Philosophy and Phenomenological Research
Vol. XLIX, No. 4, June 1989

Was Husserl a Nominalist?

J. P. MORELAND
Liberty University

Students of Husserl are divided when it comes to stating his theory of universals. Was Husserl a realist or a nominalist? On the realist side are philosophers like Dallas Willard who has argued that ". . . it is obvious that Ideas (universals, 'species', essences) and the viewing and analyzing thereof form the substance of his entire philosophy."[1] On the nominalist side there are those who would agree with Gustav Bergmann when he claimed that ". . . Husserl made two major mistakes. For one, he is a nominalist."[2]

The purpose of this article is to argue that Husserl was realist. There are a number of issues relevant to proving this point. But in my opinion, the most important issue in the debate about Husserl's view of universals is his doctrine of moments. By focusing on different ways of assaying a Husserlian moment, the main issues in the realist/nominalist debate will become clear and, I hope, the strength of the realist case will be enhanced.

Realism, Nominalism, and Quality Agreement

Consider the following case of quality agreement. Suppose we have before us two red and round spots. Let us call them Socrates and Plato. Socrates and Plato have the same *infimae species* of redness and roundness. Further, let us refer to the redness of Socrates and the redness of Plato as red_1 and red_2, respectively.

There are three broad schools of thought as to how quality agreement is to be explained. First, extreme nominalism denies the existence of qualities by giving a reductive analysis of them according to the following biconditional:

---

[1] Dallas Willard, *Logic and the Objectivity of Knowledge* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1984), p. 187.

[2] Gustav Bergmann, *Logic and Reality* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), p. 194.

a has the quality F, if and only if, Q

Q can refer to predicates, concepts, sets of concrete particulars (F-things like Socrates and Plato), and the like. For example, states of affairs like the-F-of-a, e.g. the-redness-of-Socrates, are analyzed as meaning that a is a concrete particular in the set of F-things. Socrates is in the set of concrete particulars whose membership is red things. Or Q might be spelled out by saying that the predicate "red" is true of a or that a satisfies the function "x is red." This version of nominalism is often called *extreme* nominalism because it denies the existence of qualities altogether.

A second school of thought is nominalism. Nominalists acknowledge the existence of qualities but deny that they are universals. According to nominalism, qualities are abstract particulars, e.g. the-redness-of-Socrates is not numerically identical to the-redness-of-Plato. Rather, each spot has a particular entity in it (red_1 in Socrates and red_2 in Plato) which is not multiply exemplifiable. Red_1 and red_2 are quality-instances which stand to one another in the relation of exact similarity and they are simples — basic, fundamental entities which have no constituents (including natures) as parts. Quality-instances have been given various labels, among them are tropes, abstract particulars, perfect particulars, and cases.

Currently, two major varieties of nominalism exist. First, there is the nominalism of Keith Campbell.[3] According to Campbell, the "universal" redness is a set whose members are all and only the abstract particulars which stand to one another in the relation of exact similarity. The relation between the "universal" redness and red_1 or red_2 is the ϵ of set membership. It will be made clear later that if Husserl is a nominalist, his nominalism is not of this variety. Whatever else one wants to say about Husserl's view of Ideal entities, they were not sets which stand to their members in the relation of set membership.

A second variety of nominalism is one which can be identified with the views of Nicholas Wolterstorff and Michael Loux (in the category of substance)[4] According to Wolterstorff, red_1 and red_2 are simple entities called cases which exactly resemble one another. But the "universal" redness is not to be construed as a set (where a set is taken nonreductively as an abstract entity). Rather, it is an abstract entity called a kind. A kind has

---

[3] For an analysis and criticism of Campbell's form of nominalism, see J. P. Moreland, *Universals, Qualities, and Quality-Instances* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1985), pp. 37-133.

[4] See Nicholas Wolterstorff, *On Universals* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970); Michael Loux, *Substance and Attribute* (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1978).

two similarities and two differences when it is compared to a set. First, kinds are like sets in that cases are *members* of their kinds. Sets are entities to which members belong. Similarly, universals are kinds to which members *belong* and the relation between a kind and a case of that kind is a primitive relation called a type/token relation. Redness is not a constituent in red_1, viz., its nature. Rather, red_1 is "in" (i.e. "is a member or token of") redness. Second, there are kinds of kinds (the kind "color" includes the kind "red") just as there are sets of sets (the set of all sets with ten members includes the set of natural numbers from one to ten).

Despite these similarities, Wolterstorff holds that there are two differences between sets and kinds. First, no set could have had different members from the ones it does have since the identity conditions for a set involve its having just the members it does, in fact, have. But kinds could have had different cases from the ones they do have. For example, there might have been current examples of the kind, Dodo, though it is now extinct. Similarly, there might have been more lions than have actually obtained, but this would not have changed the kind "lion." Second, while sets are identical just in case they have the same membership, a kind is not like this. Nonidentical kinds may be coextensive in their membership. For example, the Dodo and the Passenger Pigeon are different kinds that have the same number of current members, namely, zero. When someone classifies Husserl as a nominalist, they have in mind a view very close to Wolterstorff's.

The third school of thought is realism and has been held by philosophers like Bergmann and Edwin B. Allaire.[5] According to realism, universals are multiply exemplifiable entities which are "present in" or "constituents of" their instances. Redness in in both red_1 and red_2 and it is what makes these instances red. Red_1 is a complex entity with at least three constituents in it: redness, an individuator — usually construed as a bare particular — and a tie of predication.

According to realists, a view like that of Wolterstorff is nominalist in flavor because the "universal" is not a genuine multiply exemplifiable entity in all of its instances. Rather, the "universal" is itself a particular of some sort. Redness is "over and above" its instances which are simples; it

---

[5] Gustav Bergmann, *Realism: A Critique of Brentano and Meinong* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1967); Edwin B. Allaire, "Existence, Independence, and Universals," in *Iowa Publications in Philosophy Vol. I: Essays in Ontology,* ed. Edwin B. Allaire (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963), pp. 3-13. For more on the debate between extreme nominalism, nominalism, and realism, see Michael Loux, *Substance and Attribute,* pp. 3-88; D. M. Armstrong, *Universals and Scientific Realism,* vol. 1: *Nominalism and Realism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

is not truly in each of them as that entity which gives the instances their nature and which grounds the respect of their resemblance.

Irrespective of Husserl's position on the ontological status of qualities and quality-instances, in my opinion the realist view is preferable to nominalism for at least three reasons. First, realism explains the respect of resemblance between red_1 and red_2 while avoiding an infinite regress of resemblance relations by postulating a ground for the resemblance between these two moments, viz., an identical constituent in each one. Second, realism rounds both of the functions that red_1 and red_2 must sustain (resemblance to other red moments and individuation from those other moments) in a universal and a bare particular in each. Realism does not treat red_1 and red_2 as simple entities which, somehow, must sustain both functions. Third, realism clarifies how it is that the universal, redness, is brought together with its instances is such a way that those instances are themselves red. Redness makes red_1 red because redness is *in* red_1 and redness simply is the color of that instance. Returning to Husserl, we will see that a realist understanding of his doctrine of moments renders intelligible, not only the above three features of a moment, but also his treatment of the notion of foundation as it relates to moments.

In sum, our analysis of Husserl will utilize the following understanding of nominalism and realism. A nominalist is one who holds that an entity like redness is outside the being of its instances and not in them as the entity which constitutes their nature. Instances like red_1 and red_2 are simples with no further entities in them, they stand to one another in the relation of exact similarity, and they stand to redness in a primitive type/token relation which is similar to the ϵ of set membership without the extensionality of the latter. When assaying a Husserlian moment, we will call this the Simplicity view.

By contrast, a realist is one who holds that a universal is a multiply exemplifiable constituent *in* its instances. The universal is the essence of those instances and the ground of their resemblance with other instances of the same universal. Thus, red_1 and red_2 are complex entities which have the same nature, redness, and they stand to that nature in a basic relation which is the tie of predication between the redness and a bare particular in each instance. When assaying a Husserlian moment, we will call this the Complexity view.

One further preliminary is in order. In what follows, I will talk as though Husserl either assayed a red moment, red_1, as a simple entity or as a complex entity with redness, the tie of predication, and an individuator in red_1 as constituents. But either view is mistaken if taken as the whole story of Husserl's treatment of a moment like red_1. For Husserl, a red

moment will have, among other things, hue, intensity, saturation (and, perhaps, color and extension) as constituents.

This fact is irrelevant for our purposes, however, since we are focusing on the nature of the universal, redness, how it relates to its moments, and the problem of the individuation of red moments. These same issues could be raised for each of these constituents (except for color and extension, which involve problems about the relationship between higher and lower order universals). So to simplify our investigation, we will disregard hue, intensity, and the like from our analysis.

Husserlian Moments

Would Husserl assay red_1 as a simple entity or as a complex entity? Let us begin by considering arguments for the Simplicity view.

Arguments for the Simplicity View

Argument one: Reinhardt Grossmann argues for the Simplicity view based on a statement from *Investigation* II, which can be paraphrased as follows:[6] We can concentrate our attention on the-green-of-the-tree before us. Let us assume this can be done in such a way that we become unaware of all of its individualizing aspects. In this case, the-green-of-another-tree (of the same shade) could be substituted for the-green-of-this-tree and we would not notice the difference. Nevertheless, inattention to the individuality of the-green-of-this-tree does not remove its particularity. Thus, the-green-of-this-tree is a particular and not a universal, and it is a simple entity which exists here and now, a moment of green.

Argument two: Wolfgang Künne appeals to another argument from the second *Investigation* to support the simplicity view.[7] The argument states that each geometrical fragmentation of, say, a green surface has its own green. Otherwise, we could not talk about the spread of a color over a surface. For example, the green of the top half of the surface is not identical to the green of the bottom half even when they are the same shade. Thus, each fragmentation has its own green, $green_1$, $green_2$, . . . , and these are simple particulars, viz., moments.

---

[6] Reinhardt Grossmann, *The Categorial Structure of the World* (Bloomington: The Indianna University Press, 1983), pp. 107-8. Cf. Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations,* 2 vols., trans. by J. N. Findlay (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), 1: 376-77.

[7] Wolfgang Künne, "Criteria of Abstractness. The Ontologies of Husserl, Frege, and Strawson against the Backdrop of Classical Metaphysics," in *Parts and Moments: Studies in Logic and Formal Ontology,* ed. Barry Smith (Munich: Philosophia Verlag, 1982), p. 423; cf. Husserl, *Logical Investigations,* 1: 377.

Argument three: James Talvite cites yet another argument from *Investigation* II in favor of the Simplicity view.[8] The argument states that certain predicates are true of a species but false and absurd when applied to the moments of that species (and vice versa). For example, a green moment is located in space and time, is spread out, arises and vanishes, and so forth. But none of these things can be truly predicated of the species, green. Thus, green moments are particular entities which are simple.

Argument four: Barry Smith, Peter Simons, and Kevin Mulligan, as well as Reinhardt Grossmann, present an argument which can be summarized in this way:[9] Moments, like red_1, can be the objects of acts of perception. We see red_1 with our very eyes. However, the universal, redness, is not the object of a perceptual act. Rather, it is presented to the mind by a special mental act of eidetic intuition. Thus, redness is not a constituent *contained in* red_1 that can be seen. It is something "over and above" red_1 which is "instanced by" red_1. Thus, red_1 is a simple entity. On the other hand, if the universal redness were itself an object of a perceptual act — say by seeing red_1 — then red_1 would be a complex entity. It would be the redness itself, which exists as a constituent in red_1, that would constitute the latter's redness and serve as the object of a perceptual act which attends to the color of red_1.

There is a similarity in the first three arguments and a general response can be given to them. Simply put, phrases like the-F-of-a are ambiguous and the mere presence of such phrases does little to show that their referents are to be taken as simple entities. For example, phrases like the-F-of-a, say the redness-of-red_1, can be a way of referring to the universal, redness, *in* red_1 as opposed to the shape of red_1 or in contrast to a different shade of color.

Second, the-F-of-a can be taken to refer to a complex entity — redness, a tie of predication, and a bare particular. According to most realists, when a universal is exemplified by a particular to form a complex entity, then this complex entity is itself a particular. This has been called the victory of particularity. Similarly, if a universal is exemplified by a spatio-temporal entity, the complex whole that is formed is itself spatio-temporal. The universal is "in" the complex whole, but this relation is not itself a spatio-temporal one nor is at least one of the entities it relates. Rather, the universal is in the complex whole in some sort of part/whole relation. Thus, the complex moment, red_1, can be a spatio-temporal particular

---

[8] James Alan Talvite, "Properties and Things," (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1977), pp. 196-201; cf. Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, 1: 377.

[9] Kevin Mulligan, Peter Simons, and Barry Smith, "Truth Makers," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 44 (March 1984): 304-6; Grossmann, pp. 110-11.

without one of its constituents — the universal, redness — being a spatio-temporal particular.

So Husserl's arguments regarding moments can be granted without implying that moments like red_1 or $green_1$ are simple. Red_1 can be complex and his arguments could still hold. For example, two moments on the same surface, $green_1$ and $green_2$, are both particular and are not identical to each other even though the greenness *in* each is an identical constituent in both. Husserl may have used phrases like the-F-of-a to refer to simples, but he did not have to use them in that way for arguments one through three to be cogent. And the mere presence of the-F-of-a in these arguments cannot decide the issue, for they are ambiguous.

Regarding argument one, Husserl could be making the simple point that a moment does not become a species by ignoring its particularity. Husserl could still consistently hold that the greenness in each green moment is a universal constituent in those moments, without denying that the moments themselves are numerically distinct particulars. Arguments two and three can be handled in the same sort of way.

In my opinion, argument four is a somewhat more difficult one for a realist. If a moment like $green_1$ is a complex entity, with greenness as one of the constituents *in* it, then when one sees $green_1$, it would be possible to see the greenness in $green_1$. In other words, the Complexity view implies that universals like greenness can be objects of acts of perception. They can be seen with the eyes, for in seeing green moments, it is the greenness in them that constitutes their color.

On the other hand, if $green_1$ is a simple entity, then greenness is somehow instanced *by* $green_1$ without being a constituent *in* it. Greenness itself is in some sense outside of the being of its moments. This, of course, raises problems of how to understand the relation between greenness and $green_1$ in such a way that the universal can be responsible for $green_1$ being *green*. In any case, the Simplicity view seems to imply that one can perceive only $green_1$ with the eyes. Greenness, since it is not literally *in* its moments, cannot be perceived when one looks at them. Greenness must be the object of a mental act or some other sort of perception by means of which it is intuited.

Did Husserl hold that one can perceive a universal with the eyes? It would certainly seem that some statements made by him — which are often overlooked by advocates of the Simplicity view — suggest a positive answer to that question. In sections 2-5 of part I, chapter 1 of *Ideas* I, Husserl states that the essence of an individuum (a particular, a this-here) can be "found in the very own being" of that individuum. In fact, he seems to imply that a thing's universal essence is *at the place* where that individual

is located.[10] The Eidos, the pure essence of an individual "can be exemplified for intuition in experiential data — in data of perception, memory, and so forth."[11]

Taken at face value, it is hard to see what these statements mean if they are not understood along realist lines. As Willard has argued, according to Husserl one "... can *find* — immediately recognize — the same element in many different individuals of the same kind which come before us in intuition."[12] It is true that for Husserl, one may need to see several moments of the same universal before one can have an eidetic intuition of the universal itself. Nevertheless, in such acts of intuition it is the universal itself which is seen as one and the same *in* each of its moments. To my knowledge, the passages cited above have not been adequately treated by advocates of the Simplicity view and they owe us an account of these texts which renders them consistent with that viewpoint.

In sum, the arguments for the Simplicity view listed above are not compelling and, in fact, our examination of the fourth argument has lead us to some passages in Husserl that directly support the Complexity view. Let us now turn to an examination of other arguments for the Complexity view.

Arguments for the Complexity View

The first argument has to do with Husserl's view of the genus/species relations which obtain between higher and lower order universals. In *Ideas* I, Husserl explicitly states that higher order universals are "contained inside" of the more determinate universals lying below them.[13] Elsewhere, he says that ". . . the universal, red, is 'inherent' in the different nuances of red, . . . , 'color' is 'inherent' in red or blue."[14] He calls this relation of inherence a part-whole relation where the higher order universal is contained in the lower order universal.

In another passage in the *Ideas,* Husserl sheds more light on this relation through an example. He says, "Thus, for example, any tone in and of itself has an essence and, highest of all, the universal essence tone as such, or rather sound as such — taken purely as the moment that can be singled out intuitively in the individual tone."[15] This seems to suggest that when

[10] Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book: General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology,* trans. by F. Kersten (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1983), p. 7.

[11] Husserl, *Ideas,* p. 11.

[12] Willard, p. 192.

[13] Husserl, *Ideas,* p. 25.

[14] Husserl, *Ideas,* p. 27.

[15] Husserl, *Ideas,* p. 8.

an individual moment has an essence, it also has the higher order universals contained in that essence. A higher order universal, tone as such, is "in" the *infimae species,* which is the nature of this particular tone by virtue of the fact that a moment of the higher order universal is contained in the lower, more determinate, universal.

This interpretation is confirmed by a statement in *Logical Investigation* III: "The generic 'moment' of colour, for instance, . . . , can only be realized in, . . . , a 'moment' of lowest difference such as red, blue, etc. . . ."[16]

Assume that redness is a first-order universal and color is a second-order universal. Disregarding the constituents of hue, intensity, and brightness, red_1 still cannot be a simple entity for it has, as one of the constituents in it, a moment of the second-order universal, color. Thus, red_1 is a complex entity and the Simplicity view is wrong.

I believe this argument has some value. At the very least, it shows that Husserl's view of the genus/species relations among universals is quite different from the ϵ of set membership used by Keith Campbell, or the kind/case relation employed by Wolterstorff. For Husserl, the genus/species relation is a type of part-whole relation and, thus, red_1 is complex for Husserl in a way that is not true for Campbell and Wolterstorff.

Unfortunately, this is not the kind of complexity a realist wishes to attribute to red_1. As we have already seen, the realist assays the complexity of red_1 so as to include at least one genuine universal which is multiply exemplifiable, redness. And many realists would hold that the second-order universal, color, is a numerically identical constituent in all first-order universals that are colors. But the genus/species relation held to by Husserl makes no clear reference to a one-*in*-many. A defender of the Simplicity view could point out that it is a *moment* of color that is in redness (which, in turn, is tokened by red_1), and this is not a true second-order universal, i.e., a one-*in*-many. It is, at best, a species that has many instances. Or a defender of the Simplicity view could hold that Husserl accepted a constituent ontology in assaying the part-whole relations between higher and lower order universals, but abandoned that framework in his treatment of the relation between first order universals and their moments. So my argument fails to establish the kind of complexity at the level of moments like red_1 involved in the Complexity view.

On the other hand, the above statements by Husserl do seem to indicate that he did not reject a constituent ontology when he assayed the relationship between higher and lower order universals. If Husserl rejected such an ontology at this level, then greenness would not have a moment of

---

[16] Husserl, *Logical Investigations,* 2: 467.

color *in* it; greenness would simply *be* a moment of color. This would be consistent with a Simplicity view analysis of a moment of green$_1$ wherein green$_1$ does not have a moment of greenness *in* it; rather, green$_1$ simply is a moment of greenness. Furthermore, while Husserl may have employed a constituent ontology for relations between higher and lower order universals, and abandoned that framework in his analysis of the relation between an *infimae species* and its moments, surely the burden of proof is on the Simplicity view here. It is more natural and consistent to treat Husserl's view as a constituent ontology throughout.

There is a second argument for the Complexity view based on Husserl's notion of foundation.[17] According to Husserl, color and extension stand in a relation of mutual foundation. That is, one cannot have a moment of some color without there also being a moment of some extension. Instances of color are necessarily associated with and require supplementation by an instance of extension. Consider our red, round spot, Socrates. Socrates is a whole with two dependent parts or moments, red$_1$ and round$_1$. These moments stand to each other in a relation of foundation. This relation is an a priori law of the essences or species of these moments, redness and extension. Husserl states the following: "Our discussions so far have shown that there is always an a priori law governing what is non-independent, having its conceptual roots in what is universal *in* the whole and part in question."[18] (Italics mine)

So the relationship between red$_1$ and extension$_1$ (which are dependent parts of the whole, Socrates) is determined by an a priori law of essence which is grounded in the universals in those moments. Thus, a defender of the Complexity view could argue that these relations between moments like red$_1$ and extension$_1$ are only true of these moments because they are laws relating to the universal essences that are constituents in them.

On the Simplicity view, it is hard to see how the kind or species is brought together with or in the moment in such a way that the former genuinely determines the nature of the latter. How does redness make red$_1$ red, if not by being the redness *in* red$_1$? Similarly, how can a priori laws governing the relationships that obtain between moments have anything to do with those moments unless they are laws pertaining to the essences of those moments, and unless these essences are constituents in those moments?

---

[17] The entire third investigation of the *Logical Investigations* discusses Husserl's views on parts and wholes, including his notion of foundation.

[18] Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, 2: 453.

A defender of the Simplicity view could respond by asserting that the species is *instanced by* its moments and this relation is just a basic, primitive relation. But this appears to be a mere assertion, and it simply leaves unclear how the essence of a moment makes that moment what it is. It seems to me that since Husserl makes such important use of the a priori relations between moments, and since he grounds these in laws having to do with the essences of those moments, then his view would be clarified and more consistent if he held that those essences were constituents *in* their moments. For then it is the essences themselves in their moments that are related by a priori laws, and not essences that are so related and then, somehow, instanced by those moments.

A third argument for the Complexity view has to do with the relation of resemblance that seems to obtain between two abstract particulars if they are taken to be simples. In this case, the relation between, say, red_1 and red_2 is a primitive relation of exact similarity which is not grounded in an identical constituent in red_1 and red_2. It is no accident that neither Wolterstorff nor Campbell gives much weight to the argument for universals based on resemblance. This is because their Simplicity views imply that two instances of the same kind or set "agree" with each other in the sense that they exactly resemble one another. Red_1 and red_2 do not have a numerically identical constituent in them that grounds this resemblance and constitutes its respect.

It would seem that this same point could be made regarding two Husserlian moments if these are taken to be simples. In fact, Mulligan, Simon, and Smith explicitly state that, for Husserl, two red moments are two numerically distinct entities that are exactly similar to each other.[19] In the same article, the point is made that Husserl's doctrine of moments is compatible with nominalism in its view of exact resemblance as primitive. But, the article goes on to say, nominalism need not follow, for Husserl himself maintains realism by utilizing kinds and moments that exemplify kinds.[20]

But does vague talk of kinds and moments "exemplifying" kinds really solve the problem here? I think not. Gustav Bergmann has shown that if moments are simples, then it is very difficult to articulate a coherent position without appealing to exact similarity as a primitive, ungrounded relation.[21] This is because the universal is not in each moment and, thus, there is no numerically identical constituent to ground the resemblance between them.

---

[19] Mulligan, Simons, and Smith, p. 291.

[20] Mulligan, Simons, and Smith, p. 295.

[21] Bergmann, *Realism*, pp. 87-90.

As is well known, Husserl used the argument from exact similarity to argue for universals as identical constituents in many. Husserl argued:

> We find in fact that wherever things are "alike," an identity in the strict and true sense is also present. We cannot predicate exact likeness of two things without stating the respect in which they are thus alike. Each exact alikeness relates to a species, under which the objects compared are subsumed: this species is not, and cannot be, merely "alike" in the two cases, if the worst of infinite regresses is not to become inevitable.[22]

While Husserl does not clearly treat them seperately, we can discern three reasons for the Complexity view here. First, exact similarity is not a primitive relation, but is instead a derived subsistent grounded in a strict identity (the universal) in each of the resembling entities. Second, one must specify the respect of resemblance between the entities in question and this respect of resemblance will be the universal in each. Third, a denial of a universal in each of the resembling entities leads one to a vicious infinite regress of higher and higher order relations of resemblance.

Thus, Husserl's argument from resemblance shows that he held to the Complexity view of moments. For when red_1 and red_2 are exactly alike, this is grounded, not in an actual infinite number of primitive resemblance relations, but rather in a universal which is a numerically identical constituent in each and which constitutes the respect of their resemblance.[23] For the identity he speaks of here is not the universal's mere identity with itself. Rather, it is the fact that the redness in each moment is really one entity and not two.

A defender of the Simplicity view could argue that I have misunderstood Husserl. This objection could point out that Husserl is arguing for an identity different from a numerical identity; Husserl means to argue for a qualitative identity or specific identity of some sort. Thus, exact similarity between red_1 and red_2 is not grounded in a numerically identical constituent in each. It is grounded in a specific identity, a species, and red_1 and red_2 each bear the same relation (exemplification) to this species, redness.

Two things can be said in response. First, I have difficulty understanding how red_1 and red_2 can bear a relation of specific identity to one another if this is not taken as an identical species in each. The former seems to be a mere circumlocution for the latter.

---

[22] Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, 1: 342-43.

[23] For more on this, see Dallas Willard, "Meaning and Universals in Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen*" (Ph.D. dissertation, Wisconsin University, 1964), pp. 119-30.

Second, let us assume that red_1 and red_2 can bear a relation of specific identity to one another where this is not taken as an identical species in each. Then, as Bertrand Russell's famous argument from resemblance shows, we still need a relational universal (resemblance or exemplification) to avoid a vicious infinite regress. One would have two different states of affairs, red_1, exemplification, redness, and red_2, exemplification, redness. If these relations of exemplification are taken as instances or moments of a relational species, exemplification as such, then an account must be given of the resemblance between $exemplification_1$ and $exemplifiation_2$, and so on. So somewhere along the line there must be a state of affairs with a numerically identical constituent *in* each. Elsewhere, I have defended this and other arguments for universals based on resemblance.[24] But even if the reader is not convinced by such an argument, Husserl was, as we have just seen. And because he was, it is best to understand his view of moments as an example of the Complexity view.

A fourth, and final, argument for the Complexity view centers on some of Husserl's comments about individuation and ultimate substrates. In sections 11-15 of book I, part 1, chapter 1 of the *Ideas,* Husserl is discussing genus/species relations and different hierarchies of being. In terms similar to those used by Aristotle, Husserl argues that as one ascends to higher and higher levels of universals, one eventually reaches *summa genera.* In descending, one finally reaches ultimate, formless substrates. These substrates are "pure, syntactically formless, individual single particulars."[25] Here Husserl is refering to an Aristotelian *tode ti,* which for Aristotle has as its primary meaning something indivisible and one in number (*Cat.* 3b 10-14). Aristotle uses *tode ti* to refer to forms, primary substances, or prime matter that is a "this" potentially.[26] Husserl's main use of *tode ti* is to refer to an ultimate subject of predication that is itself formless and particular. His description of a *tode ti* reminds one of a bare particular for Bergmann which, he said, was Aristotelian prime matter splintered.

In one very interesting pasage, Husserl compares an ultimate substrate with a moment. He points out that an ultimate substrate is an "uncombined individuum," i.e. something particular. Then he says this: "The quality-moment in itself 'has no individuality.' Is it accordingly an *essence?*"[27] The passage, which was not included in the published texts,

---

[24] See J. P. Moreland, *Universals, Qualities, and Quality-Instances,* pp. 109-33.

[25] Husserl, *Ideas,* p. 28.

[26] See Rogers Albritton, "Forms of Particular Substances in Aristotle's *Metaphysics,*" *The Journal of Philosophy* 54 (October 1957): 699-708.

[27] Husserl, *Ideas,* p. 24, footnote 31.

is very difficult to understand. But Husserl seems to be saying that a moment needs to have an ultimate substrate in it which is its ultimate subject of predication and which grounds its individuation.

Unfortunately Husserl's views here are unclear in just the same way Aristotle was unclear. Aristotle was unclear about the form-instance relation. For example, in the category of substance, statements like "Socrates is a man" may contain an ungrounded "is" of classification that places a primary substance (Socrates) in a class, the secondary substance. Or Aristotle may ground this "is" in a more basic relation involving the predication of the form, humanity, of the matter in Socrates. The former represents a reading of Aristotle that is compatible with the Simplicity view since, on this reading, Socrates is a simple, particular entity (disregarding accidents) and the universal, humanity, is like one of Wolterstorff's kinds. The latter is more in keeping with the Complexity view since, on this reading, Socrates is a complex entity with these constituents (disregarding accidents): the universal, humanity, the individuating matter in Socrates, and the tie of predication.

It seems to me that Husserl is somewhat unclear in the same way. But his comments about individuation and ultimate substrates do seem to imply the Complexity view even if Husserl's explicit statements are not clear. For on the Simplicity view, moments come individuated in and of themselves. The Simplicity view rejects the part-whole framework in its treatment of a moment as a simple. Thus, the problem of individuation does not even arise. Only the Complexity view requires some sort of ultimate substrate to ground the individuation of moments, and the fact that Husserl links individuation with such substrates implies that he accepts the part-whole framework for moments. And this is nothing other than the Complexity view.

In sum, we have investigated the arguments for the Simplicity view and found them to be inadequate. In addition, several arguments have been presented to show that Husserlian moments are complex entities. Husserl was a realist and his ontology included true universals, those multiply exemplifiable entities which are constituents in their instances.