) of the world and all phenomena that can possibly appear therein (Husserl 2012, 3).

Husserl describes the phenomenologist as a “scientific traveller” (Husserl 2012, 203) to this end, with their journey beginning from their position in everyday life. Husserl terms this position “the natural attitude” (*die natürliche Einstellung*) (51). Here, the spatio-temporal world is experienced as certainly existing throughout all changes in the experienced things of which it is the totality. The world is furthermore experienced as having its being “out there” (Husserl 2012, 56). This presupposition that the world exists independently of experience is “the general thesis of the natural attitude” (56). The subject is always directed towards the world without being aware of their fundamental belief in its existence and without reflecting on their consciousness of it (Husserl 1960, 17). The phenomenologist therefore cannot reflect on their own consciousness of the world if they remain within the natural attitude. What is required is a radical change of attitude.

A new “phenomenological attitude” (Husserl 2012, 97) is achieved through a series of “phenomenological reductions” consisting of different steps of “bracketing” (*Einklammerung*) (63). The first is the “phenomenological epoché” (59)—the beginning of phenomenology as a science (Husserl 1960, 7). The phenomenologist thereby abstains from using any methods and judgements from the natural sciences, previous philosophy, tradition and culture. For this all remains within the natural attitude that is next put out of play by the “universal epoché” (Husserl 2012, 34, 56-59, 110). This means suspending the general thesis—the implicit belief in the independent existence of the world. But this does not mean denying or doubting its existence (57-59). Instead, the phenomenologist ceases to accept or make any judgement concerning the being or non-being of the world and themselves (127). All the values, beliefs and interests of everyday life are thereby also put out of action. This involves setting aside all previous habits of thought and the “mental barriers” or “psychological resistances” set by them (Husserl 1960, 20; 2012, 2, 134).

At this point, neither the natural attitude nor the world have been lost. The world appears to the phenomenologist just as it did before, with all its usual belief-characters, meanings, values and interests. In this sense, the phenomenologist remains where they were before performing the epoché, but now sees all that is there in a radically new way. For their consciousness of the world and the sense that it has for them is opened up to view for the first time. The world is

now also seen within brackets as a “mere phenomenon” (Husserl 1960, 20), i.e., strictly as it appears in consciousness.

According to Husserl, performing the epoché creates “a universe of absolute freedom from prejudice” wherein the phenomenologist becomes a neutral, “disinterested onlooker” of their consciousness (Husserl 1960, 35). By next performing a “transcendental reduction” (Husserl 2012, 63), they direct their gaze towards their everyday consciousness of the world. This becomes the exclusive field of scientific research, where acts of consciousness and directly experienced phenomena are the only permissible data (Husserl 1960, 12-13; 2012, 43, 61-63).

2.2 Transcendentalism and the Eidetic Method

The phenomenologist’s sole and purely theoretical interest is now “to see and to describe adequately what he sees purely as seen, as what is seen and seen in such and such a manner” (Husserl 1960, 35). But the problem stands that consciousness is “the realm of Heraclitean flux” (49). There are too many experiences and phenomena to individually describe, which change while being described (Husserl 2012, 143-144). However, Husserl argues that acts and objects of consciousness—phenomena—conform to general types and ordered ways of appearing. These can be fixed in strict concepts so that they can be accurately described, that is, “essences” or “ideas” that should not be understood as metaphysical entities existing behind appearances. Rather, an essence describes the necessary and invariant features that any possible phenomenon in concrete experience must exhibit in order to appear as such (Husserl 1960, 49; 2012, 40, 65, 316).

“Eidetic intuition” (*Wesensschau*) (Husserl 1960, 72)—seeing essences—is made possible by performing the “eidetic reduction” within the “free play of fancy [fantasy]” (Husserl 2012, 4, 64). The phenomenologist imagines situations based on everyday life or rehearses recollected experiences “just as they are in their natural setting as real facts of human life” (64). By, on the one hand, altering their perspectives on and modes of consciousness of something and, on the other hand, varying the characteristics of that something, the phenomenologist identifies the respective features of the act and object of consciousness that remain unchanged throughout the imagined variations. They describe these invariant features as the respective essences of the act and object of consciousness. (Husserl 1960, 70; 2012, 63-65).

These eidetic descriptions are made according to the “doctrine of categories” (Husserl 2012, 146). This is a logical framework wherein essences are categorised into species, genera, and regions. At each level, a more general and invariant way of appearing is ascribed to particular corresponding phenomena in experience (25, 32). This doctrine of categories can be viewed as a map of consciousness that allows the phenomenologist to systematically study phenomena (de Warren 2015, 227; Martin 2015, 329). Husserl provides the following map,

which I present only in broad strokes relevant to his characterisation of the Buddha's teachings as transcendental.

The most general delineation is between the regions of consciousness and reality (*Wirklichkeit*) or "Being as experience" and "Being as thing" (Husserl 2012, 78-79). As follows, these regions are discovered upon performing the epoché. Although the reality of the world is suspended, it appears just as before except now within brackets. This means two things. First, since the reality of the world can be suspended, the sense of the world being real is dependent on consciousness. Second, although the existence of the world can be suspended, the phenomenologist's own existence cannot be, for they remain conscious of the world after suspending its reality. Husserl hence argues that consciousness is the original region of being on which all other regions depend for their essential being (146). This does not mean that the material world exists only in consciousness, but that it is only in consciousness that it appears and has the sense of being real.

There is a further correlation between the regions of consciousness and reality in that the essence of consciousness is intentionality: consciousness is always consciousness of something (Husserl 2012, 170-171). The realisation of this essential correlation—the dependence of the world on consciousness and the intentionality of consciousness—defines phenomenology as "transcendental idealism" (Husserl 1960, 86). The meaning of "transcendental" pertains to the insight that it is the essence of anything that appears in consciousness to appear partially. One is only ever conscious of something from a certain perspective revealing only certain aspects of it. In this sense, things in the world are essentially transcendent to consciousness. But they only appear at all in consciousness. Consciousness is thus transcendental—it is the condition of possibility for anything to appear (Husserl 2012, 76-80, 83).

Consciousness is subcategorised into two genera: the *cogito* (the act of consciousness) and the *cogitatum* (the object of consciousness) (Husserl 1960, 36-39). *Noesis* designates the different species of the *cogito*—perception, imagination, recollection and judgement—that give meaningful form to sensory and sensuous content (*hyle*) (Husserl 2012, 174-178). It is the essence of the *cogito* to have an intentional object. This is the *cogitatum*, and its species are *noema*—what appears in an act of consciousness in a certain way, e.g., a perceived visual thing as visually perceived (184-186).

Husserl further categorises the "pure Ego" (Husserl 2012, 62), the subject, in distinction from its continually changing acts and objects of consciousness (164). Yet the pure Ego is not a real part to be found in consciousness and it is not an object in the world. It is instead a stream of temporally ordered and intentionally structured conscious processes, abilities and dispositions (Husserl 1960, 26-29, 36, 54, 65; 2012, 111, 163). The pure Ego's essence is to constitute the being of the world by experiencing it in a certain way and believing certain things about

it (Husserl 2012, 221). Moreover, every belief, act of consciousness and decision of the pure Ego in relation to the world gives its conscious life a persistent habitual style, personal character and sense of the world (Husserl 1960, 66-75, 136).

Since all acts and objects of consciousness that can possibly occur and appear in the life of the pure Ego are categorised, Husserl thereby establishes phenomenology as a *universal* science of essential being. In summary, the criteria for this science are as follows. Performance of the epoché and transcendental reduction establishes a neutral attitude towards, purely theoretical interest in, and transcendental view of consciousness as the exclusive field of research. Through the eidetic reduction in fantasy, consciousness is then described according to the doctrine of categories. I will now examine the *Majjhima Nikāya* on these criteria, as Husserl did, and accordingly evaluate the validity of his claims about the Buddha's teachings.

3 An Examination of the *Majjhima Nikāya*²

Husserl correctly states that the Buddha is motivated by the unhappiness of human life to forge a path leading to emancipation and bliss (Husserl 2017, 412). The Buddha's path begins with the problem of *dukkha*—the dissatisfaction experienced by all human beings. The Buddha identifies the origin of *dukkha* as craving (*taṇhā*) and clinging (*upādāna*). This is argued to be rooted in a fundamental ignorance (*avijjā*) regarding the nature of experience and a corresponding set of false beliefs about the experiencing subject (MN 38.17). An ordinary person conceives of some aspect of experience as being their self (*atta*), their self as being part of it, their self as being apart from it, or it as being part of their self (MN 1.3-26). However identified, the self is conceived as permanent, unchanging and existing independently of all else (MN 2.8). But the Buddha contrarily asserts that all aspects of experience are impermanent (*anicca*), subject to change, and dependently arisen (*paṭiccasamuppannā*). He thus argues that all that comprises experience is therefore not-self (*anattā*) and yet that there is no self that exists apart from this (MN 22.26).

Dukkha arises as follows. I crave and cling to whatever I believe can give me lasting satisfaction, but I am continually frustrated because all things are impermanent and changing. I am also attached to an aspect of experience that I believe to be the self. But this is likewise impermanent and changing, and so I am continually distressed by this changing aspect and crave eternal existence (MN 138.20). I am also averse to—in the sense of hating, being fearful of, irritated or repulsed by, etc.—whatever I believe cannot satisfy me or whatever I find un-

² I henceforth refer to the *Majjhima Nikāya* as MN. Citations indicate the discourse and paragraph numbers. Standard transliterations are found in the Pali Text Society's Pāli-English Dictionary (2008).

pleasant. I despair at its presence despite my aversion to it, and may crave self-annihilation (MN 9:16).

However, the Buddha claims that the cessation of *dukkha* is possible. Since *dukkha* arises from craving and clinging, and since this is rooted in ignorance, liberation from *dukkha* follows from the cessation of ignorance (MN 38:20). This is achieved through direct knowledge (*abhiññā*) of the impermanence, *dukkha* and not-self of all aspects of experience. This knowledge is acquired through gradual training, practice and progress on the Buddha's path, consisting of these stages: "the abandoning of greed and hate, giving vision, giving knowledge, which leads to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to *Nibbāna*" (MN 3.8, 139.5). Husserl's claim regarding the Buddha's epoché concerns the first of these.

3.1 Abandoning Hindrances and Giving Vision: The Buddha's Epoché

The first step on the Buddha's path is developing a state of mind (*citta*) and body (*kāya*) that is "well-disposed for awakening to the truths" (MN 48.8). This requires the *bhikkhu*—someone following the Buddha's path—to abandon all that obstructs them from "see[ing] things as they actually are [*yathābhūtaṃ*]" (MN 48.8), that is, as impermanent, *dukkha* and not-self. They first abandon all daily activities, interests and commitments that arouse desire. They also restrain their mind and senses from habitual craving for and clinging or aversion to all that they experience, and abandon all theoretical speculation about the world (MN 39.8, 48.8). The *bhikkhu* instead devotes themselves to daily acting in full awareness (*sampajānakārī*) of their states of mind, body and whatever they experience. They furthermore practice formal meditation daily, cultivating the ability to maintain a tranquil body as the basis for developing awareness (*sati*) and concentration (*samādhi*) (MN 39).

With repeated effort, the *bhikkhu* attains sequential states of extreme concentration called the four *jhānas*. By the fourth, *upekkhā* (equanimity) is achieved: a neutral attitude towards everything of which they are aware (MN 4. 22-26; Conze 1983, 89-90). They now abide "unattracted, unrepelled, independent, free, dissociated, with a mind free of barriers" and feel "neither-pleasure-nor-pain" (MN 111.4, 4.27). As the *bhikkhu* progresses in meditative practice, they eradicate the fetters of identity view (*sakkāyadiṭṭhi*), doubt (*vicikicchā*), and adherence to rules and observances (*sīlabbataparāmāso*) (MN 2.11). They increasingly do not "form any condition or generate any volition towards either being or non-being" and cease "favouring and opposing" (MN 140.22, 38.40). This is the Buddha's Middle Way (*majjhimā paṭipadā*), culminating in the extinguishment of all attachment and aversion, i.e., *Nibbāna*.

This stepwise process is what Husserl correctly recognises, in his terms, as the performance of an epoché. The Buddha recognises in human life a natural attitude—of attachment and aversion—characterised by ignorance of the nature

of experience and implicit beliefs in the existence of the world and the self. Like Husserl, the Buddha sees that this attitude must be neutralised along with all its beliefs, interests, and habits if direct knowledge of experience is to become possible (Depraz and Varela 2003, 215; Schuhmann 2005, 147; Lau 2016, 62; Gokhale 2018, 452).³

Husserl recognises in the Buddha's teachings that one can "exercise the epoché 'theoretically' as well as practically" (Husserl 2017, 414). However, there is a key difference between Husserl's epoché and the Buddha's analogous epoché. Husserl states that all previous habits of thought as well as mental barriers or psychological resistances must be overcome by the epoché (Husserl 2012, 2, 134). Yet Husserl provides no instructions as to bodily techniques, ethical conduct and way of life for doing so (Depraz and Varela 2003, 228; Varela et al. 2016, 19, 27-28; Bitbol 2019, 138-140), that is, for performing the epoché "practically." This neglect arguably marks a weaker formulation of the epoché. A phenomenologist who follows Husserl's instructions alone would conceivably fail to suspend many interests, habits and prejudices bound up with the practicalities of daily life and bodily conduct. These would obstruct a phenomenologist's purely theoretical investigation of consciousness. Indeed, the idea that pure theory is possible apart from bodily and ethical praxis may be one of these unsuspected prejudices.

Unlike Husserl, the Buddha details techniques for increasing the scope and consistency of the epoché by transforming one's daily way of life and embodied way of habitually seeing and acting in the world. The Buddha details the bodily conduct to be observed in everyday life—instructing a life of homelessness in community with other *bhikkhus*, moderation in eating, and constant awareness of bodily movements and sensations (MN 39.3-7). He teaches bodily techniques for meditation—e.g., correct posture and control of breathing (MN 10.4)—as the foundation for developing sustained mental awareness and concentration.

Husserl misunderstands the Buddha's focus on bodily techniques and way of life as a purely practical interest. It is instead the case that careful attention to these practicalities is necessary for being mentally and physically capable of gaining direct knowledge of experience. The Buddha is concerned with the development of what the phenomenologist Diego D'Angelo calls "embodied attention" (2019, 961). D'Angelo argues that "those activities usually regarded as 'purely mental' or at least 'purely theoretical' are possible only because the body is in play," and that there are "bodily conditions that need to be met in order to be attentive: a certain posture of the body; the satisfaction of primary needs; and habitualised movements" (965, 974). This is why the Buddha instructs a certain bodily posture in meditation, observances regarding daily needs of the body, and transforming bodily habits. This is the foundation for the sustained

³ Odysseus Stone and Dan Zahavi (2021) correctly argue that mindfulness practice itself does not constitute performing the epoché. I argue it is analogously constituted by all of the Buddha's instructions detailed here.

mental awareness and concentration that allow a *bhikkhu* to study experience (MN 20.8, 32.9, 119.29).

Finally, Husserl claims that the Buddha's performance of the epoché amounts to averting his gaze *away* from the world and that his categorical imperative is a complete theoretical and practical renunciation thereof (Husserl 2017, 414-415). But just as the Husserlian epoché is not a denial of or negative position towards the world, the purpose of relinquishing attachment and aversion to the world is not to turn away from or renounce it (Iyer 2017, 402). Like the phenomenologist, the *bhikkhu* instead aims to achieve a neutral attitude *towards* the experienced world in order to gain knowledge of it.

3.2 Giving Knowledge: The Buddha's Transcendentalism

I will now evaluate Husserl's claim that the Buddha—via the epoché—achieves a transcendental view of the world but gains no further knowledge because he is limited by his purely practical interest in *Nibbāna* (Husserl 2017, 407, 414). Husserl consequently asserts that the Buddha could not develop a universal science of being. Yet Husserl, without explanation, ascribes the seeing of essences in fantasy to the Buddha (409, 414)—two crucial aspects of this science. It is outside this article's scope to provide a detailed analysis of these aspects needed to evaluate Husserl's ascription of them to the Buddha. However, while henceforth evaluating Husserl's aforesaid claim concerning the Buddha's transcendentalism, knowledge, and goal of *Nibbāna*, I suggest related points in the *Majjhima Nikāya* that are comparable to seeing and categorising essences in fantasy.

I shall first assess whether the Buddha achieves a transcendental standpoint. The Buddha “teaches the *Dhamma* through direct knowledge, not without direct knowledge ... with a sound basis, not without a sound basis” (MN 77.12). The *Dhamma* refers to the Buddha's teachings, and its sound basis is a theoretical framework: a system of conceptual classifications of consciousness (experience in general). Direct knowledge is strictly of the nature of the *bhikkhu*'s own direct experience (Anālayo 2003, 46)—“only of what [they] have known, seen, and understood for [themselves]” and “is visible here and now” (MN 38.24-25). As is the case for Husserl's science, the Buddha thereby delimits consciousness as the exclusive field of investigation and what is directly experienced as his only evidence. This feasibly constitutes a transcendental reduction (see Nizamis 2012, 195, 225).⁴

The Buddha teaches several classificatory schemes that account for the totality of *dhammas* (phenomena) that constitute experience (Gethin 1986, 48).⁵ The most general classifications are *nāmarūpa* and *viññāṇa* (MN 9.54). *Nā-*

⁴ Eugen Fink, assistant to Husserl, remarked that “the various phases of Buddhist self-discipline were essentially phases of phenomenological reduction” (Cairns 1976, 50).

⁵ The five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) and seven enlightenment factors (*bojjhaṅgas*) classify states of mind. The five aggregates (*khandhas*) and twelve spheres (*āyatanas*) classify aspects of experience. The twelve links (*nidānas*) and Four Noble Truths (*ariyasaccāni*) detail the fact of *dukkha*, its origin, cessation, and how it ceases.

marūpa is divided into *nāma* (mentality)—sub-classified into *vedanā* (feeling), *saññā* (perception), *cetanā* (volition), *phassa* (contact) and *manaskāra* (attention)—and *rūpa* (materiality) which is the physical world as experienced by the conscious subject (Gethin 1986, 36). *Vīññāṇa* designates the consciousness of the subject in distinction from the object of consciousness (Somaratne 2005, 169).

Here, I find further reason for Husserl to state that the Buddha achieves a transcendental view of consciousness (Husserl 2005, 145; 2017, 414). The Buddha states that “with the arising of consciousness there is arising of mentality-materiality” (MN 9.54). This is comparable to Husserl’s assertion that the world is a mere phenomenon in subjectivity, i.e., that it only arises with consciousness. In this sense, consciousness is transcendental. The Buddha continues: “have I not stated in many ways consciousness to be dependently arisen, since without a condition there is not origination of consciousness? ... consciousness is reckoned by the particular condition dependent upon which it arises” (MN 38.5). This is comparable to Husserl’s assertion that the essence of consciousness is intentionality, i.e., that consciousness is only consciousness of something or only arises on the condition that it is of or about something (see Depraz and Varela 2003, 225; Prosser 2013, 153; Nizamis 2012, 226).

Within the Husserlian framework, the intentional ‘something’ need not be a perceptual object but may otherwise be a non-perceptual phenomenon such as a feeling, wish, judgement, concept, etc. (see, e.g., Husserl 2012, 170-172). There may otherwise be consciousness of non-objectual aspects of experience such as the temporal flow of consciousness and the kinaesthetic sensations of the body (see, e.g., Husserl 1960, 41-43, 97-98; 2012, 164-168).⁶ In *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis: Lectures on Transcendental Logic*, Husserl also develops the idea that while the Ego is actively directed towards objects of consciousness, as its foregrounded themes of attention, it is also passively conscious of or ‘receptive’ to a field of backgrounded *pre-constitutive* and *objectlike formations*. These are not objects proper, but rather units of hyletic, i.e., sensuous data—such as a patch of colour or loud bang—that are more or less prominent in relation to one another (Husserl 2001, 210-11, 215, 312, 288).⁷

It has occasionally and controversially been claimed in Buddhist scholarship that there can be states of “pure consciousness” (see Griffiths 1990, 71-97; Collins 1982, 246-247; Smith 2011, 480-482; Sharf 2016, 779-788). In short, this is claimed to be consciousness of nothing except consciousness itself, that is, in absence of

⁶ Rudolf Bernet argues that cases such as these, as developed in Husserl’s work, can be construed as “intentionality without objects.” Bernet includes “the non-objectifying intentionality of the relation to the world” – consciousness of the pre-given world in general – and “the impressional intentionality of self-relation” – the Ego’s pre-reflexive consciousness of itself – as instances of ‘intentionality without objects’ (Bernet 1994, 244-51).

⁷ *Analyses* are published notes from lectures given by Husserl between 1920 and 1926. They are thus near in his intellectual history to the publication of his two Buddha texts in 1925 and 1926.

any phenomena. This would mean that it *lacks intentionality*.⁸ Buddhist scholars who hold pure consciousness to be possible may thus take issue with my characterisation of the Buddha as holding a transcendental view of consciousness akin to that of Husserl, even after I have detailed above that intentionality does not have to be of perceptual objects or objects as such in the Husserlian framework.

I cannot here extensively critique claims of pure consciousness defined as lacking all intentionality. But I can say that the Buddha does not claim in the *Middle Length Discourses* that there can be pure consciousness (see Gombrich 2006, 43-45). Moreover, the Buddha holds an arguably antithetical position. In the *Cūḷasuññata Sutta* (MN 121), the Buddha describes how a *bhikkhu* may progress through the *arūpa jhānas*. These are ever deeper stages of concentration (*samādhi*) that thereby entail progressively more minimal states of consciousness in terms of ever fewer phenomena present, while what is present as the focus of the next *jhāna* are increasingly non-objectual and formless spheres of experience (*arūpa-āyatanas*).⁹ However, the *bhikkhu* ultimately finds upon reaching the final stage of “signless concentration of mind” that then “there is present only this amount of disturbance, namely, that connected with the six bases [sense-spheres] that are dependent on this body and conditioned by life” (121.10). Thus, this state is in fact “conditioned and volitionally produced” (121.11). The *bhikkhu* accordingly finds that even their most supremely ‘pure’ state of consciousness still depends upon the presence of phenomena to arise, however radically few and formless they may be. This can be read as a realisation of the transcendental nature of consciousness that is also antithetical to claims that there is any such state as pure consciousness.¹⁰

I thus find strong reason to posit that the Buddha’s view of consciousness is comparable to Husserl’s transcendental position that consciousness is essentially always consciousness of something, i.e., defined by intentionality not restricted to perceptual or objectual phenomena. This is so if one considers both

8 See Metzinger (2020) for a recent philosophical study of pure consciousness that is not specific to the Buddhist context.

9 The *arūpa-āyatanas* are as follows: perception of the base of infinite space, perception of the base of infinite consciousness, perception of the base of nothingness, perception of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, and finally attention to the signless concentration of mind (MN 121.6-10).

10 Progressing through the *arūpa jhānas* may, however, also be practiced to attain “the cessation of perception and feeling” (*saññāvedayitanirodha*) rather than signless concentration of mind (MN 25.20, 44.16-21, 111.19-20). Then, the *bhikkhu*’s “bodily formations have ceased and subsided, his verbal formations have ceased and subsided, his mental formations have ceased and subsided, but his vitality is not exhausted, his heat has not been dissipated, and his faculties become exceptionally clear” (43.25). This may seem like a candidate for pure consciousness. However, this would be a highly questionable characterisation since it is a state that in lacking all, perception, feeling, as well as all bodily, verbal and mental formations (*saṅkhāra*) can hardly be identified as a conscious state in the sense of the *bhikkhu* actually being aware of being in it (see Griffiths 1990, 78-85; Somaratne 2022, 214). I cannot debate this here, but at least suggest that it may be more apt to describe the cessation of perception and feeling as a temporary absence of consciousness, though the *bhikkhu* remains physically alive during it. It seems that the *bhikkhu* can only recollect a “gap” in consciousness, so to speak, once they have “emerged mindful” from it with exceptionally clear faculties (MN 44.16-21, 111.19-20). That is, upon the arising once more of perceptions, feelings, and the bodily, verbal and mental formations.

the Buddha's assertions concerning that consciousness is dependently co-arisen with mentality-materiality and his descriptions of how the most phenomenally minimal state of consciousness that can be achieved is nonetheless dependently co-arisen with mentality-materiality—for, as I will clarify below, this includes the six sense-spheres.

Beyond identifying the fundamental correlation of consciousness and materiality-mentality, a central scheme by which the Buddha *further* classifies all possible aspects of experience is that of the five aggregates (*khandhas*). Belonging to materiality, this includes *rūpa* (material form) and, belonging to mentality, this includes *vedanā* (feelings), *saññā* (perception), *saṅkhāra* (volitional formations) and *viññāṇa* (consciousness) (MN 10.38). These are sub-classified according to the six sense-spheres (*saḷāyatanas*) in which any phenomenon can arise. Here, phenomena are determined according to their condition for arising, e.g., there are six classes of *viññāṇa* determined according to the contact between the specific sense-faculty and sense-object that they arise from (MN 38.8). Furthermore, each aggregate is defined as dependently arisen with every other.¹¹

This short description of the five aggregates demonstrates that Husserl is wrong to assert that the Buddha's knowledge of experience extends no further than proving the transcendental standpoint. The knowledge that consciousness and the world are dependently arisen is not sufficient for achieving *Nibbāna*. Rather, all possible aspects of experience must be further classified and investigated so that direct knowledge can be gained of their impermanence, *dukkha* and not-self. The Buddha presents himself as a guide on the path to *Nibbāna* (MN 51.14) and provides a classificatory map of experience, the sound basis of the *Dhamma*, for reaching this end (Shulman 2014, 124). This serves a similar function to Husserl's doctrine of categories; providing conceptual classifications for identifying and investigating all possible aspects of experience. I will now describe how the *bhikkhu* can thereby achieve *Nibbāna*.

3.3 Direct Knowledge, Peace and Enlightenment: The Investigation-of-dhammas (*dhammavicaya*)

The *bhikkhu* first surveys their experience in daily life and formal meditation. As the Buddha details in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* (MN 10), the *bhikkhu* in formal meditation initially operates in the mode of *sati*. This denotes a heightened awareness of the body (*kāya*), feelings (*vedanā*), mind (*citta*) and *dhammas* (phenomena). In this mode, the *bhikkhu* does not interfere with or react to whatever they experience. They begin with mindfulness of breathing and then contemplate the body as body, feelings as feelings, mind as mind, and *dhammas* as *dhammas*. This means identifying them just as they appear, and noting their aspects and variations as they arise and vanish to view (MN 10.1-35). In Husserlian terms, the *bhikkhu* operates within the epoché, remaining neutral towards

¹¹All the above classifications are detailed in MN 9, 18, 28, 38, 43, 59, 78 and 148.

whatever they experience, and the transcendental reduction, taking what they directly experience as their only evidence.

The *bhikkhu* next shifts their awareness from the individual characteristics of a particular phenomenon to its general features as a certain type of phenomenon (Anālayo 2003, 93). While *dhammas* can generally mean directly experienced phenomena, at this stage of *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation, *dhammas* means “ideas” or “mind-objects” contemplated in meditation (Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi 2009, 54).¹² They are mental representations of directly experienced phenomena. The *bhikkhu* classifies these *dhammas* according to what is seen to be their general nature or characteristic quality (MN 10.36-45; Anālayo 2003, 182-186). This procedure is comparable to the phenomenologist categorising the essences of ideal phenomena in fantasy.

Having surveyed and classified the *dhammas*, the *bhikkhu* “investigates and examines” *dhammas* “with wisdom and embarks upon a full inquiry into” them (MN 118.31). The aim is now to attain direct knowledge of the impermanence, *dukkha* and not-self of all *dhammas* constituting all possible experience. The *bhikkhu* thereby sees that all *dhammas* classified into the five aggregates are impermanent and subject to change, and are thus *dukkha* because they cannot satisfy craving and clinging (Vetter 1988, 40). The *bhikkhu* tests the thesis that the self is permanent, eternal and not subject to change, finding that there is nothing in experience that has this nature. They thus see that all five aggregates are not-self because they lack the permanence, independent existence and unchangeability that a self should have. Since the *bhikkhu* discovers that they can experience nothing other than the five aggregates, they find that the self is nowhere to be seen (MN 22.16-29).¹³

The *bhikkhu* furthermore sees that they cannot grasp their meditative states of mind as the self. For they see that even the most concentrated and neutral state of mind “is connected with the six bases that are dependent on this body and conditioned by life” and that it is “conditioned and volitionally produced. But whatever is conditioned and volitionally produced is impermanent, subject to cessation” (MN 121.10-11). In other words, the *bhikkhu* sees that all that constitutes experience is impermanent, that their mind is conditioned by experience, and thus that any possible state of mind is impermanent and cannot be grasped as the self.

¹²The Buddha uses the term *dhamma* in many distinct ways (see Gethin 2004).

¹³An open question is whether Husserl's notion of the pure Ego is compatible with the Buddha's assertion of not-self. I suggest that Husserl's statements that the pure Ego cannot be found as a part of experience, that consciousness is co-constituted by experience of the world, and that every act of consciousness shapes the character of the pure Ego, could be interpreted as meaning that the pure Ego has no independent, permanent or unchanging existence (Husserl 1960, 26–29, 36, 54, 65; 2012, 111, 163). Thus, it might not be construed as the self that the Buddha rejects. However, Husserl's egological conception of consciousness has been strongly critiqued within the phenomenological tradition. Aron Gurwitsch (1941) notably argues that Husserl is wrong to conceive of the ego as the necessary centre of the field of consciousness, and of the latter as being structured by egoic acts of consciousness performed from the ego's privileged place therein.

It is with the final knowledge that everything constituting experience is impermanent, *dukkha* and not-self that the *bhikkhu* achieves enlightenment (*bodhi*). Upon eradicating all ignorance of the nature of experience, they are liberated from all false beliefs about it (MN 121.11). No longer believing that there is anything permanent, independently existing, not subject to change and the self, they do not cling to and crave any aspect of experience as if it were. All craving and clinging is thus extinguished and, the former being its cause, all *dukkha* ceases. This is *Nibbāna* here and now.

3.4 *Nibbāna* and Knowledge

Husserl is right to say that the Buddha's interest in investigating consciousness is not purely theoretical. The goal is to achieve *Nibbāna* and not simply to develop a theory of consciousness. But the question can now be raised as to whether, as Husserl claims, *Nibbāna* is a purely practical goal that limits knowledge of consciousness. The Buddha states that "destruction of the taints is for one who knows and sees, not for one who does not know and see" (MN 2.3), and his classificatory schemes, which structure this knowing and seeing (Shulman 2014, 124), cover all possible aspects of experience. Achieving the so-called purely practical goal of *Nibbāna* thus requires universal knowledge of consciousness on the basis of knowing the Buddha's theoretical framework. The goal of *Nibbāna* therefore does not limit but motivates and requires theoretical knowledge of consciousness (Sinha 1971, 259).

In any case, Husserl's distinction between the purely theoretical and purely practical is inapplicable to the Buddha's soteriology. *Nibbāna* means being "completely liberated through final knowledge" (MN 107.11) that is gained by dedicating one's life to knowing the *Dhamma* and applying it to investigating consciousness. Here, there is no distinction between pure theory and pure praxis. The *bhikkhu* transforms their bodily and ethical conduct and way of life in order to investigate consciousness. In turn, this investigation transforms their bodily and ethical conduct and way of life as they gradually cease their attachment and aversion to all aspects of experience through directly knowing their impermanence, *dukkha*, and not-self.

Nonetheless, Husserl's claim that the Buddha cannot develop a universal science of being still stands. But, as I have shown, the Buddha performs the epoché and transcendental reduction, and thereby establishes consciousness as his exclusive field of investigation. He may identify essences in fantasy, and his classificatory schemes may function similarly to Husserl's doctrine of categories. The only criterion for a universal science of being not met by the Buddha is to have a purely theoretical interest in consciousness. Since all the above criteria have been met or at least indicated, it becomes questionable whether a purely theoretical interest is a necessary criterion for this science and whether the goal of *Nibbāna* is incompatible with it.

Moreover, *Nibbāna* refers to two distinct moments in the life of a *bhikkhu*, which Husserl does not recognise. *Nibbāna* here and now—during life—concerns liberation from *dukkha*. This is when a *bhikkhu* becomes an *arahant* (liberated person). This is the end of the path, the point at which a *bhikkhu* does “not ... still have work to do with diligence” (MN 70.12). But the attainment of *Nibbāna* is not the end of their life, which is *parinibbāna*. In the context of rebirth—perpetuated by craving and clinging—this denotes the final cessation of the five aggregates upon the death of the *arahant* and their consequent liberation from rebirth (Collins 1998, 143; Brahmāli 2009, 33).

Arahantship refers to a new way of life that begins with *Nibbāna*. An *arahant* experiences the very same world that they did before (MN 1.51-171). But they now abide in a radically heightened awareness of and neutral attitude towards it that is free of *dukkha*. Although *arahants* have completed the path, the Buddha states that they continue living a secluded life and practicing meditation because they “see a pleasant abiding for [themselves] here and now, and [they] have compassion for future generations” (MN 36.34). Meditative practice in itself gives them bliss and satisfaction (Anālayo 2003, 272). Having done what has to be done concerning liberation from *dukkha*, an *arahant* is not only able to continue developing their knowledge of consciousness along with their capacity for awareness and concentration (Engelmajer 2003, 33, 49; Anālayo 2003, 273), but to do so freely of any ulterior interests—the very thing that Husserl claims that the Buddha’s path does not allow. It is thus the case that even post-*Nibbāna* there is no limitation of knowledge.

Husserl states that the Buddha’s teachings are “certainly not a science that ensues from a theoretical interest, a ‘free’ science, a ‘purposeless’ science, a ‘play’ of leisure in opposition to the ‘seriousness of life’” (Husserl 2017, 410). Yet this could describe the meditative practice of an *arahant*—bar the question of scientific method—who leisurely delights therein, no longer has any other purpose for doing so, and does so freely of the seriousness of life that is *dukkha*. An *arahant* is also free to continue living within a community of *bhikkhus* in order to guide others to *Nibbāna*. Thus, contrary to Husserl’s view, the Buddha’s path does not lead to a categorical renunciation of the world, but rather to a transformed way of living therein.

4 Conclusion

Although Husserl’s ascriptions of the performance of an epoché and transcendentalism to the Buddha are supported by evidence from the *Majjhima Nikāya*, Husserl’s distinction between pure theory and pure praxis leads him to misconstrue the purpose of the Buddha’s epoché, the extent of knowledge that the Buddha gains from the transcendental viewpoint, and the nature of *Nibbāna*. It

finally seems that Husserl and the Buddha's approaches to consciousness diverge in their respective scientific and soteriological goals, and that Husserl's distinction between pure theory and pure praxis renders them incommensurable. By way of conclusion, I suggest that this is not necessarily the case.

In the *Kaizo* articles (1922-1924), Husserl states that the continual dissatisfaction of human life can be rationally overcome. This requires the phenomenologist, as also indicated in "Socrates-Buddha," to ground all their goals, values and interests on the scientific knowledge gained by phenomenological investigation, such as that the irrational striving for what is falsely expected to satisfy is ceased (Husserl 1989, 1-13, 30-31; 2017, 411-413). Hence, phenomenology has a soteriological character (Lau 2016, 150). Husserl even states in the *Crisis* that "the total phenomenological attitude and the epoché are destined to effect, a complete personal transformation, comparable at the beginning to a religious conversion," and that "a thoroughly new way of life" is attained (Husserl 1970, 137, 150). Similarly, to overcome *dukkha*, a *bhikkhu's* entire life must become grounded, via the Buddha's epoché, on knowledge of consciousness. This brings about a complete personal transformation and new way of life culminating in *Nibbāna* and further developing in *arahantship*.

Furthermore, Husserl arguably abandons his distinction between pure theory and pure praxis in the *Crisis*, for here the scientific investigation of consciousness is understood as simultaneously bringing about a complete transformation of life. Husserl can be seen to thereby approach the view of the Buddha who extensively developed the transformative potential of investigating consciousness. However, Husserl still neglects the development of bodily and ethical conduct for performing the epoché, and so the feasibility of thereby beginning a completely transformed and satisfactory way of life is questionable. For, as I have argued, this neglect leaves in place misguided interests, habits and prejudices that are bound up with bodily attachments and aversions of daily life and that cause *dukkha*.

I propose that by engaging with the Buddha's teachings from where Husserl, due to his misunderstandings, left off, phenomenologists can explore whether phenomenology can feasibly become a way of life—especially by incorporating the bodily techniques and way of life taught by the Buddha into their performance of the epoché. Granted, Husserl never wavered in his view that the scientific character of European philosophy, epitomised by phenomenology, is superior to Indian thought. But I have shown that this view is based on misunderstandings of the Buddha's teachings. If, as Husserl states in "Socrates-Buddha," "science is the supra-national, common good of all peoples, who want to raise themselves to an autonomous knowledge" (Husserl 2017, 408), then this should not mean a hegemonic domination of European philosophy. Rather, as Husserl proclaimed upon first encountering the Buddha's teachings, "from now on it will be our destiny to blend that Indian way of thinking which is completely

new to us, with the one which for us is old, but which in this confrontation becomes alive again and strengthened" (Husserl 2005, 145).

References

- Bernet, Rudolf. 1994. "An Intentionality Without Subject or Object?" *Man and World* 27: 231–55.
- Bhikkhu Anālayo. 2003. *Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization*. Birmingham: Windhorse Publications.
- Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans. 2009. *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*. Fourth ed., *Teachings of the Buddha*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- Bhikkhu Brahmāli. 2009. "What the *Nikāyas* Say and Do Not Say about *Nibbāna*." *Buddhist Studies Review* 26 (1): 33–66.
- Bitbol, Michel. 2019. "Consciousness, Being and Life: Phenomenological Approaches to Mindfulness." *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 50: 127–61.
- Cairns, Dorion. 1976. *Conversations with Husserl and Fink*. Dordrecht: Springer Science + Business Media.
- Collins, Steven. 1982. *Selfless Persons: Imagery and Thought in Theravāda Buddhism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1998. *Nirvana and Other Buddhist Felicities: Utopias of the Pali Imaginaire*. Vol. 12, *Cambridge Studies in Religious Traditions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Conze, Edward. 1983. *Buddhist Thought in India: Three Phases of Buddhist Philosophy*. Second ed. London: George Allen and Unwin.
- Čopelj, Erol. 2022. *Phenomenological Reflections on Mindfulness in the Buddhist Tradition*. London and New York: Routledge.
- de Warren, Nicolas. 2015. "Concepts without Pedigree: The Noema and Neutrality Modification." In *Commentary on Husserl's Ideas I*, edited by Andrea Staiti, 225–56. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Depraz, Natalie, and Francisco J. Varela. 2003. "Wisdom Traditions and the Ways of Reduction." In *On Becoming Aware: A Pragmatics of Experiencing*, edited by Natalie Depraz, Francisco J. Varela and Pierre Vermersch, 205–32. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Depraz, Natalie. 2019. "Epoché in Light of Samatha-Vipassanā Meditation: Chögyam Trungpa's Buddhist Teaching Facing Husserl's Phenomenology." *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 26 (7–8): 49–69.
- D'Angelo, Diego. 2019. "The Phenomenology of Embodied Attention." *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 19: 961–78.
- Engelmajer, Pascale. 2003. "Perfect or Perfecting? Reflections on the Arahant in the *Nikāyas*." *Contemporary Buddhism* 4 (1): 33–54.
- Gethin, Rupert. 1986. "The Five Khandhas: Their Treatment in the *Nikāyas* and Early Abhidhamma." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 14: 35–53.
- . 2004. "He Who Sees Dhamma Sees Dhammas: Dhamma in Early Buddhism." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 32: 513–42.

- Gokhale, Pradeep P. 2018. "Buddhism and Phenomenology: With Special Reference to Mindfulness Meditation." *Horizon Studies in Phenomenology* 7 (2): 452-71.
- Gombrich, Richard. 2006. *How Buddhism Began: The Conditioned Genesis of the Early Teachings*. Second. New York: Routledge.
- Griffiths, Paul J. 1990. "Pure Consciousness and Indian Buddhism." In *The Problem of Pure Consciousness: Mysticism and Philosophy*, edited by Robert K. C. Forman, 71-97. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gurwitsch, Aron. 1941. "A Non-Egological Conception of Consciousness." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 1 (3): 325-38.
- Hanna, Fred J. 1993. "The Transpersonal Consequences of Husserl's Phenomenological Method." *The Humanistic Psychologist* 21 (1): 41-57.
- . 1995. "Husserl on the Teachings of the Buddha." *The Humanistic Psychologist* 23 (3): 365-72.
- Hanna, Fred J., Brett D. Wilkinson, and Joel Givens. 2017. "Recovering the Original Phenomenological Research Method: An Exploration of Husserl, Yoga, Buddhism, and New Frontiers in Humanistic Counselling." *Humanistic Counseling* 56 (2): 144-62.
- Husserl, Edmund. 1960. *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*. Translated by Dorion Cairns. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.
- . 1970. *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*. Translated by David Carr, *Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- . 1989. *Aufsätze und Vorträge (1922-1937)*. Vol. XXVII, *Husserliana*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- . 2001. *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis: Lectures on Transcendental Logic*. Translated by Anthony J. Steinbock. Edmund Husserl Collected Works. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- . 2005. "Über die Reden Gotamo Buddhos." Translated by Karl Schuhmann. In *Karl Schuhmann: Selected Papers on Phenomenology*, edited by Cees Leijenhorst and Piet Steenbakkers, 144-46. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- . 2012. *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*. Translated by W. R. Boyce Gibson. London and New York: Routledge Classics.
- . 2017. "Socrates-Buddha." Translated by Arun Iyer. In *The New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy*, edited by Burt C. Hopkins and John J. Drummond, 402-15. London: Routledge.
- Iyer, Arun. 2017. "Socrates-Buddha: Translators Introduction." In *The New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy*, edited by Burt C. Hopkins and John J. Drummond, 398-402. London: Routledge.
- Larrabee, M. J. 1981. "The One and the Many: Yogācāra Buddhism and Husserl." *Philosophy East and West* 31 (1): 3-15.
- Lau, Kwok-Ying. 2016. *Phenomenology and Intercultural Understanding: Toward a New Cultural Flesh*. Cham: Springer. <https://link-springer-com.ru.idm.oclc.org/book/10.1007%2F978-3-319-44764-3#about>.
- Li, Jingjing. 2016. "Buddhist Phenomenology and the Problem of Essence." *Comparative Philosophy* 7 (1): 59-89.

- Lusthaus, Dan. 2002. *Buddhist Phenomenology: A Philosophical Investigation of Yogācāra Buddhism and the Ch'eng Wei-Shih Lun*. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Martin, Ben. 2015. "A Map of the Noesis-Noema Correlation." In *Commentary on Husserl's Ideas I*, edited by Andrea Staiti, 329-36. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Metzinger, Thomas. 2020. "Minimal Phenomenal Experience: Meditation, Tonic Alertness, and the Phenomenology of 'Pure' Consciousness." *Philosophy and the Mind Sciences* 1 (1) 7: 1-44.
- Ni, Liangkang. 2011. "Husserl und der Buddhismus." *Husserl Studies* 27: 143-60.
- Nizamis, Khristos. 2012. "'I' without 'I am': On the Presence of Subjectivity in Early Buddhism, in the Light of Transcendental Phenomenology." *Buddhist Studies Review* 29 (2): 175-250.
- Patrik, Linda E. 1994. "Phenomenological Method and Meditation." *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* 26 (1): 37-54.
- Prosser, Aaron. 2013. "Siddhartha, Husserl, and Neurophenomenology: An Enquiry into Consciousness and Intentionality." *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 20 (5-6): 151-70.
- Sharf, Robert H. 2016. "Is Yogācāra Phenomenology? Some Evidence from the 'Cheng Weishi Lun'." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 44 (4): 777-807.
- Schuhmann, Karl. 2005. "Husserl and Indian Thought." In *Karl Schuhmann: Selected Papers on Phenomenology*, edited by Cees Leijenhorst and Piet Steenbakkers, 137-62. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Shulman, Eviatar. 2014. *Rethinking the Buddha: Early Buddhist Philosophy as Meditative Perception*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Sinha, Debabrata. 1971. "Theory and Practice in Indian Thought: Husserl's Observations." *Philosophy East and West* 21 (3): 255-64.
- Smith, David Woodruff. 2011. "Nibbana (or Pure) Consciousness and Beyond." *Philosophia* 39: 475-91.
- Somaratne, G. A. 2005. "Citta, Manas and Viññāṇa: Aspects of Mind as Presented in Early Buddhist Pāli Discourses." In *Dhamma-Vinaya: Essays in Honours of Venerable Professor Dhammavihari (Jotiya Dhirasekera)*, edited by Toshichi Endo, Asanga Tilakaratne, G. A. Somaratne and Sanat Nānāyakkāra, 169-202. Colombo: Sri Lanka Association for Buddhist Studies.
- . 2022. *An Introduction to Buddhist Soteriology: Freedom of Mind and Freedom by Wisdom*. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Stone, Odysseus, and Dan Zahavi. 2021. "Phenomenology and Mindfulness." *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 28 (3-4): 158-85.
- The Pali Text Society. 2008. "The Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary." Digital Dictionaries of South East Asia. Last modified March 2021. <http://dsal.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/>.
- Varela, Francisco J., Evan Thompson, and Eleanor Rosch. 2016. *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive and Human Experiences*. Second ed. Cambridge and London: The MIT Press.
- Vetter, Tilmann. 1988. *The Ideas and Meditative Practices of Early Buddhism*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.