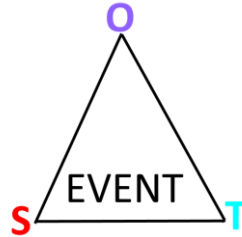


## Unpacking Husserl's Matryoska

This essay is an attempt at a more precise reformulation of my earlier one of December 26<sup>th</sup> 2022, entitled "On the Record," wherein I stated that "History" is in effect recording of space/time reference-framed quanta. Understood in an Einsteinian Relativistic sense, I now attempt to add a third element to these dyads: **The Observer**.



This diagram illustrates a **Space/Time Reference-Framed Quantum** (i.e., an **Event**).

My concept of any "event" as a space/time phenomenon dependent on whomever happens to be the observer, is similar to the concept of "**bracketing**"—or *epoché*—developed by Edmund Husserl (1859-1938). As Husserl wrote: "*Psychologically experienced consciousness is...no longer pure consciousness; construed Objectively in this way, consciousness itself becomes something transcendent, becomes an event in that spatial world which appears, by virtue of consciousness, to be transcendent.*" \*

**Bracketing** is a preliminary act in the phenomenological analysis, conceived by Husserl as the suspension of the trust in the objectivity of the world. It involves setting aside the question of the real existence of a contemplated object, as well as all other questions about the object's physical or objective nature. For example, the act of seeing a [horse] qualifies as an experience, whether one sees the horse in person or not. Bracketing the [horse] suspends any judgement about the horse as *noumenon*, and instead analyses the *phenomenon* of the "horse" as constituted in intentional acts. Bracketing may also be understood in terms of the phenomenological activity it is supposed to make possible: the "**unpacking**" of phenomena, or, in other words, systematically peeling away their symbolic meanings like layers of an onion until only the thing itself remains.

Husserl began developing the method of bracketing around 1906. He later reinterpreted and revitalized the concept of *epoché* [or suspension of judgement] —meaning that a spectator must adopt a disinterested attitude in order to arrive at *scientia* (i.e., Knowledge based on demonstrable and reproducible data.)

[Husserl was influenced by Pyrrhonism, a form of scepticism taught by Pyrrho of Elis (c. 360-270 BCE), who traveled to India with Alexander the Great's army, where Pyrrho was indirectly influenced by the gymnosophists and by Buddhist teachings —most particularly by the three marks of existence: *aniccā* (impermanence), *dukkha* ("suffering" or "unsatisfactoriness"), and *anattā* (without a lasting essence).] \*\*

Therefore, a simplified symbolic sequence illustrating the historical development of Husserlian phenomenology would be:

[Buddhism] ⇔ [Gymnosophists] ⇔ [Phyrrho] ⇔ [Kant] ⇔ [Husserl]

Complicating matters even more, I would like to introduce at this time the concept of “multiple bracketing,” which I illustrate by using the model of the *matryoska*, or Russian nesting dolls. My thesis here is that all events start by being closer to [reality] or [essence], but become more and more illusory and/or artificial as more and more observers participate in diverse space/time R-F’s by stacking new interpretations that obscure and distort the original space/time R-F.

Let us suppose that we can see Mona Lisa –that is Lisa Gherardini– as her husband, Francesco del Giocondo, saw her when she was posing for the famous painting. We will call that experience “Event 1” (or first doll).



Then the sequence of bracketed events will be as follows:

- E-2 –Leonardo’s finished masterpiece (1517);
- E-3 –First observer-critic (unknown);
- E-4 –First replica –the *Gioconda di Montecitorio* or *Gioconda Torlonia* (16<sup>th</sup> century);
- E-5 –First photograph of the Mona Lisa (unknown);
- E-6 –Andy Warhol’s silkscreen print (1963);
- E-7 –First computerized version by H. Philip Peterson (1965);
- E-8 –Recent digital scan of hidden underlying features by Pascal Cotte (2004); and
- E-9 –My friend Alan Zisman’s first viewing at the Louvre (summer 2005).

If we compose a symbol-sequence using multiple brackets, this will look somewhat like this: [ [ [ [ [ [ [ [E-1] E-2] E-3] E-4] E-5] E-6] E-7] E-8] E-9]. Therefore E-9 would be the outer matryoska doll.

<p><b>E-6 Warhol’s</b></p>	<p><b>E-7 Peterson’s</b></p>	<p><b>E-8 Cotte’s</b></p>

As the Mona Lisa has been reproduced and altered thousands of times, it will become obvious to you, the reader, that our matryoska could continue to nest more and more space/time R-F [dolls] unto infinity –making the final outer [Mona Lisa – E- ∞] a phenomenal monument hundreds of times taller than the Burj Khalifa.

Whether she would be real or not, only Edmund Husserl or Gautama Shakyamuni could say. Unfortunately, neither are available for comments at this space and time.

\* Husserl, shorter works (ed. Univ of Notre Dame Pr, 1981) in  
<https://quotes.thefamouspeople.com/edmund-husserl-4265.php>

\*\* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bracketing\\_\(phenomenology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bracketing_(phenomenology))

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