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EDITORIAL

This is the First Volume (1998) of our Yearly Departmental Journal, *Philosophy and the Life-world*. The Journey of the Journal is just started. We are happy to announce that the starting volume is devoted to such a special topic, on which there is no book/ collection of articles in India. The Special topic is : *The Life-world* .

Kant's division between understanding and practical reason led F.D.E. Schleiermacher (1768-1834) , one of the fathers of hermeneutics, to argue that the interpretation of human actions can never be accomplished by the method of natural sciences. Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), a later Kantian philosopher, best known as the philosopher of life extended Schleiermacher's hermeneutical method to the entire human world. Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), the father of phenomenological philosophy, took this idea a stage further. He suggested that the pre-scientific vision of the world expresses not merely our identity as rational being, but our *life*. The world appears to us in the guise of a 'lived environment'. Dilthey was the first to attempt a systematic distinction between the humanities — the human sciences and the natural sciences. Husserl asserted that the human sciences had entered a condition of crisis during the twentieth century, precisely because natural sciences had presumptuously invaded their territory, and so prompted people to throw away as useless remnants of a vanished world-view, the concepts through which the life-world is understood and organised. The crisis is not only intellectual, it is also moral, indeed a crisis of civilisation. For the Life-world falls apart, when not sustained by reflections. The result is a loss of meaning, a moral vacuum, into which we are led whenever we surrender to the false god of science. In fact, the new task of phenomenology of Husserl, in his last part of life, was to awaken us to the Life-world and to vindicate those 'we' thoughts in which the meaning of objects is created and made public.

The papers collected here, excluding the selection from Edmund Husserl, were presented in our ICPR-sponsored national seminar on *perspectives of the Life-world* held in November, 1997. We are grateful to the Indian Council of Philosophical Research for their kind and full-fledged sponsorship for holding the seminar. We convey our heartiest gratitude to the paper-writers, without whom such a rare volume could not be brought out .

We are also obliged to Professor A.K. Dev, our Vice-Chancellor, Dr.J. Debnath, Registrar, Professor M. Maity and Professor T.J. Banerjee , the two Deans and other personalities of the Executive Council, Vidyasagar University for their kind permission and hearty inspirations which have motivated us to arrange the publication of this Departmental Journal.

We deeply feel that Professor Shibjeevan Bhattacharya and Professor Pranab Kumar Sen, the two eminent philosophers from West Bengal, have been suffering from fatal disease. We, the teachers and students of the Department of Philosophy and the Life-world Vidyasagar University earnestly wish them immediate cure and well-being, good health and longer life.

GENESIS OF THE IDEA OF THE LIFE-WORLD

SANTOSH KUMAR PAL

Preliminary study of Husserl's manuscripts, especially those edited under the title *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, gives the impression that in the later years of his philosophical career Husserl sought for a primordial level of experience in order to capture the true nature of human affairs. This level of experience is christened by Husserl as 'the life-world' (*die Lebenswelt*). During Husserl's life-time only a few of his friends and followers were acquainted with his interest in the theme of the life-world. Husserl did not even carefully formulate the idea till he had prepared the final draft of the second part of the *Crisis*. An international yearbook, called *Philosophia*, edited by Arther Liebert in Belgrade, however, arranged to publish the *Crisis* manuscripts in instalments. But unfortunately only the first two parts of the text were published in 1936. Because of illness Husserl could not send the third part to the publisher. Eugen Fink, who was Husserl's close research assistant during this period, had produced a typed version of Husserl's stenographic manuscripts of the Part-III. Husserl, however, approved it with some changes made and some to be made¹. Thus we find that the writing of the *Crisis* began sometime in 1934, and continued till the summer of 1937, the beginning of Husserl's terminal illness to which he succumbed on 27th April, 1938².

But it is not actually in the *Crisis* that the term '*die Lebenswelt*' makes its first appearance in Husserl's vocabulary. It appeared in a manuscript meant as a supplementary text to the *Ideas-II*, dated 1917 by the Louvain Archives³. That the idea of the life-world had preoccupied him much earlier than the writing of the *Crisis* becomes evident as we look at the texts of *Ideas-II*, *Ideas-III*, *Erste Philosophie*, *Phenomenological Psychology* and *Experience and Judgement*. It is generally agreed that about 1925, more definitely about 1929, there came about a remarkable change in Husserl's thought due to more and more use of the concept of the life-world⁴. But his idea along this line was first made known by Ludwig Landgrebe in an article, namely, 'World as a Phenomenological Problem', published in 1940 in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* (Vol.I, pp. 33-58). Then in 1945 we find Merleau-Ponty using this idea, with which he was acquainted while studying in Husserl's Archives in Louvain, in his *Phenomenology of Perception*. In fact, Merleau-Ponty made the idea of the life-world the central theme of his philosophical investigations. Anyhow, following the publication of the relevant manuscripts in 1950 on this subject,

the life-world theme became the subject-matter of profound attention by different thinkers.

But what lies behind Husserl's shift to the life-world phenomenology? What had been the factors that led him to initiate the theme of the life-world? The most off-hand answer is: Husserl introduced the idea of the life-world to meet the challenge of the prevalent crisis of the then science and culture. Husserl came to realize that there exists a 'general lament about the crisis of culture' in which science is implicated⁵. To be sure, science has made a generous progress and has contributed to our material welfare and prosperity. But, frustratingly enough, it insists on excluding in principle precisely the questions whose answers we require most, and these are 'questions about the meaning or meaninglessness of the whole of human existence'⁶. Even the human sciences (*die Geisteswissenschaften*) insist that the scientist ought not to adopt any valuative position in his investigations. This non-valuative position of the scientists sometimes results in hostility towards humanity, and, as Husserl says, this has been the cause of growing antipathy of the younger generation towards science. 'In our vital need.... this science has nothing to say to us!⁷ Thus in spite of the epoch-making success, sciences lapse in crisis and it is 'the loss of life'. We have witnessed the tragic consequences of humanity in the past world wars. The use of scientific methods and inventions in warfare without any concern for the sacred humanity has helped only to heap the debris of human skulls and skeletons.

Husserl was deeply shocked by this sorry state-of-affairs with the sciences. At the same time he was aware that this had not always been the case. If we take a historical look, we would find that modern sciences trace their origin to the period of Renaissance when sciences contributed to the meaning of human life. It was science in the most elevated sense, as an overarching system of truth of which the special sciences are merely coordinated branches which were assigned this role. According to Husserl, it was philosophy which was the ground and unity of the sciences, and the fullest realization of man's essential nature, his reason. His infinitely increasing theoretical and practical 'mastery and profession of nature' would free him from its bonds and would go hand in hand with his growing ability to shape his own destiny.

But the days of our modern sciences have been quite different. With the launching of specialization, the belief in the possibility of philosophy as the ultimate of court of appeal has been shaken. The specialized sciences familiarize us with certain facts of a particular domain of nature. Even the humanistic sciences too fail to incorporate the unifying principles of human accomplishments, and man himself appears there as nothing special but a more complex fact. These 'fact-minded sciences make merely fact-minded people⁸. The idea of reason and humanity is getting replaced by irrationalism and vulgar scientism. This tendency results in man's estrangement from himself, his betrayal of himself through the neglect of his own rational nature.

Husserl came to realize that unless such a madness of irrationalism and scientific objectivism is checked, the existence of teleological humanity will encounter a terrible disaster. He preached that for his salvation man must endeavour to rediscover his rational nature.

Husserl came to realize that unless such a madness of irrationalism and scientific objectivism is checked, the existence of teleological humanity will encounter a terrible disaster. He preached that for his salvation man must endeavour to rediscover his rational nature — radical self-understanding is the only way to combat this alienation. At this point Husserl's phenomenology of the life-world appears in its historical significance and mission. He writes in the *Crisis* :

"What is clearly necessary is that we *reflect back* in a thorough *historical* and *critical* fashion in order to provide, *before all decisions*, for a radical self-understanding : we must inquire back into what was originally and always sought in philosophy, what was continually sought by all the philosophers and philosophies that have communicated with one another historically"⁹.

Husserl's earlier project of transcendental phenomenology invites us to reflect upon the world and upon one's own consciousness. We learnt a radical manner of answering philosophic questions. His analysis in the *Crisis* proposes 'a teleological - historical reflection' upon the origin of our critical situation. True to his word, he begins the text with an exposition of 'the crisis of sciences' which he interprets as an 'expression of the radical life-crisis of European humanity'. Then, in search of the origin of the crisis, Husserl goes back to a long discussion of Greek philosophy and mathematics, the rise of modern science with Galileo, and its philosophical interpretations from Descartes to Kant. In all these investigations Husserl shows that the rootlessness of modern sciences, both mathematical and human, from life is due to their failure to incorporate humanly lived aspects in their investigations. Husserl traces the aim of modern science and philosophy to be mathematical in character which appeared first in the development of natural science in the modern age. It is primarily to Galileo that we owe the conception of nature as purely mathematical , and as soon as this idea of science 'begins to move toward successful realization, the idea of philosophy in general is transformed'¹⁰. If we want to understand this transformation of the idea of philosophy, we must turn first to what made it possible: Galileo's mathematization of nature.

What is the meaning of this mathematization of nature ? Husserl rephrases the question as 'How do we reconstruct the train of thought which motivated it?' It is historically interesting to note that Galileo inherited pure geometry from the Greeks as the science which provides exact and objective knowledge for its domain of objects. In our encounter with the real world we face the problem of subjective relativity of its appearances. It is the task of science to overcome this relativity. Now, pure geometry is related to the world in the sense that it can be seen as originally arising out of the practical need of accurately surveying land and, as a matter of fact, its theoretical formulation always applies back to the real world. Galileo sees that it is so because the real world that is given to us in experience carries with itself instances of what is dealt with successfully in the science of geometry. Galileo then proposed that exact and intersubjectively valid knowledge can be attained only if the real objects of the world are considered as examples of geometrical entities. Every physical object thus is to be regarded as object which can be read in terms of geometrical shapes and properties. Galileo saw through this that 'whatever such a methodology is developed, we have also overcome the relativity of subjective interpretations, which is, after all,

essential to the empirically intuited world¹¹. This leaves certain properties which do not seem directly measurable in geometrical terms, viz., colour, warmth, weight, tone, smell, etc. But Galileo observed that changes in some of these properties correspond exactly to measurable changes in geometrical qualities, and in his boldest of all moves, he proposed to treat all such 'secondary qualities', as they are later called, exclusively in terms of their measurable geometrical correlates with the idea that all will be thereby accounted for.

Thus the desired mathematization of nature is realized, and this has been the origin of mathematical physics. This can be seen as involving two steps : first, Galileo's geometrisation of nature, and second, the arithmatization of geometry by Descartes and Leibniz. Nature thus becomes a mathematical manifold, and mathematical techniques are seen as to provide the key to its inner workings. In mathematics we find access to an infinite domain, and if nature is correlated with that domain, we get access not only to what lies beyond the scope of our immediate experience, but also to everything that could ever be experienced in nature¹².

Anyhow, Husserl is not directly interested in the scientific method itself. His concern is the manner in which it determines the task of philosophy. The philosophical interpretation of nature which results from Galileo's mathematization gives rise to a series of equivocations. Science indulges in a number of abstractions to overcome the vagueness and relativity of ordinary experiences. The result of such abstraction is then given an interpretation. In the first step, it brings to focus the shape aspect of the material object which is presented in our experience. But the so called secondary qualities, which are inseparable from objects in our everyday experience are miserably ignored. In the second step, the shapes are interpreted to be pure geometrical shapes, so that objects can be understood in terms of geometrical measurement. In such a move we may be able to explain successfully the correlation of primary qualities with secondary qualities. But with this we lose a very significant aspect of the real world. A world of objects with shapes alone but no colour becomes insignificant and senseless to us. The secondary qualities are systematically ignored as merely subjective.

In making this moves science forgets what remains at the basis as its activity. It forgets from which it abstracts and of which it is interpretation, viz., the world of sense-experience. And this is the moving away of the natural sciences and humanistic disciplines from the real life-world. Husserl, particularly in his later days, endeavoured at recovering this forgotten meaning of life and the world. A new mode of investigation, therefore, came to be necessary.

Nevertheless, it is mistake to suppose that Husserl's life-world phenomenology represents nothing but an attempt to respond to a particular situation. If it were, we have to regard the crisis theme and the historical investigations to be a *piece de circonstance*, and set these reflections apart from a systematic introduction to philosophy. Only Part-I and Part-II can be properly characterized as historical reflections, while in the larger Part-III Husserl seeks 'the way into' phenomenology through a reflection, first upon the life-world (Part-A), and another upon psychology (Part-B). Thus the Part-III, although differs from earlier texts (viz. Part-I and II) in an important way, could still be described like them as the reflections upon the world

and upon one's own consciousness of the world. It is the thought about the world, and with this the problem of the world takes on a novel significance.

Admittedly Husserl's theory of the world as expounded in the *Crisis* proceeds primarily by way of contrast to the mathematized world of the modern science, and as such the world is described as pre-scientific and pre-theoretical. If the world is identified with the mathematical scientific world, then any discipline that claims to be scientific, even if it concerns man's spiritual nature, is to be grounded on it. But the notion of the life-world in the *Crisis* derives not so much from a broadening as from a deepening of the concept of the world. Husserl speaks of the life-world as what is pre-given to consciousness, not only prior to natural science but also before anything, is an idealized construction based upon what is perceived, and as such, science operates with abstraction, while the life-world is the concrete fullness from which these abstractions are made. We may say that science constructs and the life-world provides the materials of construction. The ideal objects of science preclude their availability to sense-intuition whereas the life-world is the field of intuition itself. Husserl describes the life-world as 'the universe of what is intuitable in principle' and 'the realm of original self-evidence' to which the scientist must return to verify his theory¹³. We can say that science interprets and explains what is given, while the life-world is the locus of all givenness. Evidently the emphasis here is on the immediacy of the life-world experience in contrast to the mediatory character of scientific thought. Thus we may regard the life-world as prior to any theory (or science), not only historically but epistemologically also.

To some of those who are well acquainted with earlier texts of Husserl it might seem that what Husserl says here are mere recapitulation of the phenomenology of perception as expounded in the *Ideas-I*, the *Ideas-II* and the *Cartesian Meditations*. As he says, the life-world is first and foremost a world of perceived bodies. He also speaks of perspectival character of perception — of outer and inner horizons — placing more emphasis than before on the role of the living body, its kinesthetic functions and also on its orientation character. Husserl elaborated all these details in his earlier texts. E.g., the oriented character of perception around body was examined under the borrowed Kantian title of a 'transcendental aesthetics' in the *Formal and Transcendental Logic*¹⁴ and also in the *Ideas-II* (Husserl speaks here of the living body as 'zero-point of orientation'). But if this were the case, the question naturally arises: To what extent is the concept of the life-world new? If we take a curious look at the whole body of Husserl's texts, both earlier and later, we could explore the repeated use of the new theme of the life-world. Having gone through the relevant texts it seems that the concept of the life-world goes much beyond Husserl's earlier world-view. The *Crisis* concept of the life-world extends far beyond the transcendental aesthetics of the *Formal and Transcendental Logic* or the phenomenology of perception of the *Ideas -I* and the *Cartesian Meditations*. In none of the earlier works the concept of the world reaches such a level as can be equal to that of the life-world. The views developed in the earlier writings require much revision and extension to attain the concrete fullness of the lived world.

Anyhow, we can make an analysis of the concept of the world as given in the earlier texts, and see in what sense it lacks the richness of the life-world. It is first in the *Ideas-I* that the problem of the world has seriously been taken up. The world there is to indicate the total field of possible research from the natural standpoint. The crucial point that emerges from this text is the world as horizon — the ultimate horizon of anything given in experience. This constitutes the givenness of the world. Husserl refers to the immediacy of givenness when he said 'I discover it immediately, intuitively'¹⁵. It is in this manner that the world is given to us 'in every waking moment'. This means that what is presented in my sense-perception is not some image or idea of the world but the world itself. Yet the world is clearly not itself a perceived object. Its givenness can be understood to some extent by analogy to an object only part of which is the direct focus of our perception, while the other part is potentially object of perception. Obviously, the whole world can never be the object of perception, yet what is experienced is experienced directly.

But the difficulty is that Husserl does not seem to uniformly maintain the same conception of the world throughout. Even in the first section of the same *Ideas-I* he defines the world as 'the totality of objects that can be known through experience, known in terms of orderly theoretical thought on the basis of direct present experience'¹⁶. This account suggests that what is experienced as knowable is considered as theory. The later theory of life-world, however, does not deny that anything experienced is potentially an object of theoretical thought, but it does deny that anything experienced is given only in this way. There is, again, the suggestion that the world itself is given as thought rather than as experienced. But in the description of the natural attitude, only two chapters later, he says explicitly that not only that the world itself is experienced, but also that our awareness of the horizon surrounding the perceptual field is a kind of knowing that has nothing conceptual thinking in it. The world as horizon is experienced, and as such is given as 'limitless', 'indefinite', and 'infinite', but not as a 'totality'¹⁷. Again, in Part-II, where Husserl speaks of the suspension of the natural attitude, the world is defined as corresponding directly to the natural attitude, and natural attitude itself is called an original theoretical attitude¹⁸.

Thus some sort of discrepancy is traceable in these descriptions. Husserl, however, never characterizes the objects of natural experience as being themselves theoretical entities, as, for example, those of physics, rather in several contexts in the *Ideas-I* he tries to show the secondary constructed character of those entities in relation to experienced things given beforehand¹⁹. If we try to understand all these from the perspective of the *Crisis*, we would find that what Husserl opposes in the *Ideas-I* is the theory of scientific realism, according to which the real physical entities are mathematically determined properties and these objects are hidden causes of the experienced objects, which are 'mere appearances'. He wishes to show that the concept of the physical object grows out of a prior attitude that does not originally contain it and that such entities can hardly be unknown. In § 46 Husserl reiterates that physical existence is never required as necessary by the givenness of something physical, but always is, in certain manner, contingent²⁰. That means, it can always happen that a further course of experience would compel us to abandon what has already been posited with empirical justification. Thus 'everything which is there for me in the world of things ... is only a *presumptive reality*'²¹.

The main difficulty here is with the implied description of the manner of givenness in the natural attitude. With the proposal of 'nullification of the thing world' Husserl unavoidably leaves the impression that the world is given as a kind of transcendent thing, the totality of all things rather than the horizon. But this conception involves a faulty reasoning : The world itself is not experienced, as implied in the description of the natural attitude, but posited as the ultimate order of things, an order that lies at the end of the infinite process of consciousness whose aim is the grasping of that order. This grasp cannot, however, be thought as something experiential, but as a thought or a theory, which goes beyond experience, generalizes from it and proceeds inferentially to general conclusion. In other words, it is conceivable only as theory.

This conception of the world is, more or less, borne out in the later parts of the *Ideas-I* , which form the transition to the *Ideas-II* and the *Ideas-III* . In the closing section of the *Ideas-I* (viz., 'Reason and Reality') Husserl raises the problem of constitution of 'reality'. What he takes here to be 'real' is that which is 'rationally demonstrable', and 'what is rationally demonstrable' is determined not only by formal norms for objects, but also by the 'material *a priori*' of the same²². The project of constitution has been carried over to the *Ideas-II*, and we have the phenomenological investigations on constitution — different for different regions — the natural, the psychic and the spiritual²³. Although Husserl speaks here of 'different regions of being', yet it is true that he places much emphasis at every turn on the manner in which the different regions are intertwined. He is also careful to notice that the regions correspond to the theoretical attitudes of the natural and psychological sciences and the humanistic disciplines²⁴. It appears that this division is due to the different theoretical attitudes as required. But there runs a unitary phenomenon, the world, which corresponds to a pre-theoretical attitude from which different regions are carved out. But in that case, given the identification of the real with the rationally demonstrable, such a unitary pre-theoretical world begins to show itself like something less than real, i.e., like something 'merely meant'. All these mean that there is a considerable amount of ambiguities in the *Ideas-II* regarding the world and the givenness of the world, or to put it otherwise, between the world as thought and the world as experiences.

Nevertheless, it can be said that between these two ideas, the latter, viz., the world as experience is more dominant in the texts of *Ideas*. Again, in lectures on phenomenological psychology Husserl makes considerable use of this concept of the world as experienced when he speaks of 'lived experiences'²⁵. He speaks also of 'the only original, genuine concept' of 'the experienced world'²⁶ and describes it as 'pre-theoretical world, which proceeds all theoretical questions, the world perpetually perceived and experienced in its relativity as existing in undoubting certainty'. On another occasion Husserl distinguishes this world from 'the science of natural world-concept'. He writes, "As scientific themes, nature and mind do not exist beforehand; rather, they are formed only within a theoretical interest and in the theoretical work directed upon it, upon the underlying stratum of the natural, pre-scientific experience. Here they appear in an originally intuible inter-mingling and togetherness : it is necessary to begin with this concretely intuitive unity of the pre-scientific experiential world and then to elucidate what theoretical interests and directions of thought it pre-delineates ..."²⁷. Certainly this is a pre-cursory of the phenomenology of the life-

world in the *crisis*.

One important thing is that Husserl has sometimes criticized his own earlier positions. Some of his marginal notes on the *Ideas-I*, made as he reread the text in the later years, testify this contention. One such note, written in 1927, bears the title 'objections to the whole first chapter of the first section'²⁸. This note is meant for the chapter in which the natural attitude is described as 'theoretical' and the world is defined as the correlate of the correct theoretical thinking. He says that this chapter makes its departure from the natural attitude and that it is a 'great error'. Secondly, next to the passage on the every first page of *Ideas-I*, which discusses the natural attitude as a theoretical attitude, Husserl writes on the margin in copy D, apparently sometimes around 1928, 'And the natural practical attitude'²⁹. Thirdly, commenting on the second chapter of Part Two, where the dubitability of the world is presented, he remarks that he has limited himself to too much individual experiences of individual things and has neglected the all-important concept of horizon. In this connection he writes in an addition to copy D: 'To be sure, this exposition forces us to go further, and actually it is not adequate'³⁰.

In view of these self-criticisms from 1927 to 1929, the question of the manner of givenness of the world gets much more emphasis in the *Cartesian Meditations*. Husserl is introducing here the schema of *ego-cogito-cogitatum*, and the cogitatum is treated exclusively in terms of the particular objects of consciousness. This concept brings out a stronger version of the problem of givenness of the world than that found in the *Ideas-I*. He also speaks here of the world as presumptive reality and this amounts to saying that for consciousness the reality of the world is left undecided until some infinitely distant, unattainable moment of complete verification. Due to his preoccupation with the problem of logic, Husserl seems to maintain here some dominance of the theoretical and ideal concept of the world.

Nevertheless, in his quest for pre-predicative level of experience in the *Formal and Transcendental Logic* we can discover Husserl finding an orientation towards the pre-reflective world of experience. Logic has always concentrated on judgements, but 'intrinsically first thing in the theory of evident judgements', says Husserl, 'is the genetical tracing of pre-reflective evidences back to the non-predicative evidences and experiences'³¹. The evidence of judgement presupposes the self-givenness of objects, and it is in experience that objects are given.

The distinction between predicative and pre-predicative evidences, however, corresponds to the distinction between active and passive genesis in the *Cartesian Meditations*. In the active genesis the Ego functions as productively constitutive by means of subjective processes that are specifically acts of the Ego. Passive synthesis, on the other hand, is something that does not involve reflection, and it is said to be the limiting form of conscious activity. Anything built by this activity necessarily presupposes the lowest level, a passivity that gives something beforehand. Husserl says that 'thanks to this passive synthesis the Ego always has been an environment of objects'³², but he immediately makes it clear that for the natural attitude the surrounding world cannot stand above. Rather it is experienced as a segment of the world as such which extends into the limitless horizon.

But it is in the last part of the *Cartesian Meditation* that we find Husserl according importance to the pre-reflective, pre-predicative experience. He remarks, "As regards this, nothing prevents starting at first quite concretely with the human life-world around us (*menschliche Lebenswelt*), and with man himself as essentially related to this our surrounding world, and exploring, indeed purely intuitively, the extremely copious and never discovered Apriori for any such surrounding world whatever, taking this Apriori for any such surrounding world whatever, taking this Apriori as the point of departure for a systematic explication of human existence"³³. Again, in explicating the constitution of the 'alter ego' Husserl speaks of 'my sphere of ownness', which is regarded as 'the original sphere' in which the objective, inter-subjective world is constituted. Ricoeur rightly opines that this 'primordial sphere of ownness' of the Fifth Meditation is nearly to what the *Crisis* calls the life-world³⁴.

The search for the life-world is further strengthened by the perception of historicity and inter-subjectivity. In *Erste Philosophie*, e.g., Husserl sees of us the endless horizon of *Lebenszusammenhang*, of one's own and of the intersubjective historical life. And so he writes : "*In Wahrheit Stehen Wir in der Alleinheit eines endlosen Lebenszusammenhanges, in der Unendlichkeit des eigenen Undes intersubjectiven historischen Lebens, das, wie es ist, eine Alleinheit in infinitum sich herausstellender Geltungen ist*"³⁵. (As a matter of fact, we live on our own with an unending (mode of) living relations (with others) in the infinite horizon. And the intersubjective historical life, that, as it exists, is an ownness *in infinitum* appears to be valid). With all these Husserl seems to suggest that a historical critique of 'our living the world' is necessary for a radical *Lebensphilosophie*.

We may note here that Husserl's earlier opposition to Dilthey's *Lebensphilosophie* sprang from his suspicion that the latter may lead to relativism, a denial of the ideality of meanings and thought-structures. But as soon as he succeeded in establishing the ideality and thought-structures in the *Logical Investigations*, particularly after Dilthey had welcomed the *Investigations* as new and invaluable insights into the achievements of mental life, it was possible for Husserl to make use of the concept of 'life' without earlier compunctions³⁶. Even the purification enforced by the reductions and the transformation of empirical subjectivity to the transcendental did not deter Husserl from making use of the concept of 'life' : We are now told of transcendental life of the ego. But this life is intentional intersubjective and accomplishing of ideal objectivities. It consists not merely in the positioning, objectifying acts of consciousness, but also in the non-positional anonymous, pre-objective, 'operative' intentionalities constituting the sense of being 'already given' that belongs to the perceptual world as perceived or what *Formal and Transcendental Logic* calls the 'aesthetic world'³⁷.

Again, in the *Experience and Judgement* Husserl speaks of the world as the field of passive *doxa* which is prior to, and the universal ground of, all cognitive confirmation, as the 'horizon of all possible judgemental substrates'³⁸. The task of this text is to trace judgemental activity as such to its roots in experience. Experience is defined here as the evidence of individual objects, not merely in the ordinary mode of self-evidence, but also in its further modalization³⁹. Evidently, this experience

seeks that 'immediate' or 'original' horizon in which something is given and this is nothing but the life-world itself. Thus the return to the life-world is not one which simply accepts the world of our experience just as it is given to us. Rather 'the retrogression to the world of experience is a retrogression to the life-world'⁴¹. Even before the turn to subjectivity is taken, which accomplishes the full transcendental phenomenological understanding of the genesis of judgement, it is necessary to return first 'from the pre-given' world with all of its sedimentations of sense, with its scientific determination, to the original life-world'⁴¹.

From the above discussion it becomes evident that Husserl in his later years has come much closer to the conception of world as experience than that from the earlier view of the world as thought. Of course, this transition is not straightforward. Nevertheless, it is the *Crisis* which securely and systematically establishes the theme of the life-world on the philosophical map, and made it a central interest of phenomenology. Husserl decidedly wants here to return to the world of pre-scientific, pre-predicative, pre-reflective level of the world-experience. As the *Crisis* reads, this is the perceived world and 'the original ground of all theoretical and practical activity'⁴², 'the constant ground of validity',⁴³ 'the source of self-evidence'⁴⁴ 'the source of verification'⁴⁵, and that which 'constantly exists for us'⁴⁶. Not only that, it is also 'the world of all known and unknown realities'⁴⁷ in which everything has 'a bodily character'⁴⁸ and in which we ourselves live 'in accord with our bodily, personal ways of being'⁴⁹. It is also the 'realm of something subjective which is completely closed off within itself, existing in its own way, functioning in all experiencing, all thinking, all life, thus everywhere inseparably involved'⁵⁰. It is, again, 'an accomplishment', 'a universal mental acquisition', 'the construct of a universal, ultimately functioning subjectivity'⁵¹. It is, in principle, intuitable, while the objective, scientific world is not⁵², but the intuition it is capable of is 'subjective-relative'⁵³, it is given 'prior to all ends'⁵⁴ and yet its truths are 'as secure as is necessary for the practical projects of life that determine their source'⁵⁵. It is the field, the horizon which is constantly and necessary pre-given⁵⁶ yet 'each of us has his life-world, meant as the world for all'⁵⁷. It is pre-scientific but includes sciences as cultural facts of the world, so that objective science as an accomplishment of scientific community belongs to the life-world without altering its concreteness⁵⁸.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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2. David Carr's 'Introduction' to *The Crisis, op. cit.* p. XVI.
3. See Edmund Husserl's *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy : Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*, Second Book (trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Andre' Schreier). Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, 1989, p.384 [This book will be hereafter referred to as *Ideas-II*].

4. J.N. Mohanty : *The Possibility of Transcendental Phenomenology*, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Dordrecht, 1985, p.101.
5. *The Crisis, op.cit. p.5*
6. *Ibid.*, p.6
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18
10. *Ibid.*, p. 23
11. *Ibid.*, p. 29
12. *Ibid.*, p. 9
13. *Ibid.* p.127
14. See Edmund Husserl : *Formal and Transcendental Logic* (trans. Dorin Cairns), Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1969, pp.291-92.
15. Edmund Husserl : *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, First Book (trans. W.R. Boyce Gibson), George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1931, p. 101 (This book will hereafter be referred to as *Ideas-I*(BG) . I have consulted another translation of the same book : *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, First Book (trans. F. Kersten), Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1983 (This book will be referred to as *Ideas I* (FK)]
16. *Ideas-I*(BG), p. 52
17. *Ibid.*, p. 102
18. *Ibid.*, p. 51
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20. *Ibid.*, p. 145
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25. See Edmund Husserl : *Phenomenological Psychology* (trans John Scanlon), Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1977, pp 5ff, 12, 14,16ff, 22ff, 27, 117ff.
26. *Ibid.*, p.46

27. *Ibid.*, p. 40
28. See appendix to *Husserliana* edition of *Ideas-I*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1950, p. 390.
29. *Ideas-I*(FK), p-5.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 101
31. *Formal and Transcendental Logic, op.cit.*, p. 209
32. Edmund Husserl : *Cartesian Meditations* (trans John Scanlon). Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1960, p. 79.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
34. Paul Ricoeur : *Husserl An Analysis of His Phenomenology*(trans. G. Ballard and L. Embree) North Western University Press, Eramdon. 1967, p. 173.
35. Edmund Husserl : *Erste Philosophie, Zweiter Teil*, Martinus Nijhoff, Den Hagg, 1959, p.153
36. *Phenomenological Psychology, op.cit.*, pp. 23-25.
37. J.N. Mohanty : *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy, op. cit.*, p. 109
38. Edmund Husserl : *Experience and Judgement*(trans J.S. Churchill and Karl Ameriks). Rontledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1973, p. 39.
39. *Ibid.*, p.27.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 41
41. *Ibid.*, p. 50, 42
42. *The Crisis, op. cit.*, p. 49.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 122
44. *Ibid.*, p. 127
45. *Ibid.*, p. 126
46. *Ibid.*, p. 113
47. *Ibid.*, p. 50
48. *Ibid.*, p. 106
49. *Ibid.*, p. 50
50. *Ibid*
51. *Ibid*

52. *Ibid*, p. 127
53. *Ibid*
54. *Ibid*, p. 138
55. *Ibid*, p. 125
56. *Ibid*, p. 254
57. *Ibid*, p. 130
58. *Ibid*, p. 142. See also J.N. Mohanty : *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy*.
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LIFE-WORLD AND THE CRISIS OF NATURAL SCIENCE

TUSHAR K. SARKAR

Life-World and the Crisis of Natural Science

The title of my paper is 'Life-World and the Crisis of Natural Science'. The topic is as interesting as it is nebulous and broad. It is not possible to do justice to all the related issues in this short paper. I propose therefore to make it clear right at the beginning the main points with which I shall be concerned in this paper. They are the following :

- (a) Nature of the Husserlian concept of life-world to relate it to some other similar concepts with a view to showing that the Husserlian concept is not a really unprecedented invention of Husserl, nor for that reason should it be tagged exclusively with Husserl's name.
- (b) Next I propose to analyse two senses of 'crisis' when one speaks of 'crisis' of science. I distinguish between 'Crisis in Science' and 'Crisis of Science' and try to capture the sense in which Husserl was talking about crisis of science.
- (c) As a follow-up comes the discussion, although very brief, of what Husserl considered the causes of such a crisis of science. They are identified as (i) fragmentation and (ii) perspectival disorientation due to lack of rootedness in life-world.
- (d) Then to discuss Husserl's notions of 'reason', 'philosophy' and 'science', their Greco-Hegelian background and some resulting ambivalences that are found in Husserl.

Although the discussion of the above points would also have ramifications for Husserl's notions of metaphysics, reason and science, as well as for the notion of creativity in so far as philosophy is a way of creative thinking, yet for obvious reasons I shall not go into them in this paper.

(a) Life -World

As Aron Gurwitsch put it, The term *die Lebenswelt* has essentially a historico-social connotation : a *Lebenswelt* is relative to a certain society at a given moment of

its history. The universe of science proves to be a tissue of ideal constructs or, as Husserl puts it, 'a theoretico-logical superstructure'. By virtue of its intrinsic sense as superstructure, the universe of science requires a foundation; that foundation is the *Lebenswelt*. All theoretical truths - logical, mathematical, scientific - find its ultimate validation in the evidences which concern occurrences in the *Lebenswelt*. The *Lebenswelt* includes not only material objects, but objects of art and objects which have human significance and also our fellow-men in complex encountering relations to us. Collective accomplishments (e.g., culture) become part and parcel of the *Lebenswelt*. In and through the activities of its members our *Lebenswelt* undergoes transformation, change, reinterpretation, etc. *Lebenswelt* proves to be the ground of our human existence. Now, science being a culture-bound human activity does presuppose and should be rooted in the *Lebenswelt*. The notion of *Lebenswelt* and 'the way to' phenomenology through a reflection on life-world occupies part A of Part III of *Crisis*.

Is this notion of life-world something original and unprecedented contribution of Husserl, or is it that the idea was already in the air in other kindred forms and only the terminology '*die Lebenswelt*' deserve to be exclusively patented to Husserl? In the final part of this paper I shall try to show why the notion of *Lebenswelt* (though not the expression '*die Lebenswelt*') should not be exclusively credited to Husserl.

(b) Crisis

The word 'crisis', when used with particular reference to science, (in this paper I am concerned only with one natural science, viz, Physics) may be used in two quite distinct senses.

In one sense 'Crisis' means conceptual theoretical crisis *within* science engendered by stubborn anomalies at some critical juncture of science. The cases of perihelion of Mercury and GTR or the null result of MM experiment and STR are illustrative examples. These we may call 'Crises *in* Science'. Such crises can be within the boundary of science itself. This was not Husserl's intended use of 'crisis'. This is the sense in which Thomas Kuhn used 'crisis'.

In the other sense, 'crisis' means crisis engendered by science due to scientism. By 'scientism' I mean an attitude that leads to philosophical disorientation resulting from, what may be called, perspectival myopia. It entails a craze for objectivism (positivistic) and an eliminative-reductivistic approach to human values. Both positivistic objectivism and eliminative reductivism are examples of what I call philosophical disorientation. That present day science (19th century and early 20th century) suffers such philosophical disorientation is what Husserl tries to draw our attention to when he speaks of the crisis of (European) science. Husserl is concerned not with 'Crisis *in* Science' but exclusively with 'Crisis *of* Science'. It becomes clear when he says, 'This is a crisis which does not encroach upon the theoretical and practical areas of special sciences; yet it shakes the foundations in the whole meaning of their truth' (*The Crisis*, p.12). Thus 'the crisis of philosophy implies the crisis of all modern sciences as members of the philosophical universe' (*The Crisis*, p.12). This is a crisis in respect to the total meaningfulness of its cultural life—its total

Existing'. It actually represents according to Husserl, a collapse of the belief in reason. It is reason as the ground of *episteme* (as opposed to *doxa*) which ultimately gives meaning to everything including values and ends. It is meaning understood as their normative relatedness to 'truth in itself'. It is 'absolute' reason through which the world has its meaning - it is faith in this reason that gives man the capacity to secure rational meaning for his freedom and his individual and common human existence (The *Crisis*, p.13). Modern Science with its dominant positivism has lost faith in reason, according to Husserl, a faith so vital for securing a mooring of science in our *Lebenswelt*. It is this loss of faith in reason that has caused modern science to become rootless in the soil of our lived world resulting in a fragmented and myopic vision of our human existence and this is the crisis of science which, according to Husserl, it must strive to overcome.

Is there any relation between Kuhnian crisis *in* science and the Husserlian crisis of science? I think that the answer is 'Yes'. In the Kuhnian sense scientific discoveries and theories can never be understood without reference to their socio-historical setting. What he calls crisis *in* science is always precipitated by both internal as well as external (sociological, etc.) factors. Without going into the details I simply claim that crisis *in* science can and should be viewed as a limiting case of crisis of science in Husserl's sense.

(c) Causes of Crisis

Crisis of science in Husserl's sense, as we saw, 'concerns not the scientific character of the sciences but rather what they, or what science in general had meant and could mean for human existence' (The *Crisis*, p.5). What causes this crisis? In describing the crisis itself, Husserl refers to the younger generations' justified hostility towards the science of the 19th and 20th centuries, because 'In our vital need - so we are told - this science has nothing to say to us'. (The *Crisis*, Introduction - XXVI). Husserl also speaks (in his Vienna Lecture) of 'an intellectualism which loses itself in theories alienated from the world', and also of 'the fateful error of believing that science makes men wise'. In his Prague Lecture (1934) he maintains that the spirit of philosophy is hindered by scepticism (which is the manifest symptom of collapse of our faith in absolute reason) and specialization (which is the cause of modern science offering only a fractured or fragmented view of the world).

The total exclusiveness of the total world view of modern man let itself be determined by the positive sciences and blinded by the 'prosperity....meant an indifferent turning away from the questions which are decisive for genuine humanity'. 'It (positivistic science) excludes in principle precisely the questions of the meaning or meaninglessness of the whole of this human existence' (The *Crisis*, p.6). The mere sciences of bodies (i.e. physical sciences), according to Husserl, abstract from everything subjective, it is consumed by the flame of impersonal objectivism, so to say. It was, however, not always the case that science understood its demand for rigorously grounded truth in the sense of that sort of objectivity which dominate our positive sciences.

Husserl regarded philosophy as 'the one all encompassing science', and regarded

the individual sciences (sciences in the plural) only as 'dependent branches of the one philosophy' (*The Crisis*, p-8) Philosophy as the one edifice of definitive, theoretically interrelated truths was to solve all conceivable problems -problems of fact and of reason. What has happened instead is that the positivistic concept of science in our time has become a 'residual concept' in the sense that it has dropped all the human questions that really matter (Husserl calls them 'metaphysical' questions or questions of reason), e.g., the questions of immortality, freedom, value, etc. which surpass the world understood as the universe of mere facts. All metaphysical questions lie outside this physical world, but not outside the *Lebenswelt*, the life-world. According to the Husserlian concept of science, each science being only a dependent branch of the one philosophy, must be capable of making such philosophical contribution as would fit together like the pieces in a zig-saw puzzle to help promoting the aim of true Philosophy, viz. building up a *Weltanschauung*. Positivistic sciences miserably fail in this task. According to Husserl, 'merely fact-minded sciences make merely fact-minded people.' (*The Crisis*, P.6) 'Positivism decapitates philosophy' (*The Crisis*, P.9). Scientists themselves as practitioners in specialized business of the positive sciences, were becoming unphilosophical experts (*The Crisis*, P.11) . The causes of crisis of European science is therefore identified as (i) fragmentation of reason and (ii) philosophical disorientation due to its lack of rootedness in our life-world resulting in the exclusion of all essential, i.e. non-residual problems. No wonder that such a truncated view of science has nothing to say to us in our vital needs. This almost seems to echo proposition 6.52 of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* : 'We feel that when all possible scientific questions have been answered, the problems of life remain completely untouched.'

(d) Husserlian notions of 'science', 'philosophy' and 'reason' :

I have already briefly indicated Husserl's view about the nature of true philosophy and its relation to sciences. I have also said that the so-called metaphysical questions, according to Husserl, are the most vital as they are the questions of reason. What sort of reason is he talking about ? In his *Crisis* we find him say this : '...here reason is a title for "absolute", "eternal", "super-temporal", "unconditionally" valid ideas and ideals' (*The Crisis*, Part I, p.3) . This notion of reason, which he himself sometimes refers to as 'absolute reason' he borrows from the Greco-Hegelian background - the same source from which he borrows his notion of philosophy as well. In the Greek tradition we can discern two very distinct and powerful trends that pull the unfoldment of the nature of philosophy in opposite direction. One leads to the idea that the aim of philosophy is to achieve clarity leading ultimately from Platonic dialectics of the 'Dialogues' through sophistry to modern analytic philosophy. The other trend develops into the view that the objective of philosophy is the development of a comprehensive world view, a *Weltanschauung* formation. Traces of both are found in Husserl's notion of philosophy. When he criticizes science for its self-generated crisis due to fragmentation, that is because the positivistic sciences offend his idea of philosophy as *Weltanschauung*. On the other hand, in Husserl's insistence on phenomenology as a method leading one to grasp the true essence of the given through a painstakingly cultivated way of looking by taking recourse of phenomenological reduction through the act of 'bracketing', he is prompted by the notion of philosophy as aiming at clarity. An ideal that also underlies the growth of analytic philosophy. There is one

fundamental difference between Husserl's approach to clarity and an analytic philosopher's quest for clarity through conceptuo-linguistic analysis. While the analytic philosophers use language as data and undertake language analysis as a method, Husserl falls back upon the pre-given, pre-theoretic *Lebenswelt* and raises the slogan of 'Zu den Sachen Selbst'. Hence, if each science be a dependent branch of philosophy it has to be rooted in the *Lebenswelt*, or else it would be in crisis. Since the positive sciences of to-day are not rooted thus, there is crisis of science .

If my analysis is correct then several corollaries follow. First, it cannot be said that in later Husserl the notion of absolute reason and search for essences were given up. It was not, though it was sufficiently weakened. Secondly, if, according to Husserl, *Lebenswelt* undergoes transformation, change and reinterpretation as Aron Gurwitsch puts it, then historicity, change and consequent relativism have to be taken seriously. But if so, then, Paul Ricocur asks, Husserl avoids the internal incompatibility between his Hegelian attitude to history and a relativistic-interpretation prone 'crisis' theme itself? David Carr thinks that *Crisis* itself does not clear up these puzzles about the treatment of history. (*The Crisis*, p. xxxv)

Lebenswelt and Some Similar Notions

Although Wittgenstein, Husserl and Kuhn are considered to be philosophers of three different genre, yet I find surprising thematic affinity between Husserl's 'Life-world', Wittgenstein's 'form of life' (*Lebensform*) and Kuhn's notion of a scientific paradigm. Let us take up the comparison between 'form of life' (FOL) and 'life-world' (LW) first.

First, the LW is pre-given, pre-theoretic and ultimate foundation of all our theoretical enterprise and social communication. Wittgenstein's FOL is the pre-theoretic, ultimate ground on which mastery of any given language game depends. That FOL is pre-theoretic and beyond justification becomes clear from *PI* : 'When the rock-bottom is reached, the spade is turned back'. 'What has to be accepted, the given is a form of life'.

Secondly, all theoretical truth - logical, mathematical and scientific-finds its ultimate validation in evidences grounded in the LW. Similarly, the most basic concepts of logic and mathematics like 'being the same', 'difference', 'identity' etc. are rooted in FOL. They are not based on common agreement ; they are agreement in FOL.

Thirdly, Husserl's LW has generated exactly the same Mind of puzzlement and controversy regarding the relativity and plurality of it as has been generated by Wittgenstein's concept of FOL. The controversy in this regard between Garver (only one FOL) and Rudolf Haller (plurality of FOL) is strikingly parallel to Kern-Carr controversy regarding LW.

Fourthly, even the pattern of the considerations that led to the switchover from a rigid formalistic, logico-syntactic theory of language of *Tractatus* to a flexible, non-formal FOL-LG based theory of language, in *Philosophical Investigations* bear

unmistakable similarity to the transition pattern from early Husserlian rigid essentialistic phenomenology to his later relativism-prone LW based approach.

As regards the similarity between LW and Kuhnian notion of a scientific paradigm, the following points may be noted.

First, according to Kuhn, a scientific paradigm grows out of a set of shared commitments of a particular community (the scientific community) at a given point of history. A paradigm thus formed proved to be both (i) metaphysical and (ii) methodological in nature.

Similarly, as Gurwitsch puts it, within the *Lebenswelt* we encounter our fellow-men. The world as a whole, appear to us in the light of beliefs, opinions, etc. that prevail in the community to which we belong. And collective accomplishments become part and parcel of the *Lebenswelt*. (Gurwitsch, pp. 352-353, in Tillman (ed.)). That Husserl's LW has both metaphysical as well as methodological import just like scientific paradigms is too obvious to elaborate.

Secondly, if we do not exclude *ab initio* the possibility that plurality of LW's is a plausible interpretation of Husserl, then the choice between alternative life-worlds would be a non-criterial choice. If incompatible modes of community life within an encompassing world-horizon is not postulated, LW's become locally incommensurable, just as pre-paradigm and post-paradigm theories are for Feyerabend.

Similarly, as Kuhn puts it, 'Like the choice between competing political institutions, the choice between paradigms proves to be a choice between incompatible modes of community life' (Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*, 156). Kuhn also says that 'when (choice of) paradigms enter into a debate ... their role is necessarily circular (*Ibid*). Wiltgenstein's famous remark, 'there is no rule for rule following' clearly brings out the notion non-criteriality as does the Kuhnian notion of 'circularity' involved in paradigm choice. As he puts it, 'the issue of paradigm choice (like political choice of a country constitution) can never be unequivocally settled by logic and experiment (*Ibid*, p.-156) alone. Such a choice is, of necessity, non-criterial.

Thirdly, the ingredients of an established scientific paradigm, viz. concepts (say, of mass), laws, theories are never given to and are never learned by the scientists in abstract isolation. They always come in a networked form. Similarly, the constituents of a life-world, e.g. things, fellow-men, communal creatins etc. 'None of those existents is ever given in isolation. Everyone of them refers to a context into which it is inserted, ...' (Gurwitsch, p 351, in Tillman (ed.)). In fact, LW, FOL and Kuhnian paradigm, each has a holistic and anti-atomist bearing.

Question of Originality

There is no doubt that it is due to Husserl that the notion of life-world has gained immense popularity. The theme of *Lebenswelt* has been so uniquely associated

with the name of Husserl that is often given the credit as the original innovator of the notion of life-world. But a look at the history of the idea of life-world would make one pause to think. Traces of this concept is found in the writing of Vico. In more recent time we find a very similar idea, viz, the idea of '*Lebensform*' as early as 1911 in the writings of W. Fred (Hugo Von Hoffmannstahl) who published a collection of articles under the title '*Lebensform*'. W. Fred believed that the individual is indeed free to choose his own *Lebensform* and ought to do so, but that the totality of *Lebensform*, 'all forms of languages or that which is also called the culture of a society cannot be shaped and created by individuals.' (Haller, pp. 133-34) Haller imputes the source of Wittgenstein's FOL to W.Fred. Wittgenstein even uses the very same German expression *Lebensform*. Janik and Toulmin however imputes the source of the *PI* notion of FOL to Edward Spranger which, Haller shows, is wrong.

Three years after Fred's book *Lebensform* was published, there appeared a book by Otto Stoessel with the title '*Lebensform and Dichtungsform*' (Form of Life and Poetic Form) in which he says, 'In poetry, the poetic grows and ripens out of the form of life and each contains, after its own manner, in the whole world' (See Haller, p.135 for detail).

This all-encompassingness of FOL was also shared with Spengler and Goethe by Wittgenstein in so far as Wittgenstein too implied that 'the whole *gestalt* must always be considered in the interpretation of a particular'. The all-encompassing networked relationship among the ingredients of both 'life-world' and 'scientific paradigm' has already been referred to by me. Not only that, somewhat later in history we find Heidegger appropriating the notion of poetic existence in his notion of *Dasein* when he harps on the theme that 'man lives poetically'. But that is a separate issue and I am not going to go into it now. Coming back now to the question of originality of the Husserlian notion of *Lebenswelt* my conclusion is that *Lebenswelt* is a very thinly disguised modification of W. Fred's notion of *Lebensform*. The underlying basic idea of the two has an unmistakable thematic affinity, although the expression '*die Lebenswelt*' is Husserl's own.

PHENOMENOLOGY, THE LIFE-WORLD AND METAPHYSICS

MRINAL KANTI BHADRA

Edmund Husserl spoke of a pre-suppositionless phenomenology. In that respect all presumptions are to be removed so that the pure phenomena can be given. Among the presuppositions there are many. But the metaphysical presuppositions occupy an important part. If a philosopher is determined in his thinking by a metaphysical theory, he cannot see the truth for himself. Another important thing is this that Husserl wanted to make his phenomenology a rigorous science. For that, what is supposed to be true has to be intuited as a phenomenon. Such intuited phenomena are to be necessarily connected with one another. In this way, what is thought to be true has intuitive evidence. Metaphysical propositions have no such intuitive evidence. Such propositions may be accepted on the basis of pseudo-evidence. So phenomenology has to be metaphysically neutral. It has no commitment to any metaphysics. Even though such things may be said, we are not unable to discover metaphysical tendencies in his thought. Even though phenomenology wants to deny metaphysics and speak of metaphysical reflections as impossible, sometimes an attempt has been made by philosophers who practise phenomenology to synthesize it with metaphysics. But such synthesis has not been happy. It may be that metaphysics may not be added to phenomenology; it may be discovered in phenomenology. With these words, we may try to discover metaphysics in Husserl's early thought, his thoughts during the life-world stage and the thoughts of Merleau-Ponty in his last unfinished work *The Visible and The Invisible*.

I

Let us see what things Husserl starts with. He speaks of an intentionality of consciousness : consciousness is always consciousness of something. He begins with a naturalistic standpoint in which the world lies outside our experience : there are things, animals and human beings. A man has knowledge of himself as a natural being. He can know also the other persons. But there are also phenomena which present to us objects and other aspects of reality . But these phenomena do not have adequate self-evidence . For this Husserl introduces a phenomenological bracketing in which we dissociate ourselves from that which does not have self-evidence. As a result, we are left with only pure phenomena, in which there are only *cogitata* and *cogitations*. But the world to be a world need not only phenomena, but the phenomena have to be constituted as a world. For that we need the activity of the ego. This ego cannot be the naturalistic ego, the ego existing as a factual something. It has to be

pure ego which endures beyond the phenomena. Husserl calls it the transcendental ego, the 'I think' of Kant which accompanies all our experiences. But the question may arise : Has Husserl been able to prove that there is a transcendental ego ? If we do not have anything more than the phenomena, after the phenomenological bracketing, the ego cannot be but the complexes of phenomena. Such an ego may have a constituting power, but the constitution has to be confined to fragments of experience, and not the world which has been lost due to phenomenological bracketing. In our experience we find that the world along with its objects is given to us. We are human beings in the world and the world has not been constituted by us, but the world is already there. Husserl wants to change this idea of the world and gives us a new perspective. In that perspective, it is the transcendental ego and the world that is constituted by the phenomena. This idea of the transcendental ego and the world which is constituted by it is a metaphysical tendency. It is true that Husserl has not systematically worked out this metaphysical view-point. But it is there in his phenomenology.

We may see that Husserl's distinction between the mental act and phenomena which are called *noesis* and *noema* also leads us metaphysical point with the introduction of the phenomenological bracketing. We have now only the intended objects, or what we call, *noema*, what we obtain now is a series of *noemata*. They are the objects as perceived or as experienced. They are also the meant objects. These meanings are bestowed by the transcendental ego. An object which we experience is as it is meant. As Husserl says, a real tree may be burnt or cut down or destroyed, but the *noema* or meaning cannot be destroyed. So in the phenomenological reflections of Husserl, an object is not what it is, because it is a meant object or meaning. We can say changing Berkeley's words a little that an object exists because it is a meaning. Husserl thus gives us a meaning-idealism, in the place of world of the naturalistic standpoint. The world of our everyday experience is due to our natural attitude. But it can also be a theory of the naturalistic standpoint which may be adopted in our realistic point of view. But the view of the world, which Husserl is giving us after he has introduced the phenomenological bracketing, is that of an idealistic attitude. It does not remain just an attitude, but it becomes a theory of the world and the objects. Such a theory can also be a transcendental solipsism in which there is only the transcendental ego and its intended objects. Such a theory is a metaphysical tendency of Husserl, though here also he has not systematically worked it out.

We have thus discovered some metaphysical tendencies in Husserl, even though he seems to deny that he is committed to any metaphysical theory. But Husserl does not want to remain in the idealistic attitude. He wants to give us back the world in which everyone of us lives, in which we work and which we want to improve. He wants to tell us that the world which we have established is not a subjective or personal world. It is an inter-subjective, objective world. It is a world accepted to be true by others and myself. To establish the reality of the world, we have to prove that there are other human beings. We hope that in such a proof also, there is metaphysical element. The existence of the other is established through several stages. In the first stage, there is a sort of analogy by which the significance of my body moves from my apperceived world to the body of the other. In the second stage, the

announcement of the concordance of behaviour is made. Thus, there is given a verifiable accessibility to what is not originally verifiable. The third stage marks a new stop. There is a 'free variation' in the following terms. I am 'here', the 'other' is there, but "there" where I would be if I were to move. The other is now appresented. But can we say that we have succeeded in establishing the existence of the other ? The pairing of 'here' with the 'there' of the other actually remains an enigma. The here of the other differs essentially from the here which would be mine, if I went over there. My here and the over there or the other are mutually exclusive. This analysis shows that another world has not been established independently. It is constituted by appresentation in mine. There are two elements here which have not been reconciled -the idealistic element which requires that the other must be a modification of my ego, which according to the realistic element, ever excluded from my sphere of consciousness.

To solve the problem of the other and also the objectivity of the world, Husserl has to go to the naturalistic point of view where I am given with the other. The other does not have to be constituted. The other is with me. But Husserl cannot go back to that point of view. He has adopted the idealistic attitude and tried to establish that the transcendental ego is the foundation of everything. But what is that ego ? It is what remains after the natural elements as well as the personal characteristics of a human being have been bracketed. It is the pure ego of everyone and as such it is the universal self. It can be related to other selves as their basis. The other selves are expressions of the transcendental ego. Only in that sense perhaps, can we understand the relation between the ego and the other. But this is a Hegelian trend in Husserl. Though Husserl has not been explicit about it, he has spoken of the inner man. Such inner man establishes everything and gives foundation to the world and all things. This is the only way Husserlian transcendental phenomenology can be understood. It has little difference from the Hegelian theory of the absolute spirit of the objective idealism. Thus we arrive at the implicit metaphysical theory of Husserlian transcendental phenomenology . Though such metaphysical ideas have never been worked out in Husserl in a systematic way, these are there potentially. We can bring them to light, if we wish to do so.

II

Towards the end of his life Husserl spoke of another type of phenomenology. It is the phenomenology of the Life-world . We are not sure whether Husserl came to accept the theory of the life-world as a mode of escape from the transcendental solipsism or he came to introduce this new idea as a reaction from the abstract character of the scientific entities. These abstract scientific theories have created an emptiness in the mind of human beings. There were philosophers in this period who brought to focus the uselessness of human life. They were giving more importance to the emotional aspects of human life. They were trying to show man a new way in which he could be conscious of the strivings of his life. But Husserl was not happy with the irrational attitude of the existential philosopher. He did not deny that philosophy has to serve the human purpose. Through it, man can establish a new *telos* towards which he can proceed to realize a humanistic goal. But all this has to be done in a rationalistic reconstruction of human thinking. But such reconstruction

should not follow the physico-mathematical model of the sciences.

It is under the influence of Galileo that the life-world in which human being are in immediate contact with the things of the world has been replaced by the objectively true world of the sciences. The universe of science is a net-work of ideal constructs. Its conceptions are those of the mathematical sciences. But the life-world is experience on the individual and the social level. The objects appear with their colour, smell, etc. These qualities are experienced in our sensation and perception. The objects are experienced in their concrete richness with their practical aspects. The world of the sciences is opposed to the individual's life-world.

But science wants to transcend the individual and social worlds. The mathematical method of the physical sciences was a critical reflective method. In this way the objective ideal world is derived from the life-world .

Husserl points out that sciences need a foundation. This foundation is the experience of the life-world. The evidence of the lived experience builds up the scientific ideas. It is shown that mathematical or scientific truths have their final justification in the events and happenings of the life-world. So we have to return to the life-world and elucidate its role in the constitution and development of the science.

Husserl likes to point out that we are concerned in some way or other with things, animals, people in the life-world. The world is continuously present and we have a vague awareness of the world which pervades all our comings and goings. The world is therefore the ground of all our endeavours. The world comprises nature which is not the idealised nature of science, but is the nature given in immediate experience. It includes culture also with the tools, instrument, books, buildings, art-objects. They are objects having human significance. As the world has these objects and provides the frame-work within which we live our human life, we refer to it as our life-world.

All human beings take for granted that the world is one and the same for all of us. It is a common intersubjective world in which there is a reciprocal interaction between our intentions, plans and those of other persons. The life-world is the ground and basis of our life which exists independently of all our individual and collective activities.

The life-world is the base upon which the superstructure of science is built. Husserl points out also that the life-world is pre-reflective , pre-theoretical, pre-predicative, pre-scientific and pre-verbal. To arrive at the scientific world we have to perform a reduction concerning the objective science. The objective science remains a cultural fact. But we refrain from following the guidance of the theoretical science, we suspend them and take them out of action with the help of this reduction. We are able to grasp the life-world as it is as what is experienced in our historical reality. The life-world has a relativity, but it shows an invariant structure. We obtain the expense of space and time in the life-world. We also get material objects in such experience. But they are not as what is obtained in geometry and physico-state mathematical investigations. The principles are a kind of uniformities. What Husserl

wants to say is that objects behave uniformly under similar conditions. These principles behave also like the opening principles of science. But the scientific principles are obtained by abstraction of the concrete rich experience. The life-world is the pre-scientific level of experience which, as pointed out earlier, is pre-linguistic and pre-predicative.

In this way Husserl reaches an ontology of the life-world from which metaphysics is not a great distance. It is a possible world of the inter-subjective experience. But we have to remember that the ontology of the life-world is fundamentally different from the ontology of modern science.

If we want to implement the programme of the derivation of the scientific principles, we have to know how the life-world is constituted for this, we need a second reduction with regard to the life-world which means rendering inactive, laying aside and suspension. The whole of the life-world remains unaffected by the transcendental reduction. We remain disinterested onlookers and just look at the stream of conscious life. Acts in our naive and natural attitudes are just lived and they become articulated and made subjects of reflective analysis. In this way all our mundane activities and the life-world become transformed into phenomena which refer to the acts of consciousness. The life-world is constituted by different modes of constitution, such as passive constitution, active constitution, genetic constitution, unconscious constitution and anonymous constitution. There are some common ways in which the objects are constituted and they are space, time, the basic characteristic of the objects, the idea of the world, etc.

Let us now try to see what metaphysical tendencies are discovered in the theory of the life-world. We find that Husserl makes a distinction between three orders of reality. There are the order of the scientific world, the order of the pre-scientific life-world and lastly, the order of the transcendental consciousness. It is also found that the order of reality of the scientific world is derived from the pre-scientific life-world, while the life-world is constituted by transcendental consciousness. One of the important questions asked by metaphysics is: what is the ultimate nature of reality? All philosophers, metaphysicians or non-metaphysicians try to answer this question. Whatever may be the case, every philosophy has an assumption about reality. The task of metaphysics is to explain the object and events which happen in reality. There is a difference between ontology and metaphysics. While ontology wants to analyse the being or the *what* of things, metaphysics tries to explain the *why* of things, thus we can understand the intimate relation between ontology and metaphysics.

Husserl has given us the idea that the ultimate reality is constituted by consciousness. This has been shown by him in the earlier part of his phenomenology, as well as in the phenomenology of the life-world. He pointed out that material objects can be destroyed but it is not possible to destroy consciousness, as without consciousness we are not able to understand the nature of reality. What we call objects are intended by consciousness, and it is the new intentional nature of consciousness which reveals the objects to us. This is possible, because consciousness operates on the level of intentionality. But this emphasis on consciousness shows

that Husserl has adopted in idealistic attitude. This idealistic attitude of Husserl is seen in his theory of meaning where he speaks of meaning as bestowed by consciousness as well as in his explanation of the existence of another person. His idea of the transcendental consciousness tries to explain how we are related to the objects and how the objects appear to be what they are. Whether his explanation can be established as a true principle is another matter. But there is no doubt that the idealistic metaphysical presuppositions work behind his phenomenology.

III

To Merleau-Ponty, phenomenology means a protest against science which makes an objective study of things and of their external causal relation. It is not, like Husserl, a scientific, rigorous study of things as Husserl understood it in the first period of his phenomenology. It is a return to the lived world as met in lived experiences in the sense of later Husserl. His move is absolutely different from the idealist return to consciousness. The real, in his opinion, has to be described, not constructed. He does not think that truth lies in the inner man. There is no such thing. Man lives within the world.

Husserl's phenomenological reduction is phenomenological idealism, as it brackets belief in the reality of the world. Merleau-Ponty wants to discover the spontaneous surge of the life-world. To him the lesson of reduction is the impossibility of reduction as it wants to loosen the habitual ties only and to understand the world in a fundamental amazement. Thus, phenomenological reduction becomes in his hand a refutation of constitutive or phenomenological idealism. Phenomenology wants to catch the facts in their uniqueness prior to the linguistic formulations. Eidetic reduction is to make the world as it is before it is reduced to subjective thoughts. This approach makes phenomenology subservient to existent faith. Intentionality means to Merleau-Ponty the facts of the world as readymade. His conception of intentionality is enlarged as it characterises our entire revelations to the world, and our attitude to other. Merleau-Ponty wants to combine extreme subjectivism with extreme objectivism in the idea of the world. He denounced the appeal to subjectivity and his attempt to combine subjectivity with objectivity can be called bipolar phenomenology.

Merleau - Ponty discusses his phenomenology of human life and behaviour in his *The Structure of Behaviour*. In this book he does not express any explicit idea of metaphysics. He speaks of human behaviour as symbolic, where stimulus and response are related by the principles of special acts. Such behaviour are found in human beings who can change the frame of reference on the human life the equilibrium between external forms and the human order depends on man's intentions expressed in the cultural world. Man has a power to choose and vary his points of view and objectives. In conclusion Merleau-Ponty considers the significance in relation to problem of mind-body situation. He aims at a position between naive realism which gives a causal account of behaviour and an idealist solution which derives exclusively from consciousness. The detailed analysis of term, structure and meaning can give an answer to the problem. He insists on the primacy of perception and so phenomenology occupies the central part of his philosophy. By the primacy of

perception he means that perception constitutes the ground level for all knowledge. It has to precede all other levels such as those of the cultural world and those of science. This perceptual knowledge explores the structure of our experiences of the world. It is available to us prior to all scientific interpretations. The primary task is to see and describe the world as it is presented in perception as correctly as possible with all the clarities and ambiguities. It is a phenomenology of the world as perceived rather than of the perceived acts.

Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* is a descriptive study of the perceptually lived world. But this return to the perceived life-world is prevented by two types of classical prejudices, empiricism and intellectualism. These theories speak of a pre-given objective world consisting of meaningless sense-data which organise themselves passively or are organised by acts of attention and judgement. The prejudice is based on the constancy hypothesis according to which the relation between stimulus and sensation is a one-to-one relation. The Gestalt psychologists defeat these theories by their concept of figure and ground of the elements of perception. Perception, according to Merleau-Ponty, is open, indeterminate and ambiguous. Only when the distortions made by empiricism and intellectualism are eliminated, can we return to perception as presented to a first psychological reflection.

Merleau-Ponty then speaks of our body as access to the world. This is clearly demonstrated by example of the phantom limb. He discusses the spatial and motor patterns of the body as well as the body as a sexual being. He explores the body as a being which expresses itself in gestures, in speech and language. In all these cases, the body is experienced as an integral component.

Merleau-Ponty speaks of 'Being -for -itself' and 'Being -within-the-world' in terms of which he wants to replace the Cartesian *cogito*. He criticises the Cartesian ego and challenges the indubitable nature of conscious act. The perceived and perceiving are inseparable. It is not necessary to attach any greater certainty to the immanent acts of the cogito than the transcendent objects of the cogito. In his words, the cogito is my being-present-within -the -world, we can remove any doubt about this cogito which he calls new cogito by throwing ourselves into action. The only indubitable consciousness is the committed consciousness which constitutes its very meaning in "existence". It is not possible to stay completely outside 'being', not even by the radical form of doubt. By subjectivity Merleau-Ponty means our inherence in the world. To him the world is nothing but our field of experience and we are one of its perspectives. In his opinion, the internal and the external, the subjective and the objective are inseparable. He gives us a doctrine of embodied consciousness where subject and object influence each other reciprocally.

Merleau-Ponty analyses the principles of phenomenology in his earlier books. But he is not quite ready to establish an ontology. On the otherhand, he has been examining the traditional metaphysical assumptions to show whether they can be based on the phenomenology of the subject who is in the world. Whether all this subject-object participation leads to some *Being* which can be discovered through phenomenological explorations is not very clear in his *Phenomenology of Perception*. In its last work *The Visible and the Invisible*, which he could not finish, he reaches

a theory of being through his phenomenological investigations of the reversibility of tactual and visual perception. But though he gives us an idea of the subject-object Being he nowhere clarifies the difference between subject and object, because for him, there is a reversibility between the two. It is true that *Phenomenology of Perception* does not lead us to a metaphysical Being, his theory of the Body-subject indicates that the Body is both a subject and an object at the same time. This body has an affinity with the world which expresses itself through it. We shall come to see that he gradually develops a theory of *Being* which he calls *Savage Being* and which is continuous with our body. He makes it clear that I belong to this being and *J'en Suis*. We shall discuss these things in our analysis of *The Visible and the Invisible*.

In *The Visible and the Invisible* Merleau-Ponty thinks that he has found a new philosophical approach. He stresses the essential unity of the visible and the invisible. They belong together as the two sides of a sheet of paper. He protests against the separation of 'psyche' and 'nature' Human life is actualised visibility of nature, of Being itself. We have to see human being in its insoluble unity with nature. He wants to abandon this notion of perception which is considered as an isolated act as it confronts nature and object. He still uses the term 'perception', but he uses more the expressions 'perceptive life' and 'perceptive faith'. He speaks of a primordial realm of reality, of 'Savage Being' which precedes all distinctions. The task of philosophy is to discover the primordial unity.

In his last book Merleau-Ponty refuses to start from the distinction between consciousness and object. The distinction remains within experience but the most original level of human life must precede this distinction. In the *Phenomenology of Perception* he spoke often of bodily injury which brings in a disturbance of the objective order. He now rejects the problem itself. He now asks what such an objective condition really is. He thinks that it now belongs to the order of 'Savage Being' which precedes the distinction between the subjective existence and objective order. We have now to understand that the body in its development obtains an invisible meaning, an invisible aspect. Actually Merleau-Ponty thinks that the subjective and the objective orders are manifestations of a deeper realm of reality, which he calls 'Savage Being'. Every structure, all accessible reality is visible reality. The visible is that which transcends the seeing subject. We should not conceive the subject as nothingness, like Sartre, nor as a thing. The seeing subject itself is visible reality which becomes seeing and goes beyond itself.

Merleau-Ponty's new understanding of his views about reality cannot accuse him either of materialism or of spiritualism. The visible and the invisible belong together, as they are two sides of the same reality. He speaks of an interconnection between all things of reality. The interconnection is called by him an *Enteclas* which actually refers to a network composed of flowers, numbers or other decorative elements. They are crossed and intermingled. He wants to point out that the elements of reality are comingled while the analytical attitude endangers their essential unity. But there are other notions, like seeing, speaking and even thinking, in which there is not a clear distinction between subject and object, essence and existence, they mediate a vague experience in which all things seem to be comingled. These notions do not have a clear and exact meaning. But Merleau-Ponty speaks of a mystery

which is indicated by these notions, a mystery with which we are familiar, but which has been forgotten. These notions are to be reflected upon to discover how they bring us in contact with reality.

About the objects which we see are to exist at a right distance. Vision takes up things and makes them visible. He says that colours partake of the structure of visible things. It is claimed by Merleau-Ponty that colour is never an isolated fragment of being offered to an isolated look. Colour produces a ripple in the several interior and exterior realm of our existence. It is a modulation of our world. The word 'the flesh of things' is frequently used by Merleau-Ponty. He means by it an affinity between our seeing body and the visible reality.

In the case of touching Merleau-Ponty says that the interrogating body and the interrogated world comes closer. He points out also that our visual interrogation of the world is a very special manner of touching. He often speaks of touching thing with our look and this leads him to the reversibility of seeing and touching. Later he says that reversibility is the final truth about human life.

It is pointed out by him that our feeling hand cannot be openness towards the world, if it is not sensitive to itself and sensible to another feeling person, sensible to our other hand. In our touching experience we can distinguish three aspects, namely, (1) I feel the qualitative aspects of reality, e.g., softness and hardness, (2) In them I feel the things themselves. (3) At the same time I have a feeling of my feelings. I can feel my feeling hand with the other hand. This shows that my hand belongs to the realities which can be felt.

Though seeing takes place at a distance from the visible things, the distance is not an obstacle. Distance and visibility are not exclusive, rather they imply one another. The reason is that we do not see things from a point outside the world. We see the world as being in and of the world. The 'density of flesh' constitutes the visibility belong to the visible reality and this is also the reason why I must be at a distance to see the things when seeing. I belong to the world and the world belongs to me, I am a part of the world and the world is an extension of my flesh.

Merleau-Ponty now analyses the body and says that it is distinguished from things by the fact that it is sensitive to itself. It is also a perceptible reality which perceives itself. The body appropriates every thing and thus constitutes the differences between itself and the surrounding world. Our body unites us directly with the world because it is a perceptible reality which perceives. He says further that the perceiving body is perceptible reality which becomes perceiving. It has the 'flesh of the world' in itself. Its revelation is a revelation of all Being. Merleau-Ponty criticises Sartre who says that body as perceiving, as a phenomenal body is nothingness, confronted with the density of Being. He wants to reject the traditional *cogito* which considers it as a reality of the spiritual order, radically distinguished from the body. He considers man as a body-subject and tries to reduce the total reality of man to this body-subject. But in his earlier books he did not penetrate sufficiently into reality of the body-subject. He was seduced into reintroducing the traditional concept of the *cogito*. He continues to say that we have a body which is not mere object but which has the

character of a subject, since it suffers pains, since it has hands which touch things. The body as perceptible reality must be extended to all perceptible reality. There is no clear boundary between the perceiving body and the world. The world is the continuation of our visibility, of our 'flesh'. The depth of Being which constitutes things constitutes also my body. As a visible reality my body is a part of the world, but my look actualises the spectacle of the world and supports it. There really is *entrelacs* and *chiasme*. The perceptibility, which is actuated but not created by human beings, characterises all reality. Merleau-Ponty calls it the 'flesh of the world', an expression which has been used by him earlier. The word 'flesh' refers to the Greek notion 'element'. Element is something which constitutes and penetrates all things. The element is also considered as a general thing. It is the essence of all things which are particulars. It is rather similar to both particulars and general ideas, as it has the generality of the idea and the reality of spatiotemporal beings. It is a kind of embodied principle which gives a style of Being to everything in which it is present. The element explains the interior unity of all Beings. Metaphysicians speak of all things which belong together as they participate in Being. Merleau-Ponty gives a name to the worldly unity of all beings, which is 'element'. Thus the 'flesh' is an 'element' of Being. The 'flesh' is not a fact or a collection of facts. Yet it coheres with 'here' and 'now'.

The element is at the same time both worldly and human. It brings all reality including man into a field. This field-character of the element depends on both, Merleau-Ponty never expresses this fundamental unity as the 'flesh'. The flesh constitutes the unity and cohesion of our body. The things of the world seem to be a prolongation of the body. It seems that Merleau-Ponty's thought represents a metaphysics which tries to find its basis in matter or the corporeal order. His thought is metaphysical because he is looking for the principle of unity of Being.

Human activities, according to Merleau-Ponty, are reversible and belong to the world. That is why our body belongs to the world and concentrates around it. This is possible, as both are united within the same 'flesh' of the world. It is the realm of both body and the world. Two consequences of interiority and intersubjectivity are the consequences of these points of view. Seeing has a peculiar character. Though I cannot see all things at the same time, it can be presumed that things which I do not see are visible. They are not only visible, but touchable also. All worldly things and our body are penetrated by the same 'flesh' of the world. So all things are visible and touchable in principle. My body is a 'perceiving perceptible' and it actualises a possibility which is inherent in the 'flesh of the world'.

It is also said that the 'flesh of the world' is the realm of existence of all substances. My seeing does not depend on my private personal initiative. Vision is realised in me independently of me. This shows that visibility which makes me see is also realised in me independently of me. This shows that visibility which makes me see is also realised in other beings. Due to this fact, an 'intercorporeality' arises. I can touch my touching and in this way I am in contact with a corporeal being which makes contact with another things. Merleau-Ponty does not want to make the worldless consciousness the universal principle of coherence. The world is one field, consciousness cannot constitute the unity of all things. It is my body which is

the interior unity of things. It is the collaboration of different instruments of the body which makes things visible and touchable. The unity of my consciousness is supported by the intrinsic unity of the body itself. My body can be called a thing, but it has at the same time the character of a subject. The body itself gathers its manifold experience into our experience. Because of the body itself there is one experience of one world. The appeal to a bodiless consciousness to explain the unity of our experience is an escape from reality. Such a theory treats many problems, such as the problem of intersubjectivity and the plurality of conscious beings.

The intersubjective character of our experiences can be understood in the same way as we understand the unity of our own experience. We find a connection between the manifold experience field. There is an interchange between them which constitutes one general field of experience. The same interchange is possible between the experiences of many persons, as the same 'flesh of the world' unites them as 'perceiving perceptibles'. The 'flesh of the world' enlightens not only what happens in me, but also what happens in other.

There is no real problem of the other 'ego' since it is not he or I who sees, an anonymous visibility actualises itself in us. We share a great vision. The same 'flesh of the world' constitutes all of us.

Merleau-Ponty speaks of reversibility which means that the message we receive from one experience can be translated into another realm. Most of the time the translation takes place on the pre-intellectual level our body translates factual messages into visual language. The tactual message has a visual meaning, while the visual meaning implies a tactual meaning. For our experience there is an intrinsic communication between the visual and tactual realm of perception. It is called by Merleau-Ponty the phenomenon of 'reversibility'. This 'reversibility' also holds good between different persons and it is known at the pre-intellectual level. There is a transition not only between one experience and another, but between the experiences of different persons.

When we see other persons, we do not confront worldless looks, but a look in which the world is involved. When we see them looking at us. We know that our world, including ourselves, is visible to them. We experience that in our seeing, the depth of being becomes manifest. This same depth of Being reveals that seeing is not our exclusive possession. Solipsism is an impossible attitude. The solipsist isolates his whole experience in himself and then asks if his experiences are shared by others. But when I realize that I am a 'perceiving perceptible' I experience a mystery of Being which exceeds myself. I understand that my experience does not necessarily or exclusively belong to myself. Then I understand I am visible, precisely as seeing. My seeing returns upon me through the eyes of other persons. I understand human body in general I am in the world with other seeing persons. We communicate with other persons, since we are all 'perceiving perceptibles'. The 'flesh of the world' makes us see, makes us perceive.

This inter-subjectivity accepted by Merleau-Ponty comes due to intercorporeality. Our communication does not proceed from an intellectual or voluntary act. It comes

from the fact that we are all actualization of the same visibility which is the 'flesh of the world'.

Merleau-Ponty does not deny the intentional relationship, but it is not the final truth of human existence. When man reaches a certain level of self-actualization, he finds himself as a subject opposed to an object. Thus the intentional level is preceded by a pre-intentional level. To understand the intentional relationship, we have to reduce it to the pre-intentional level. Actually the intentional level is permeated by the pre-intentional level which can be called 'super-intentional' level. Our attention is focussed on the frontal aspects of appearing reality. But there is also lateral aspects through which the subject and the object are connected. The opposition between the subject and the object takes place within a unity which precedes and exceeds the oppositions. This unity co-appears in all phenomena and makes them possible. There is a distinction between a 'figure' and a 'field'. We can observe the figure, but not the field, which is only co-observed world. This expresses that the figure has a clarity, but the field remains obscure.

Now it seems to be clear that the subject and the object belong together, as they are permeated by one and the same reality. This is what is called *en-etre* or *in-Being*. This is also expressed by the statement 'I belong to it', the subject belongs to the world and it is essentially worldly. The world also belongs to me and so he speaks of the 'flesh of the world'. My flesh is not a substance alien to the world. It is the world itself which becomes flesh in me. My flesh is therefore a revelation of an essential possibility of things themselves. Merleau-Ponty wants to say that man is worldly and the world is human. Man is matter and the world is flesh. There is an interchange between man and the world. He expresses that the world humanises itself by becoming man and man is the humanisation of the world. That is why he often says that the world has 'an invisible side' or even the spiritual side.

Merleau-Ponty extends the awareness of *en-etre* or *in-Being* to all experience. We feel behind an experience the weight of space, time and Being. These are not just in front of us, but behind us. The awareness of 'en-etre' makes us realize that we are at a distance from surrounding things without being separated from them. He understands the human body as a thing among all things, but it is openness to all things. Body is at once both subject and object. The subject and the object coincide in the same reality. The two orders belong essentially together and they are fundamentally one. Both the subjective and the objective aspects arise from the intrinsic unity of Being. Our body is the fulfilment of this order. Our body manifests the unity of Being and reveals that Body can be dual without ceasing to be one. The subject in this course of experiences constitutes time and the temporal subject is the unity of time. Being is transformed in an appearing world, because a particular being transforms itself into the awareness of Being. In the same way Being becomes temporal, because a particular being temporalises itself and assumes the reality of a thing in its temporalization.

Merleau-Ponty speaks of the figure-field structure of all things. The figure can stand out from a particular field, but ultimately it stands out from Being, our final field of existence. We can distinguish between the objective and the subjective 'standing out'. The more a subject becomes a subject the more outstanding becomes

the figure. We "stand out" from 'Being' and we do so, first of all, in our corporeal existence. It is indicated by Merleau-Ponty that we are sensitive to the meaning of Being through our "carnal participation" in Being. Being is the original silent Being and our primordial participation in it is also silent. We first participate in the meaning of Being, because our body adopts itself to it. If we lose our contact with our body, we lose contact with Being. It is also mentioned by Merleau-Ponty that our body is entirely worldly, while the world participates in the being of our body. Man is worldly and the world is human.

It may be said that Merleau-Ponty has lost his phenomenological heritage in his last book. We can try to examine the meaning which traditional phenomenology obtains in his last book.

He does not deny intentionality, because man is indeed a subject confronted with an object. But this is not the final truth of human existence. The phenomena which reveal an object give a frontal datum, but there are more lateral aspects. In his opinion Being reveals itself not to an intentional subject, but to a subject which transcends itself. It is the savage Being which is hidden in darkness. It comes to itself in man. It is perceptible Being which precedes itself in man. We become aware of Being when we pay attention to the lateral aspects of the intentional relationship. We transcend ourselves as we recognise the density of Being which involves both the subject and the object we become aware that this density of Being exceeds to both the subject and the object. Then we reduce the clarity of the intentional relationship to the underlying clearness of the 'Savage Being'.

Reduction now means the awareness of the *en-etre* in any intentional relationship. The truth of the intentional relationship is the discovery of the intensity of Being which supports the intentional relationship. Eidetic reduction of Husserl is of no use in philosophy because Being does not have an essence. In Being there is a fundamental style which is more than a fact but less than an essence.

It has been criticised that real scientific communication is impossible in phenomenology. Real philosophy, according to Merleau-Ponty, is not a 'spoken word', but a 'speaking word'. He does not deny phenomenology, but contributes to the revelation of its meaning. His *The Visible and the Invisible* is an important contribution to the actual relationship between phenomenology and metaphysics. It has been pointed out that *en-etre* is Merleau-Ponty's basic awareness. Does this passage from phenomenology to metaphysics imply a radical break with his initial phenomenology? In *Phenomenology of Perception* he stressed that man is originally a body-subject. The body-subject is a dialectical interchange with the world on a pre-objective level. In *Sense and Non-sense* he spoke of a relationship, not of knowledge, but of Being. He felt that the opposition between subject and object is not the most original datum. It is preceded by something deeper. But he could not succeed in expressing this deeper reality, as he continued to conceive of this relationship as one of dialectical interchange. He felt that he should transcend this dualism but he could not turn sufficiently towards the total aspect of appearing reality. In *Phenomenology of Perception* the body-subject is a 'logic of the world'. The body is intrinsically adopted to the world and the world to the body. Meaning is

constituted in the dialectical interchange between the body-subject and the world. But this dialectical relationship between the body and the world seems to imply an intrinsic affinity between the two. He makes explicit this affinity in *The Visible and the Invisible* which is not explicit in his earlier works is now mentioned by Merleau-Ponty that the same Being penetrates into man and the world. The intentional opposition takes place within the common Being. The former position is not rejected, but he speaks of them in a new manner.

Merleau-Ponty explains why it is difficult for us to have access to Being. There is 'blind spot' in our consciousness. It is difficult for it to see that our consciousness is rooted in the body and through the body to Being. Our consciousness is blind to its existential characteristic and it fails to see the visibility in the world and the existence of object. Being is the common source of both subject and object. It co-appears in everything that appears, but in revealing itself, it hides itself. It constitutes the accessibility of all that is accessible to itself. He identifies Being with the perceptible world. Heidegger's *Dasein* can be understood as the perceptible world. Being is the source of all human activities, of perception and speech, of science and philosophy, of artistic expression and the labour of literature and music. It is the perceptual source of our orderly life and our orderly world. Being is called the 'pre-verbal *logos*' which provokes the verbal *logos*. This richness is accessible only in our expressions. Being is active in our activity and our projects are born in the heart of Being.

Merleau-Ponty's reflection on Being brings us face to face with the fundamental question. Being is a fundamental reality, a fundamental group which coappears in everything which appears. We cannot speak about it in clear words, since our clear words are related to clear phenomena. Being, however, is not a clear phenomenon. The words which point to Being are always obscure. A similar difficulty arises in the case of music and art we; cannot speak about them in clear words. But we find Merleau-Ponty saying that the philosopher must concentrate on Being. At the same time he says, Being is not directly accessible; it only co-appears; it is a field which can never become a figure. Actually such a thing can become clear and Merleau-Ponty tries to do such a thing. But philosopher cannot conceive them in clear mathematical terms. It is reflection on our lives, our situation, our world and Being. If such a reflection makes us aware that the ultimate realm of reality is obscure, that it is not directly accessible, that it does not directly appear, but only co-appears, then Merleau-Ponty is right. Such a position may appear to be contradictory, but the philosophers want to say what can hardly be said.

Merleau-Ponty's philosophy is truly metaphysical, because its last word is Being. In this sense he has an affinity with Heidegger. Like Heidegger he also asks the question of Being. He too stresses that man is involved in the question of Being. He too emphasises that Being is obscure. But there is a wide difference between the two. Merleau-Ponty explains why Being is obscure, why we cannot conceive it in a clear manner. He does not mystify anything at all. He speaks only of our involvement in a mysterious realm. This involvement is our human being. We can say that both Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty are obscure, but the latter explains why philosophy is obscure. He professes his own ignorance and expresses that he does not know.

We have seen that Husserl speaks of the life-world which is pre-linguistic, pre-predicative, pre-scientific as well as pre-reflective. But never denies that the life-world is intentional. He points out that the scientific conception is an abstraction of the life-world. But about the constitution of the life-world he appeals to the transcendental consciousness which with its intentional relationship gives us an idea of a subject confronting the objective world. Merleau-Ponty wants to go beyond this dualistic conception of the transcendental consciousness and the world. Merleau-Ponty does not deny the intentional relationship which works in the world, but he speaks of a preceding unity which permeates the intentionality. This unity is the Being, it is also the 'flesh of the world' in which both body and consciousness are united. Body is not separate from consciousness which is its other aspect. Body is both the subject and the object, which is continuously connected with the whole Being. All things are commingled in the intrinsic unity which is called by Merleau-Ponty 'Savage Being'. Though Husserl spoke of the life-world in which all things are intermixed with one another, he did not go further to realize the depth of Being. For him, it seems that though all things are immediately available in the life-world, in a state of cohesion each has a distinct identity. Merleau-Ponty dissolves the separate identities in a non-recognisable unity which includes all things in a non-dualization. This leads us to the metaphysical principle of Being which Husserl might have felt to be in the life-world, but could not realize it in its intrinsic unity of Being. Thus, the life-world prepares us for a metaphysical principle of which Merleau-Ponty could have vision, while it escaped the intellectual reflection of Husserl.



HERMENEUTICS AND THE LIFE-WORLD

KRISHNA ROY

Now-a-days the word, 'hermeneutics' is being frequently used in the realms of literature, philosophy and social sciences. Though the word is quite familiar to some, it may be helpful to discuss its meaning briefly. The word 'hermeneutics' originates from the Greek verb *hermeneuein*, which has different usages. The first usage is close to the Latin word *sermon* and means expressing, conveying, rendering etc. For example, Lord Krishna conveys or proclaims the messages to man through Arjuna in the Bhagavat Gita . The second usage of *hermeneuein* is to explain. Aristotle in his *Peri Hermeneulas* used the word in this sense. The third meaning of *hermeneuein* is to translate. Translation is a necessary process of bringing to understanding that which is strange and alien to a different language. What is common from these various usages of the word is that whether we express, explain or translate, some sort of interpretation is always, involved in these and other activities. From these usages, we provisionally define hermeneutics as the theory of interpretation. Various thinkers have employed the word differently :

1. a theory of biblical exegesis,
2. general philological methodology,
3. the science of linguistic understanding ,
4. the methodological foundation of *Geisteswissenschaften*,
5. phenomenology of existence and of existential understanding,
6. the system of interpretation both collective and iconoclastic, used by man to reach the meaning behind the myths and symbols (Note 1).

Hence, hermeneutics has two basic intentions : first, to ascertain the exact meaning of a text, sentence or word, secondly, to disclose and interpret the messages and significations contained in symbolic forms. Gradually its scope has extended, encompassing many areas within it. Thus, any act of interpreting, for example, Hegel's Phenomenology or Bhagavad Gitā may be described as hermeneutic acts. Hermeneutics, further, refers to the art of interpretation, giving us some methods or principles of proper interpretation. (In the context of the present paper, I shall use the word in its primary sense.)

Since the days of Edmund Husserl, most of the students of philosophy are familiar with his notion of Life-world. Infact, it is Husserl who first used the integrated concept

of *Lebenswelt*, but both the concepts of the life and the world were present in the thoughts and writings of many other earlier philosophers. That the philosophers, since time immemorial, are interested in investigating and explaining the world out there is quite wellknown. Zest for life and the curiosity to explore its inner secret and dynamism also fascinated the perceptive minds of all ages. Among the numerous examples of such discussion we may remember the contribution of some at least. We are all acquainted with Descartes' *Discourse on Method and Meditations*, but we should not forget that his keen interest in the nature of the world led him to prepare his *Le Monde* (the world), which remained unpublished due to social constraints. In the post-renaissance period . Descartes made the first significant attempt to explore the implications of mathematical physics and to give us some new facts about the world. In this approach to explain physical facts by mathematics. Descartes supported the Galilian interpretation implicitly. We must not forget that it is this intention to analyse and interpret the world that gradually led him to the realm of metaphysics. He wanted to establish a science of the physical world in which everything would follow mathematically from a self-evident first principle. Without going into these details, it may be mentioned that most of the post-cartesian philosophers and scientists felt the need of interpreting and justifying the scientific analysis of the external world. They were all concerned about the close relation between the man and the world and their differences arise out of their different *Weltanschauungen*.

Just as concern for the world out there permeates the history of thought, similarly curiosity for life is also age old. Different philosophers and scientists have interpreted life from different perspectives : some are concerned with the origin of life, while others are more interested in the meaning and purpose of life. Some predecessors and contemporaries of Husserl felt the importance and significance of life and wanted to reveal its deeper dimensions. We all know about Henry Bergson (1859-1941) who described life as the primary inner experience and explained how this 'original elan vital' pervades the whole evolutionary process.

It was Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), the noted historian-philosopher, who centered his philosophy on the notion of life. This life is not a mere biological concept; it encompasses the entire external, physical and socio-cultural atmosphere of human being. All our philosophical and scientific discourses arise out of this life and culminates in it. Hence, even a brief overview of the history of philosophy gives us enough evidences of the significance of both the concepts of the world and life. Here we must remember the contribution of Wilhelm Dilthey and there are enough reasons to presume that Dilthey's *Lebensphilosophie* plays an important role in Husserl's formulation of the concept of *Lebenswelt*. Husserl could not ignore the efficacy of Dilthey's philosophy of life. The impact of both Dilthey and Heidegger helped him to review his attitude towards the then science and positivism . By conjoining the concept of life, which we all experience and the concept of world, which is being investigated by the scientists, Husserl gives us the integrated concept of life-world, which not only retains the importance of the constituent elements but also reveals some Gestalt quality after synthesis. It shows the inalienable interconnection between our life and the world we inhabit. We cannot conceive of our life apart from this world, nor can we conceive of the world as it is not viewed

from the perspective of any living being. When we experience and explain the world it is only from the perspective of a concrete, living person. Of course, it may be possible to 'bracket' the one concept from the other, i.e. we can suspend judgement regarding one and focus our attention on the other - but all such suspension is possible only at the level of speculation; in the level of practice or actual experience there can never be any such abstraction. Thus, Husserl's method of suspension shows us rather the 'impossibility of such suspension' and shows the inevitable interconnectedness of our life experiencing the world.

Now we may enter into the basic question of the present paper : how would a hermeneutic thinker view this phenomenological concept of Life- World ? A hermeneutician would suggest here that the very notion of Life-World itself owes its genesis in a hermeneutic act, i.e. it is itself, as we have noticed earlier, an outcome of an act of interpretation. Both the concepts of life and that of world are liable to varied interpretations, e.g. life may be viewed from the perspectives of a biologist, anthropologist, medical practitioner etc. ; similarly the world has been the subject of investigation of physicist, cosmologist, geologist, poet, artist and so on. When a scientist wants to abstract life from the world and investigates them separately - that is one type of interpretation; and when the phenomenologist wants to view the world as conjoined with life-that is also another hermeneutic act. Hence, it reveals that whether we seek to bring about changes in world or merely speculate about it, there is no freedom from interpretation. In his phenomenological account, Husserl starts from the ordinary concrete world which we all experience in our day to day encounter or live in. Contrary to popular belief that this life-world has nothing to do with our transcendental experience, Husserl shows how his transcendental philosophy also encompasses the life-world. (Here we must remember, however, that the word 'transcendental' does not refer to that which transcends the empirical realm - here 'transcendental' refers to that which constitutes and makes the experience of the empirical realm possible.)

While formulating his transcendental phenomenology, Husserl became gradually interested in this notion of Life-World and has discussed it in detail in his *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. There he states that by forgetting the original service in life-world, the European sciences have faced a 'crisis' of meaning. While discussing how *doxa* has a special significance as compared to *episteme*, Husserl shows that the world of science always requires the life-world. He reminds us that whether in science or in philosophy we should not trivialise the ordinary truths of the life-world. That I possess a body, that I live in West Bengal, that Midnapore is in West Bengal, that West Bengal is a part of this world' etc. are the facts which are tacitly presupposed in all discourses and discussions but remain unexplained and forgotten . In the name of 'scientific idealisation' and 'mathematisation of physics', modern science tends to conceal from us the world as *our* world, as the world we *live* in. The significance of Husserl's *Crisis* lies not merely to reestablish the link between the sciences and our world but also to explore the questions regarding the constitution of the life-world itself. This life-world is the result of the anonymous constitution of the transcendental ego. Just as Heidegger proceeds from the level of ontic to the ontological, Husserl also starts from our familiar, everyday world and reaches to the concrete structured whole, which encompasses the multiplicity of

particular worlds.

The *Lebenswelt* is much more than the sumtotal of all the things in the world. It is the horizon of meaning without which they can neither exist nor be understood or interpreted. These various ways of understanding constitute the horizon and become meaningful as we all experience, live and interpret the world in our own distinctive ways and these give us our different, specific interpretations of the world. Though we live and share the world in common, the experience and the *Weltanschauungen* that we have are different from that of others and convey different purposes and value for us.

Such varied *Weltanschauungen* cater to the taste of a hermeneutician, who would also support such multiple dimensions of our life-experiencing-the-world. One may ask here a relevant query as to how does a hermeneutician, who is primarily interested in the interpretation of texts, involve and concern himself with such encounter with the world. In the present paper I would like to answer this relevant question, which consequently would help us to follow the gradual march from the hermeneutic of text to the hermeneutic of life-world as a whole.

Undoubtedly hermeneutics arose primarily from the need to understand and interpret the hidden and ambiguous expressions of the age-old sacred, significant texts like the Vedas or the Bible. Besides such obscure and cryptic texts, hermeneutics is also necessary for interpreting legal documents and literary masterpieces. The earlier hermeneutic thinkers, like Ast, and Schleiermacher, were concerned with the formulation of adequate methodology for interpreting the texts. Gradually hermeneutics underwent a profound transformation and different experiences of human life came under its purview. Though the clear and explicit expansion of the scope of hermeneutics became explicit since the advent of Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology, yet the seeds of such tendency were incipient since earlier times.

We want to remind that since its inception, hermeneutics is not a mere monological analysis but seeks to enter into a dialogue with the text as an other. Understanding a text and interpreting its meaning is not to be regarded as private activity as it is certainly intertwined with its socio-cultural milieu. Any hermeneutic act thus engages itself in discourse with the community of inquirers and participates in the form of life. Hence, in their hermeneutic of text, Schleiermacher and Dilthey too practised some communicative acts of linking the texts with their situations.

One of the fundamental notions of Dilthey's *Lebensphilosophie* is his notion of *Erlebnis* (experience), which refers to life as it is immediately lived by human beings and as such is not a mere biological phenomenon but a phenomenon of human awareness. All our actions -practical and speculative, manifest such thoughtful varied experiences of life. Hence, art, religion, philosophy etc. reflect a particular side of life and in each case the world appears in a new light. Such diverse attitudes towards life, the innumerable nuances and responses to the world from the basis of our multiple world-views. Such discourse of various world-views or *Weltanschauungen* enlarges the scope of hermeneutics from interpretation of texts to interpretation of our encounter with the world. Not only we interpret the world in our own ways, but

a hermeneutician may also act as the critic of textual exegesis, hermeneutics thus has been the method of history and social sciences. *Verstehen* is not merely understanding the texts - it is understanding the entire social structure and our place in it.

Pursuing such Diltheyan project of laying the hermeneutic foundation for the human sciences, Husserl provided its logical foundations and explicates how our lived experiences refer to the intentional structures that transcend such experiences. Though Husserl rejected Dilthey's historicism, he was equally dissatisfied with the oneness of the scientific idealisation of experience. Hence, he sensed the need of tracing the genealogy of experience, which as experience of the lived world, precedes its idealisation through science. In spite of giving emphasis on lived-world, precedes its idealisation through science. In spite of giving emphasis on lived-world, Husserl could not fully overcome the modernist ideal of progress through rationalism. It is the task of Heidegger to overcome such rationalistic image and to formulate a post modern philosophical hermeneutics which critically discusses the older concepts and strengthens the meaning and efficacy of the original experiences in newer contexts. It is Heidegger who employed the Husserlian method for enquiring the meaning of being by interpreting Dasein and as such practising hermeneutic phenomenology. Not only the phenomenological method but also the concept of world received a distinct turn in his *Being and Time*. It is because being is there, i.e., Da-Sein or in other words, being is in the world as a structure of meaningfulness does anything within the world have meaning and usefulness. The concept of Life-world is being interpreted here as conveying that Dasein's existence is always in the world. Another hermeneutic aspect of Dasein's being is understanding. "understanding is the existential Being of Dasein's own potentiality-for-Being, and it is so in such a way that this Being discloses in itself what is Being capable of". (Note-2). Understanding is the primordial activity of projecting possibilities for the entities in the world, and in interpreting we critically explicate the content of such projection. Such interpretation is never a presuppositionless apprehending of something presented to us whenever anything is interpreted as something, this interpretation will be based inevitably upon 'fore-having' , 'fore-sight' and 'fore conception'. Through such understanding and interpretation Being-in-the world discloses the infinite possibilities.

We are aware that in his *Truth and Method*, Gadamer discusses that understanding is a primordial mode of our being in the world. He states : "Understanding is no longer an operation antithetic and subsequent to the operations of the constitutive life, but a primordial mode of being of human life itself". (Note -3) Gradually he discusses that hermeneutics is no longer restricted to the problem of method in the human sciences ; it is a basic concern for philosophy and is rooted in the ontological realm Being a part of human existence, such understanding and interpretativeness are both perennial and universal.

Hence, it becomes clear that whenever we understand and interpret something, we must have some pre-acquaintance with grammar, language, literature etc. of the *interpretandum* or the subject of interpretation. It is further necessary to be aware of the milieu as such and also to have fore-conception are essential pre-conditions for interpreting any text, but these are also necessary for understanding our life in the

world as a whole. Infact, hermeneutics of text and hermeneutics of world are analogous processes . When we interpret a text (e.g. the Bhagavad Gita) it is an openended task for the text can be interpreted from various perspectives and in different ages and contexts in different ways. The world too, like the text, is liable to multiple interpretations. Without having any fixed meaning, the world also has infinite possibilities and can be viewed from various perspectives. Like the interpretation of text—our encounter with the lived world is not free from prejudice. The word 'prejudice' is not to be understood here in a derogatory sense-rather we are using the word in the way Gadamer has used it, i.e. pre-judgement . Any interpretation is inevitably preceded by some 'pre-judgements' and 'fore-havings'. Hence the same hermeneutic principle is applied in understanding the text and the world we live in .

Infact, the hermeneutics of text and hermeneutics of the lived-world can not be thoroughly dissociated from one another. For without the world, a text becomes contentless and without the text, the world would have been mute. Hence, we reiterate that the hermeneutics of text is inalienably connected with the hermeneutics of Life-world.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

Note 1 : Richard & Palmer, *Hermeneutics*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston 1982, p. 33.

Note 2 : M. Heidegger, *Being and Time* , Translated by J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson Harper & Rao, Evanston 1962, Sec. 31, p 184.

Note 3 : Hans Georg Gadamer, 'The Problem of Historical Consciousness', quoted in R. Bernstrin's *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism*, p 34.

PHILOSOPHY AND THE LIFE-WORLD :
SOME REFLECTIONS

SANKARI PRASAD BANERJEE

To one well-acquainted with the traditional Indian systems the title above may appear a little odd as the question of philosophy being alienated from the life-world appears frivolous. Philosophy/Darsāna is located within the life-world and it is supposed to offer the best solution to the problem of human living. Philosophy basically has to be oriented towards human living though this living, in accordance with the traditional systems, is not limited merely to the present birth/life. The final aim of philosophy is attaining liberation (*mokṣa/apavarga/kaivalya*). This ideal is accepted even by the non-vedic systems like Jainism and Buddhism, though in Buddhism it may be more appropriate to talk of *nirvāṇa* as a negative ideal — *alāta śānti* — extinction of the burning charcoal — though Buddhism as actually practised by its votaries would psychologically turn toward a positive ideal of happiness. Be that as it may, it appears evident that *Darsāna* is intimately related to human living, not merely at the organic or psychological level but also at the intellectual and spiritual ones, which are regarded as more important.

This should not be taken to suggest that in India philosophy has not been concerned with the hard discursive problems (rationalistic?) like knowledge, truth and such others. As a matter of fact, some systems have offered the highest type of 'rational' discussion on these problems, e.g. Advaita Vēdānta, Buddhism, Nyāya (pṛācīna and most significantly Navya Nyāya) as also Jainism. So it is advisable not to indulge in any such dichotomous philosophical clichés as spiritual (Indian) and non-spiritual (Western), intuition-centred (Indian) and intellect-centred (Western), logical (Western) and non-logical (Indian) etc. These distinctions cut across the Indian/Western dichotomy.

However, in recent developments in philosophy in the West, there has been a systematic tendency to become acutely analytic and abstract and this has brought in a resultant drifting away of philosophy from the human life-world. Our attention to the situation has been drawn by a great philosopher of the West in this century, Edmund Husserl, the pioneer of the phenomenological movement in philosophy and himself a champion of transcendental phenomenology. Husserl wanted phenomenology to found and develop itself as a 'presuppositionless philosophy' and demanded, in Husserl's own language, a 'return to the things themselves' of immediate

experience. Phenomenology is concerned with the location and clarification of the *a priori* structure of all so-called 'regional ontologies'. Phenomenology may be seen as continuing the essential style of transcendental philosophy involved in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, but through its criticism of Kantianism it attempts to go beyond Kant. 'Phenomenology seeks to reconstruct the total range of the life of consciousness in terms of its underlying eidetic structure from the standpoint of transcendental subjectivity.'¹ It also explores the genesis of meaning within the evolution of our experience. 'Phenomenology, finally, seeks the reconstruction of *Lebenswelt*, the life-world within which each one of us is born, exists, and dies'².

II

Edmund Husserl, who is usually taken as a philosopher concerned with the transcendental problems resulting in the development of transcendental phenomenology, is supposed to have given a new turn in the phenomenological movement in his *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* wherein he expresses his unqualified concern for the human *Life-world* (*die Lebenswelt*). Along with the development of his philosophical thinking and insight he becomes increasingly conscious of the gaps in abstract thinking which tends to become rootless. The root of all human thinking and other endeavours must be in human experience, in the life-world where he/she is situated. No philosophy, no area of human intellectual pursuit can afford to be cut off from the life-world of human beings, which is pre-scientific and pre-reflective, but is the ground of all reflective activities.

There are speculations galore as to why Husserl, the philosopher transcendental consciousness and *the epoche*, finds himself compelled to address something as concrete and presupposition-laden as the life-world. Among the Husserl scholars there appears to be two sharply divided camps on this point. One camp is in favour of recognizing only the 'earlier' Husserl — the transcendental absolutist — while the other starts only with the 'later' Husserl of the life-world theme without troubling themselves about the sources from which emerges the theme. Professor J. N. Mohanty along with Ludwig Landgrebe, Roman Ingarden and S.S. Kockelmans belong to the first camp which, though recognizing the philosophical insight contained in the idea of the life-world, finds the central truth of Husserl's message in his transcendental project.

The other camp thinks that the theme of the life-world represents a dramatic change in Husserl's thinking around the time of writing *the Crisis*. This change is allegedly motivated by extrinsic historical factors such as the demands of Husserl's audience in the thirties for a more 'concrete', 'relevant' philosophy as given by Heidegger in his *Being and Time* (1927) which became widely popular, with its affirmation that Dasein is always Being-in-the-world, and never a pure worldless consciousness. But this view appears to be pointless.

Gail Soffer in his *Husserl and the Question of Relativism*³ argues that Husserl's writings reflect virtually uninterrupted concerns with themes surrounding the life-world from the time of the *Ideas* — the earliest documental occurrences of the term

Lebenswelt being contained in Appendix XIII to *Ideas II* (1917). Husserl regularly discusses the themes associated with the life-world (*Lebenswelt*) under many other headings, including 'umwelt', 'naturalische Umwelt', 'naturalischer weltbegriff', 'Erfuhenugwelt', 'Alltagwelt', and 'Lebensumwelt' among others. This, however, is not to suggest that Husserl had a clear idea of the life-world from the beginning, nor to maintain that the idea is without ambiguity or development. It is also a fact that Husserl's insight gradually developed and unfortunately he could not finish the Part III/IIIA of the *Crisis* wherein he wanted to make a beginning anew. Anyway, one has to take into account the discussions formulated in all the above -mentioned terms in analysing Husserl's conception of the life-world. It is clear that Husserl becomes increasingly conscious of the rupture between the primordial, pre-theoretical human experience and the world of scientific reality which passes for 'objective' and 'Valid'. 'Under the impact of modern science as inaugurated by Galileo, the *Lebenswelt* — i.e. the world of common experience — has been superseded by the objectively true and valid universe of science which, in the thinking of modern Western man, passes for reality.'⁴ Husserl is drawing our attention to this unsatisfactory state of affairs where science and, under its impact, philosophy also is becoming completely cut off from the primordial, pre-reflective human experience. The universe of science, in Husserl's language, is a 'theoreticological superstructure' which shares much of the nature of geometry or mathematics in which the concepts are ideal constructions. This idealization of nature in what is known as natural science started with Galileo in the West and it has become more and more mathematicized. But idealization presupposes materials to be idealized, a foundation on which the sciences stand. Husserl's firm insight towards the end of his philosophical career identifies in the *Lebenswelt* the foundation of the sciences, natural and social, and studies of culture and religion etc., and in the 'evidence' of common experience. This finding of Husserl emphatically asserts that all theoretical truth — logical, mathematical and scientific — finds ultimate validation and justification in evidences which concern occurrences in the *Lebenswelt*. For the ultimate clarification of the universe of science, one has to turn to the *Lebenswelt* which plays a vital role in the construction and constitution of science.

Underlying all our life and all our activities the explicit but inarticulate awareness of the world pervades and radical philosophical reflection must begin by rendering explicit this universal 'presupposition'. This world includes nature — as given in direct and immediate experience and not the idealized nature of physics. There are many more things in this world — books, instruments, objects of art, our fellow humans, culture, religion and many more; in short, objects which have human significance, serve human ends and purposes, satisfy human desires and needs. This is the world where we encounter the other, our fellow humans whom we may observe dispassionately as they can do the same.

The theme of the *Lebenswelt* has generated tremendous interest in different human fields of intellectual activities — in the natural and social sciences, history, fields of culture, religion, morality and the like. There is everywhere an urge for going to the roots — the pre-reflective, pre-predicative, direct and immediate experience in which all these activities are rooted. But this has also given rise to a host of problems which tend to shake the very roots of Husserlian phenomenology

as developed through the *Cartesian Meditations, Ideas* etc. Marleau-Ponty goes so far as to suggest that : 'It was in his last period that Husserl himself became fully conscious of what the return to the phenomenon meant and tacitly broke with the philosophy of essences.'⁵ It appears that the Husserl of the *Crisis* (specially Part IIIA) has completely forsaken the transcendentalist and absolutist Husserl. But this is very difficult to swallow. There must be some continuity, notwithstanding Husserl's enthusiasm for the *Lebenswelt* .

One of the basic and most serious problems is concerned with Husserl's notion of *history*. Paul Ricouer raises the pertinent question, 'How can a philosophy of the *cogito* , of the radical return to the ego as the founder of all being, become capable of philosophy of history?'⁶ To accommodate *change*, which is very much there in our life-world, in an otherwise absolutist frame of philosophy appears baffling. Husserl is quite aware of the problem and makes some remarks in the text on 'the origin of geometry' (Appendix VI, below.) Husserl there refers to 'depth-problems' which throw a 'clarifying light' on 'our whole understanding'. 'For, as will become evident here in connection with one example, our investigations are historical in an unusual sense, namely in virtue of a thematic direction which opens up depth-problems quite unknown to ordinary history, problems which, (however), in their own way, are undoubtedly historical problems." Husserl speaks of himself as seeking 'what is essential to history' (p 377) and of 'methodically and systematically (bringing) to recognition the *a priori* of history' (Appendix V, p 349) . Thus Husserl appears to be primarily concerned with man's *general* character of being historical, i.e. his/her 'historicity'. But can we take this notion of historicity seriously in which time/change does not play any role ? This amounts to hypostatization of history which cannot accommodate actual change without which, paradoxically, there is no history. Again, if change cannot be accommodated, human creativity cannot be explained,. In every type of 'essentialistic' philosophy this remains a basic problem as change and reality of time can hardly be accommodated.

A staunch Husserlian has his answer — as suggested by Husserl himself. The life-world's pre-theoretical character, its pre-givenness in relation to theory, is the notion stressed by Husserl in his pre-occupation with European science and in relation to human crisis. Any theoretical activity presupposes this pre-given world which cannot be strictly said to be in time, or rather, it is always there for any theoretical, predicative intellectual activity to start. 'This world of immediate experience' is also described as a cultural world, richly organized for practical ends and laden with *linguistic* tradition. Such a world could be pre-theoretical, but could hardly be described as pre-predicative. And of course, its very social and intersubjective character places it, on Husserl's earlier scheme, in a secondary position in regard to the immediate world of perception. Here it often seems, in keeping with Husserl's stress on historicity, that the individual's world of immediate experience, rather than grounding the cultural world, is determined by it.⁶

Another serious difficulty arises in relation with relativism against which Husserl's strong objection is well-known. It appears that despite his early attacks against relativism, Husserl's analysis of the life-world (accepting its plurality) results in an affirmation and, in a way, phenomenological justification for relativism, though in a

different way from the one refuted in the *Prolegomena*. This confusion mainly arises from the misunderstanding regarding Husserl's idea of the life-world (which, in any case, he never explicitly and clearly explained). Does Husserl conceive of the life-world a full-fledged cultural -historical world (with all the sediments of past theoretical activities) or, does he conceive of the life-world as a stripped down perceptual-natural world containing natural objects only? Husserl scholars differ also on the point. David Carr in his *Phenomenology and the problem of History* argues that Husserl vacillates between these two conceptions. However, Carr presents a revised position in a later essay wherein he maintains that in writings prior to the *Crisis*, Husserl understands the life-world in a phenomenologically more authentic sense of the subject-relative conception or apprehension of the world conditioned by culture and history. By contrast, continues Carr, the *Crisis* presents a significant shift in Husserl's thinking. Here there can be no talks of 'life-worlds' in the plural, for now the life-world is the unitary natural-perceptual world which *Precedes* all historically and culturally conditioned world-views.

It is interesting to notice that Kern holds just the opposite view so far as chronology is concerned. Like Carr, he draws a similar distinction between life-world qua concrete, cultural -historical world and life-world qua prehistorical, natural-perceptual world, and then holds that the notion of the unitary, pre-theoretical world of natural experience is dominant in the Husserl of the 1920s, whereas in the *Crisis* the life-worlds are many rather than one, and are relative to the various cultural contexts. Soffer suggests that neither of these views is correct. On a close study of Husserl it becomes evident that in numerous passages Husserl does explicitly distinguish between the two senses of the life-world, and also indicate their relations. In a nutshell, it may be said that the position is as follows : The *concrete* life-world, the world as apprehended in everyday life is indeed a full-fledged cultural-historical world, containing language, practical objects, persons, works of art and many such articles. This life-world, however, in its full concreteness contain various levels of objectification, layers which can be separated out by a process of abstraction. Husserl unambiguously asserts that the cultural-historical world is one in which we operate (whether by abstraction, idealization, mathematicization, or whatever). In this sense Husserl seems to be in full agreement with Carr.

In so far as the life-world is understood as the *concrete* life-world, Husserl unquestionably maintains that the life-world is relative and there is a plurality of life-worlds and each such world is intentionally relativized to a specific intersubjective community. But he also speaks of a universal structure or nuclear experience. It cannot, however, be denied that Husserl has affirmed both the relativity and the plurality of life-worlds. The plurality of the life-worlds consists in the different *contents* and *horizons* of the worlds themselves, the relativism consists in the reference to a specific 'we' (or 'they') that comes to belong to the intentional constitution of this world and its contents, as the limited intersubjective community which lives in this world.

Once the plurality and relativity of the life-world are admitted, the question of truth poses a serious problem. How do we account for the truth of the objects and states of affairs encountered within the life-world ? or, speaking ontologically, do these objects and states of affairs constitute reality ?

From various discussions in Husserl it can be discerned that life-world truths have : a) limited intersubjectivity, b) limited justification, c) some amount of inexactness, and d) situational character. It appears that the emergence of the notion of the life-world truths presents a significant self-critique of Husserl's earlier 'absolutist' conception in the *Prolegomena* according to which the absolute conception is the one 'we all' intend *whenever* we talk about truth. Still, it may be argued in favour of Husserl that even in the case of life-world truths three basic phenomenological criteria are fulfilled : i) they are derived from experience; ii) their formal consistency can be demonstrated; and iii) the concept can be *given*, fulfilled in intuition.

In summing up this discussion we may note that :

A. Husserl's assertion of the life-world towards the end of his philosophical career is emphatic. It is born of a deep philosophical insight which reveals the abstract character of the sciences and the conviction that the ultimate court of appeal for validation is direct, immediate experience.

B. Husserl has asserted the relativity and plurality of life-worlds, even though he is conscious of the difficulties that would crop up in accommodating this relativism in his essentialistic framework.

C. He has made persistent appeal to relate everything in the life-world to immediate experience, and he seems to have harboured a sense of universal immediacy of experience in the intersubjective world. But this has not been adequately developed or defended as he has not been able to finish the project — part IIIA of the *Crisis*. But the impact of the concept of the life-world has been tremendous in different fields of human intellectual pursuits .

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LIFE-WORLD AND CULTURES : A STUDY
OF THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF LANGUAGES

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The word 'phenomenology' has been misused or used to refer to various kinds of thinking in recent years, so much so that we have almost forgotten what its various characteristics are, as exemplified by the philosophies of Husserl and his successors, who again do not at all think in the same way. Husserl himself had clearly stated in his work, *The Idea of Phenomenology* that "It is a method and an attitude of mind"¹. Gerhard Funke indeed poses the question whether it is a metaphysic or merely a method. Various phenomenologists have followed different methods in formulating it, and the student of this type of philosophy is not very clear as to whether it is just a philosophical method or a metaphysic. Quintin Laner in his introductory book points out 4 or 5 characteristics of phenomenology. Husserl himself was probably responsible for this confusion; in his own philosophy we can discover several phases. For instance some interpreters even notice a tilt towards transcendental idealism in some works of Husserl, and in his concept of *Wesensschau* there is a kind of Platonism. One of the pupils of Husserl, Oskar Becker reacted strongly to the publication of *Meditations Cartesienne (1929)* as 'a tragic symbol',² while Wilhelm Szilasi gives a three-phased account of Husserlian phenomenology : descriptive phenomenology, transcendental phenomenology and transcendental-constitutive phenomenology³. Walter Biemel discovers four stages in his philosophy⁴. The confusion is compounded by the thoughts of each of the phenomenologists like Heidegger (who puts forth a 'phenomenological ontology') Sartre (following suit with his '*Ontologie phenomenologique*') and Nicolai Hartmann and Max Scheler (breaking away from the Husserlian tradition altogether). All this shows that one cannot be rigid about the definition of phenomenology.

It has been made clear by Husserl that phenomenology should not be regarded as a set of axioms, which can lead to a construction of a metaphysical system. As a method, its basic tenets-like going back to the root of things (*zu den Sachen Selbst*), its presuppositionless non-Utopiac, not dogmatic, adherence to ontological neutrality implied by the doctrine of *epoche* and rigour with which it approaches experiential data for critical examination are basic requirements for any philosophy to claim itself to be phenomenological. Unfortunately, philosophy in the XIXth and even in this century has been influenced by a great deal of dogmatism which itself is a product of adherence to various faiths, ideologies and even secularized world-views, which have made our thinking somewhat crystallized and impervious to criticism. Dogmatism, which is not necessarily only religious in character, has seriously affected philosophy both in the East and the West. Allegiance to an absolute conceived

metaphysically is one such dogmatism we have not got over even in this century. Denial of the reality of the world and of man has been one of the cardinal doctrines of most idealistic systems, which includes also Advaita Vedanta. Old fashioned psychology has examined mental phenomena as though they were apart from and independent of bodily processes, and also independent of the socio-economic and historical circumstances. In the 20th century, we have also witnessed two dogmatic movements in psychology : psycho-analysis and behaviourism. In his *Phanomenologische Psychologie*, while pointing out the importance of his conception of the life-world, Husserl has at the same time emphasized the close relationship of philosophy with psychology in as much as the latter is closely linked to logic, epistemology, ethics and aesthetics, all of which deal with psychical operations. Unfortunately psychology in recent years has isolated itself from such operations, and has ceased to provide a theoretical basis for what the Germans have called *Geisteswissenschaften* (imperfectly translated as spiritual sciences). It has isolated itself from these aspects of philosophical activity, because it has become attached rather inappropriately to the method adopted by the positive sciences for the study of human mind and also because it is not aware of the most central feature of all mental activity, namely intentionality, to which all phenomenology gives a central place.

Later phenomenologists like Merleau-Ponty and Aron Gurwitsch have emphatically rejected the misconceptions of recent psychology based on either psycho-analysis or behaviourism. Gurwitsch is very clear as to the nature of the trend known as 'phenomenological psychology' :

"Mental and psychological life in all its multifarious forms is encountered in connection with particular beings, which whatever else they might be, have corporeality and are mundane existents. That is to say, they appear in, and belong to the real world, the world as given in the perceptual experience of the life-world (*Lebenswelt*)"⁵

The grounds of our perceptual experience are also confirmed by others like us. The world of primordial experience, according to Husserl is one and the same for everyone, belonging as they are to a certain socio-historical group. This is how Husserl visualizes inter-subjectivity with reference to the *Lebenswelt*. But one cannot help feeling that by his emphasis on consciousness, one can fall into the error of psychologism, which Husserl himself has attacked quite strongly in the first part of his *Logische Untersuchungen*. During centuries of philosophical development in the West, especially during the post-Cartesian era, philosophers have particularly emphasized 'consciousness' (or *Bewusstsein* in the German idealist tradition, or *conscience* as the French have called it). In English the term 'consciousness' has unfortunately some psychological connotation. It has to be granted however that Husserl has used this term more in logical and epistemological terms than the psychological. Husserl does believe that this perceptual world provides the material for a phenomenological description of this world. Perception (or *wahrnehmung* as the Germans have called it) as the subject-matter of man's encounter with the life-world.

Merleau-Ponty, therefore, finds it prudent to shift the emphasis from consciousness to perceptual experience, which is indubitable and inter-subjective. Life-world is the actual world of human beings and not an ideal world; a common participation in it and communication within it have to be regarded as the indubitable

starting points, not the Cartesian *res-cogitans*. Idealist philosophers have been in the habit of condemning or at least relegating the perceptual world to a lower order, calling it an appearance (or maya, as the Advaitins would call it), arising out of our infirmity, our ignorance). As Merleau-Ponty would put it humourously, departments of philosophy are not hospitals to cure man of this imaginary infirmity. Some thinkers (especially in the East) are in the habit of regarding the physical body, especially the human body as impure, non-eternal and as something to be liberated from as early as possible. We shall let Merleau-Ponty speak for himself :

"From the depths of my subjectivity I see another subjectivity invested with equal rights appear, because the behaviour of others takes place within my perceptual field Just as my body as the system of all my holds on the world founds the unity of the objects which I perceive, in the same way as the bodies of others — as the bearer of symbolic behaviours and of the true reality — tears itself away from being one of my phenomena, offers me the task of a true communication, and confers on my objects the new dimension of intersubjective being, or in other words, of objectivity."⁶

Merleau Ponty therefore talks of 'perspectives' in the same way as Husserl does. Your way of working at the world is not the same as mine. Though Husserl distinguishes between the body in its purely physical manifestation (*Korper*) and the body as an organism (*Leib*). Merleau Ponty's perspective of others is as persons, as unitary beings in whom the physical and the psychical aspects are fully integrated. Husserl while talking of the transcendental ego, relegates the order of sensations to the lower realm, whereas acts of interpreting the perceived data, generalization, theorizing, speaking, writing and all symbolizing activities to the higher sphere of the transcendental ego. This is like the philosophers who have without much justification distinguished between the higher and the lower selves.

Husserl is right in his view expressed in his last work, that philosophy in the past has ignored the life-world, in its anxiety to posit and glorify a higher realm. The influence of the religious world-view is most probably responsible for this philosophical perspective of the world we live in. A Purely scientific world-view on the other hand according to Husserl, is "a theoretical-logical subtraction " (*theoretisch-logische Substruktion*) on the life-world, which is a realm of the subjective.

"Completely closed off within itself, existing in its own way functioning in all acts of experiencing , thinking and other activities of living, thus involved everywhere ."⁷

Merleau-Ponty would confirm Husserl's view :

"The whole universe of science is built upon the world as directly experienced, and if we want to subject science itself to rigorous scrutiny and arrive at a precise assessment of its meaning and scope, we must begin by re-awakening the basic experience of the world of which science is the second-order expression."⁸

What is required as a pre-requisite is the *epoche*, by which all scientific judgements

and all common-sense judgements about the ontological reality of the world of objects are suspended, bracketing this world as it were. When we restore perceptual experience to its proper place within the realm of science. The all-encompassing life-worlds in the work, *Die Krisis der europäischen wissenschaften und die Transcendentale Phanomenologie*, Husserl has come a long way from his *Cartesianische Meditationen*, considering the world as the "natural setting of, and field for all my thoughts and all my explicit perceptions."⁹ Inter-subjectivity has two aspects to it: our interconnected perceptual experiences on the one hand, and our intrlinked intentions, projects and activities on the other. The life-world therefore presents us with an indefinitely continuing horizon, where each existence is closely linked to every other existence, without which it ceases to have any meaning. Moreover, because of its historicity, the life-world is not fixed in its connotation, and cannot be conceived mechanistically. Further, things also happen in accordance with what Husserl calls '*Gewohnheiten*' or habits (as it is inexactly translated). Historicity therefore is the essential feature of all our judgements and there is nothing *a priori*.

However, Husserl's idea of phenomenological reduction comes very close to transcendental idealism, and can even be identified with it. I can think of one British idealist who comes very close to the phenomenological point of view. Bernard Bosanquet, who is very much forgotten even in the land of his birth also talks of 'fields of consciousness' which though peculiar to each individual has elements in it which are inter-subjective and form 'contents' representing logical unity.¹⁰ The 'world' here is by definition, unique in which all truths cohere. We all participate in this world as one 'light' without sacrificing its unity in consciousness. But as Merleau-Ponty puts it, Husserl's view is one-sided in so far as I as the subject of experience am also a body with a unique past, and my own individual trials and tribulations do not have much in common with those of others. Along with me, there are other individuals too. Thus as Merleau-Ponty puts it :

"The most important lesson which the reduction teaches us is the impossibility of a complete reduction".¹¹

Husserl's characterizing his own thought as the 'phenomenology of essences' does succeed in keeping the world of existent beings apart. This attitude is corrected to some extent by Husserl's last work, *Die Krisis*. Aron Gurwitsch writing on the last work of the great thinker remarks, while summarizing the latter's attitude to the *Lebenswelt* :

"If the world is always there as pre-given, if living means living in the world, it is because the world announces itself along with the appearance of every particular mundane existents with which we might be dealing".¹²

It is in this context that language, being the most important medium of expression, communication and artistic creativity becomes relevant.

In the year 1960 Maurice Merleau-Ponty published an important work dealing with the phenomenology of language, entitled *Signes*, (which has been translated into English in 1964). To call the analytical philosophers of Great Britain 'philosophers of language' is a gross misnomer, as most of them have very poor grounding in linguistics and do not show any acquaintance with language other than the European, and are also unaware of the complexities of symbolism in human culture. Has any one ever thought how we can apply the Oxbridge type of analysis to Chinese, which shows structures different from European languages? After all, English is only one of the 50,000 languages spoken in the world, not to speak of those which are 'dead', or dying.

Language is a generic name including under it a wide variety of activities: gesture, mimicry, speech, writing, poetry and even music. As in its earlier definition, language is no longer confined, as the Cartesians and the British nominalists viewed it, within our intellectual representations, but breaks out to embrace our entire active and affective life. It has been shown by Husserl that language need not necessarily have an empirical reference. However, later phenomenologists have argued that language is out and out an intersubjective phenomenon. Martin Heidegger is rightly given the credit for bringing language to the forefront. The transition from Husserl to Heidegger and to some recent thinkers like Paul Ricoeur and Jacques Derrida may be understood as different phases in the phenomenological movement: From descriptive study of consciousness to human existence and from existence to language, the focus of attention of European philosophers has shifted from time to time.

In Husserl's idea of the life-world, the following points are emphasized: a) The world is an open system of rules, performative, written or legal or unwritten conventions, and the equilibrium of rules is subject to disturbance in various epochs of history b) the world is a life-style determined by cognitive factors. c) The world is a place of values or goals of action, which are subject to change. d) The world is a place where others like me also live and with whom enter into friendship, confrontation or conflict. e) The world is a place of life and death. Between birth and death, it is a constant struggle against pain and other forces threatening my existence. f) The world is a place for new experiences and expectations. It may evoke in us the picture of a promised land or new ways of looking at old phenomena. It may involve a free play of fantasy of positing all possible worlds. In short, it is a place where man feels a strong urge for creative expression in scientific discovery, artistic and literary expression, and also an urge for social transformation. Creativity can therefore be traced to strong impulses towards changing the rules and values and also orders or patterns of expression. It may not be characterized as an irrational urge, but as the genesis of a new rationality.

Husserl however gives no attention to the development of the ideas of creativity in his philosophy. He does not go fully into the creative dimensions of science, of art and even of everyday world. To some extent, Roman Ingarden and Mikel Dufrenne have set new directions for phenomenology in as much as they devote their utmost attention to the problem of aesthetic and literary creativity. Phenomenological hermeneutics aims at understanding language expressed at various levels the religious, philosophical and literary. If Husserl's phenomenology is meta-reflective (in the sense

that it is a reflection on reflection), hermeneutics is metalinguistic, it tries to explain language as expressed at various levels. Wittgenstein had declared, "Philosophy is a bewitchment of our intelligence by language"¹³ and "The results of philosophy are the uncovering of bumps that the intellect has got by running its head up against the limits of language."¹⁴ Unfortunately (as Hannah Arendt has remarked),¹⁵ this bewitchment can be fought only by language. Besides, Wittgenstein expresses his thought by a series of metaphors, which add to the bewitchment.

In this essay, we are concerned only with the languages as used at an intellectual and emotional level, and hence take into consideration only language as used by metaphysicians and poets. Most philosophers object to the use of poetry as an example ; but poetic language is no less a reference to reality than any other language, but it is more complex than any descriptive language. It succeeds in revealing the deeper structures of reality. Apart from poetry, about which Heidegger has written much, there are other modes through which language manifests itself : dialogue, aphorisms, tracts, drama, etc, apart from plain prose. Broadly speaking, reading, writing and speaking are three forms of language, through them is everything communicated. Of course, animals also communicate, but the content of what they communicate is only directed towards the fulfilment of their biological needs. The Greeks attached the greatest importance to *logos*, which meant putting together words so as to form a sentence in order to convey meanings of some sort. H.G. Gadamer has devoted considerable attention to tracing the development of the concept of language in European thought from the Greeks onwards.¹⁶ Early European philosophy gave more importance to *logos* than to language. Heidegger finds it interesting that the Greeks had only one word for writing and drawing : *graphein*¹⁷. It is also interesting to find the various forms of expression interlinked and very relevant to the problem of interpretation;¹⁸ poetry has always been one of the earliest and most significant forms of philosophical and religious expression. Along with poetry, we have other forms like the dialogue (in which one of the earliest exponents of hermeneutics, Wilhelm Dilthey was most interested), the dramatic form, the myth and metaphor etc.

Metaphor has attracted the attention of recent philosophers of language. There is a point in Derrida's famous statement :

"Concept is a metaphor, foundation is a metaphor, theory is a metaphor and there is no metametaphor for them."¹⁹

Derrida's goal is to show that the entire Western philosophical tradition makes use of hidden metaphorical levels. All philosophical world-views, all conceptual schemes are metaphorical in character. Metaphor is all pervasive in character. Even in our perspectives of the 'real' world, which we never do according to Derrida, we are entangled in a succession of metaphors. The metaphorical framework thus re-inforces the metaphysical world of myth, religious experience, and literature. Even the attempts to 'purify' (or 'clarify') language land us in more and more metaphors. This is clear in the case of Wittgenstein; nowhere has he clearly stated what constitutes philosophy, without resorting to metaphors, some of which have become famous.

This runs somewhat contrary to our idea of the 'life-world' and the role of

symbolism in it. Thinkers like Merleau-Ponty would never like to go beyond the perceived or experienced world and even their understanding of language and symbolism is within its framework. One should not give only a limited role to language as Descartes and the British nominalists, restricting it to embodying intellectual representations. Language is reflected in our entire cognitive conative, intellectual and creative life. Metaphors which the philosophers use are also to be seen in this light. In Derrida (and Paul Ricoeur) language is seen merely as a set of inter-acting metaphors, which do not conform to any reality or to any underlying and permanent framework of reality. This tacit rejection of the real world takes us back to idealism. Even Husserl seems to have been impressed by this kind of transcendental idealism.

One should be aware of at least two factors governing language : a) it is multiple in nature, and arises in different forms in a different cultures, and is inter-subjective within a specific cultural milieu. Language is an out and out inter-subjective phenomenon, and cannot be divorced from the actual and the situational. Merleau-Ponty would reject completely any attempt to make language a priori and independent of a life-world. Husserl had mistakenly regarded (in his *Logical Investigations* and also in his *Formal and Transcendental Logic*) all expression in purely a formal aspect and therefore ideal. He ignored (or regarded as unimportant) the plurality of temporal moments, and the existence of other human beings as irrelevant in the constitution of ideal language. The ideal language is self-consistent and complete in the immanent life of the 'transcendental ego'. Merleau-Ponty also rejects emphatically Husserlian formulation of an apriori universal grammar (*grammaire generale et raisonnee*) Moreover, language cannot be thought of independently of the bodily processes that give raise to 'speech'. Speech does not emanate from 'Pure ideas' or 'pure meanings'. To understand speech, we do not have to consult some inner lexicon or dictionary, which converts our pure thought to words, or transforms our perceived objects and forms into words.

"We only have to lend ourselves to its life, to its movement of differentiation and articulation and to its eloquent gestures."¹⁹

Language is an opaque phenomenon, and meaning emerges only with the combination of words. By themselves words do not signify anything . Language does not merely express our inner thoughts. It is not merely a means to convey our ideas. Language has a being of its own, and that is why it can present something to us so explicitly. Sometimes however, expression is allusive and indirect, in what Merleau-Ponty calls the language of "silence".

Martin Heidgger had already pointed out the various facets of language and had gone in detail to some of the various ramifications of language. He had distinguished between 'speech' (*Rede*) and writing (*Schreiben*). It is the latter that becomes a text (*Schrift*). Speech arises only when man finds himself in communion and communication with others . What first is an empty talk, a chatter (*Gerede*) can become thematic (*das Geredete* : or that which is spoken of). In all forms of speech, the body is totally involved, both in the act of expressing as well as in the act of listening. Communication again does not merely consist in speech. In fact, sometimes 'silence' contributes more to the communication of authentic meaning than a collection

of words does. Both Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty discuss at length the relation between a writer of literary works to language, both written and spoken, as also to reality and also to other beings. I am not going into them.

In short, Merleau-Ponty regards language as an existential phenomenon which enclose within it both the active and affective sides of human subjectivity. Among the earlier phenomenologists, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty have treaded into a new ground in so far as they become fully involved in attempting to understand 'language' in its multifarious ramifications, both in the literary as well as in the philosophical spheres. They try to reveal the intersubjective foundations of language and its relevance to the life-world. Of course, philosophical hermeneutics has found its most important exponents in recent phenomenology in the works of Gadamer, Ricoeur and Derrida, whom I have already mentioned. Any further elaboration of their views would be beyond the scope of this paper.

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PERCEPTION AS THE GATEWAY TO THE LIVED WORLD

KALYAN KUMAR BAGCHI

PREAMBLE

"Science and philosophy have for centuries been sustained by faith in perception. Perception opens the window on to things," Thus said Merleau-Ponty in *Phenomenology of Perception*.¹ This indeed sounds like a platitude. Yet it is an important platitude with us.

And then Edmund Husserl : " ... *der Gegenstand ist gemeint* ..."² This is a principle with us, at least to start our analysis of perception with.

The present paper tries to deal with some philosophical issues concerning perception on the basis of the aforementioned platitude and principle.

The paper has three broad sub-divisions. The first part of the paper is concerned with methodological-cum-programmatic considerations. Here we adopt Husserl's fruitful concept of 'intentionality' as our mode of analysis of perception. Perception must be recognised to be of something. Husserl's intentional-phenomenological method, to our mind, maintains a steady vision of this concrete fact. Theories of perception, like the *sensedatum* theory, phenomenism, Humianism, start with analysing perception and yet fail to return, so to say, to the concrete fact of perception and this is just because they lack the intentional-phenomenological insight into perception. But - and this is a big but -the methodological analysis of perception through the concept of intentionality opens up before our mind's eye a certain tension built into perception to resolve which one has to overstep the analysis of it from within the intentional framework and take up the framework itself within, i.e. doctrinal concern and then envisage perception against the background of the doctrine in question, although the doctrine relates to a concern which, intentionally speaking, outlives perception but, philosophically speaking, spills over to perception. The initial acceptance of the intentional-phenomenological method of analysing perception opens out to the larger doctrinal issues in the third part of the paper.

I

Intentionality, according to Husserl, is "the fundamental property of consciousness".³ It is "the peculiarity of consciousness to be of something."⁴ Each

intentional act of consciousness points to something. In the *Logische Untersuchungen*, Husserl says, "*Die intentionalen Erlebnisse haben das Eigentümliche, sich auf vorgestellte Gegenstände in verschiedener Weise zu beziehen. Das tun sie eben im Sinne der Intention. Ein Gegenstand ist in ihnen 'gemeint', auf ihn ist 'abgezielt'.*"⁵ Further, he distinguished between mental phenomena which are intentional and mental phenomena which are non-intentional, which means that not every experience would be regarded as 'intentional' by Husserl. Thus said Husserl, "*Wir werden also den Ausdruck psychisches Phänomen ganz vermeiden, und wo immer Genauigkeit erforderlich ist, von intentionalen Erlebnissen sprechen ... Das determinierende Beiwort intentional nennt den gemeinsamen Wesenscharakter der abzugrenzenden Erlebnisklasse die Eigenheit der Intention, das sich in der Weise der Vorstellung oder in einer irgend analogen Weise auf ein Gegenständliches beziehen. Als kürzerer Ausdruck werden wir das Wort Akt gebrauchen.*"⁶

The consequences of the foregoing remarks of Husserl should be drawn immediately as they are central to the problem under discussion, viz., the perception-problem. First, intentional experiences are of something. Second, not every experience is intentional: an experience that is specifically intentional is so only as 'Akt' (act) of consciousness. The third consequence follows from the second and is of direct relevance to us. An 'act' in Husserl's sense, i.e., an intentional act is of something. So while perception is of something and so intentional, pure sensation is not so, it does not fall within the intentional framework. Again, Husserl distinguishes what he calls '*Sinnlichen Daten*' or '*Empfindungsdaten*' from patterns of colour, sound etc., which latter would be called sense-data in contemporary philosophy. '*Sinnliche Daten*' do not of course have for Husserl the fundamental character of intentionality: they are '*sinnlos*' or meaningless, unless there is '*Sinngebungen*' or conferring of meaning through the noetic act of perception. Yet, '*Sinnliche Daten*' are "in principle completely different from colour, smoothness, shape... from all types of phases of things".⁷ The principle in question is nothing other than the intentional-phenomenological principle. '*Sinnliche Daten*' most assuredly are phases of perceptual experience, while sense-data or sense-impressions are not so. These latter are ruled out by the intentionality-criterion, from the realm of perception. Again - and this, too, is a matter of principle - "all phenomenological problems are classified according to intentionality"⁸. Intentional-phenomenological analysis has nothing to do with 'things' for it has nothing to do with theoretic constructs and 'things' are theoretic constructs. As between 'things' and 'phases of experience', Husserl would cast his vote in favour of the latter. The realist, the naturalist or the physicalist works with the concept of 'things', i.e., moves within the spatiotemporal framework. The phenomenologist works within the intentional framework: his watchword is '*Erscheinung*' (appearing).

Further, Husserl writes in *Logische Untersuchungen*: "*Ist dieses Erlebnis present, so ist eo ipso, das liegt, betone ich, an seinem eigenen Wesen, die intentionale, Beziehung auf ihren Gegenstand "Vollzogen, eo ipso ist ein Gegenstand, intentional gegenwärtig"; denn das eine und andere besagt genau dasselbe. Und natürlich kann solch ein Erlebnis im Bewusstsein vorhanden sein mit dieser Intention, ohne dass der Gegenstand überhaupt existiert und vielleicht gar existieren kann, der Gegenstand ist gemeint....*"⁹ And again, "*Existiert andererseits der intendierte*

*Gegenstand, so braucht in phannomenologischer Hinsicht nicht geandert zu sein. Fur das Bewusstsein ist das Gegeben ein wesentlich Gleiches, ob der vorgestellte Gegenstand existierte, oder ob er fingiert und vielleicht gar widersinning ist. Jupiter Stelle ich nicht anders vor als Bismarck, den Babylonischen Turm nicht auders als den Kolner Dom..."*¹⁰

Thus the intentional relation of an object to an 'act' is independent of whether the object exists or not. Smith and McIntyre have called intentional relation 'existence-independent'.¹¹ Intentional analysis is based on the principle "*der Gegenstand ist gemeint*".¹²Applying his intentional analysis to perception. Husserl in one of the early drafts of his Encyclopaedia Britannica article writes, "whether the thing perceived in a perception is itself, present or not, the intentional process of meaning (intentionate *vermeinen*) of the perception, in accordance with kind of the grasping which perception it, is directed nevertheless to something which exists as being itself present. Every illusory perception makes that clear. Only because perception, as intentional, essentially has its intantum, can it be modified into an illusion about something".

We stop now to let Husserl rest here with the remark that if intentional analysis may appear to be sacrasanct with us that is because we find in it a sustained effort to confine our attention just to the 'appearance' (*Erscheinung*) of the intentional - or 'noetice' in Husserl's diction - act (*Akt*) and not to allow us to indulge in any sort of theorisation, i.e. abstraction. Theories which amount to abstractionism with reference to perception ignore the meaning-conferring act (*sinng**e** bungen*) in virtue of which perception becomes an intentional act, or in others words, a perception of something. As indicated in the preamble, the concrete fact of perception is ignored by the abstractionist theories only at their peril; once it is ignored, no amount of theoretic analysis can restore its living reality. We then turn to those theories.

II

(a)

Indeed, any discussion on perception today must have to situate itself against the background of several abstractionistic or reductionistic attempts made in philosophy and, at the same time, i.e., in thus situating itself, set before itself clearly the considerations which should and the considerations which should not weigh with one in formulating one's view of perception : for one's view of perception is coloured by one's view of the way perception is to be viewed. The reductionistic attempts were made primarily with the aim of securing the most certain, incorrigible, indubitable foundation of knowledge. Thus we have in the history of philosophy the kinds of reduction attempted e.g. by the phenomenologists and the idealists respectively. The phenomenologists tried to reduce the object of perception to sets of sense-data, while the idealists tried to reduce it to subjective states, processes, 'ideas' etc. Both the parties laid claim to having discovered the foundation, the sure basis of knowledge. Both, again, claimed to tell the tale of commonsense, being wary, throughout their respective analysis, of any kind of interpretation or theorising that might creep into the account of pure, unadulterated awareness which either party was concerned to bring into limelight from , what appeared to one party, the mass of interpretation which the other party poured over the '*pure datum*' or pure experience. Whether the search for foundations, and / or the loyalty to commonsense is the right kind of

search may be open to dispute. But then the principal concern of the disputants referred to is with something pure or unadulterated which we are allegedly acquainted within perception, though it has hardly been realised that so-called unadulterated datum is itself loaded with interpretations. And so the question may arise viz., whether perception can ever be trusted with 'acquainting' us with any 'pure' datum or whether so called 'purity' is itself not all that pure; whether, if purity is nothing more than a desideratum, each philosopher does not really propose a theory of perception; and whether therefore the theoretical explanations of perception, which merely speculate on perception, may not have to be replaced by a methodology where emphasis is laid on how the object perceived appears to the perceiving act, whether in other words — a descriptive account of perception or the perceived object may not replace a theoretical explanation of it which is as theoretically unsatisfying as it is theoretically satisfying.

Before, however, we may apply such methodology, let us review several reductionistic views of perception.

Some representative samples may be taken up. There is the phenomenistic view of reduction which claims its descent from Hume. The phenomenist reduces the 'object' to sense-data. Our knowledge of a unified world is a construction out of sense-data- which (construction) may be regarded, as Hume regards it, as a matter of 'associational' unity between discrete impressions. On such a view of the matter, the identity of the object is imperilled. Such identity is two-fold. We may call it latitudinal-cum-longitudinal. The identity between sense-impressions belonging to discrete moments may be called longitudinal and the identity between sense-impressions spreading over one continuous stretch of time may be called latitudinal. Unless this two-fold identity is recognised, the unity of the object cannot be established. Now, the phenomenistic view, which is essentially reductionistic, has its roots in the attempt to stall or forestall any interpretation or theorising into our account of perception and to remain steadfast to what experience dictates. Perception may be understood in terms of itself, not by introducing any concept ab extra into it. Sense-impressions bind or order themselves. No synthesising subject of Kant's conception is needed in order to explain the unity of our experience. The so-called unity is either a hypostatisation of something introduced ab extra into the immediate, unsullied awareness of the object or itself just a replica of discrete sense-impressions. If it appears to be something more than the sense-impressions, that is so because of our covert attempt to theorise about experience.

Such is the perception — confessedly an all-too-bald presentation — of the phenomenist point of view.

This paper does not support phenomenism. Nonetheless, it does find something valuable in phenomenism which may be utilised in building up its distinctive viewpoint. For one thing, it supports phenomenism against what may be called, intellectualism. The intellectualist viewpoint against phenomenism may be presented in the form of a '*Modus Tollens*', viz., 'Unless some principles of unification are admitted, perceptual unity cannot be accounted for, i.e. 'unless p. then not Q'. It is conveniently forgotten that 'Q' here is demanded in the interest of 'P'. The

intellectualist, in fact, builds his case on the basis of a *hysteron proteron* : the theoretical principles which he wants to advocate apparently on the basis of perceptual unity, pre-determine the latter.

It is, therefore, a principle with phenomenism to be 'radical empiricism', to let 'experience tell its own tale'. 'Radical empiricism', however, is a slogan for philosophers with different persuasions. We now ask : does not the phenomenist himself dogmatise about experience ? Is a sense-datum any less of abstraction than the principles which the intellectualist advocates ? We do not, e.g., see a patch of brown, shape, smoothness etc. We see the whole object . The whole object is no construction out of sense-data. It is given, — a phenomenological datum in Husserl's diction.

What, now, is the way out of such abstraction ? This lies in a kind analysis which is different from the intellectualist mode of analysis. By the 'intellectualist mode of analysis' we mean any kind of analysis which, instead of building on the 'appearance' (*erscheinen* in Husserl's terminology) of the object, tries to construct the object out of sense-data. From this point of view, even the sense-data philosopher is an intellectualist or constructionist : he after all constructs a theory regarding the object of perception.

What kind of analysis, then, can avoid abstraction or construction ? What kind of analysis can be regarded as faithful to facts ? Who is more faithful to facts, — the intellectualist or the phenomenologist ?

(b)

The kind of analysis of perception which can avoid abstraction is phenomenological. Phenomenological analysis takes into account the appearing of the perceived object. No psychologism should be read into the prescribed analysis of 'appearing'. Here the difference between psychologism and phenomenological analysis may be dealt with at some length.

Can it be said that the 'appearing' of the object of perception is the content of psychological introspection ? What psychological introspection reveals is just a mental state which is taken to be at par with any physical object. It is placed within the physicalistic or objective framework to which the psychologist is committed from the beginning. But the 'appearing' in question is not at the behest of any presupposition or any dogmatising with the commonsense or scientific physicalist viewpoint being accepted from the very beginning; it is taken to be appearing as such and the question whether the appearing is appearing of some reality which appears is to be 'bracketed' as Husserl says. One reason why perception has been treated either psychologically or all-too-theoretically is that 'appearing as such' has not been attended to and what has instead been attended to is perception not as a mode of appearing of the object but as either an element in the construction of the object or as somehow glued to the object. Whichever way of attending to perception is adopted, the concrete unity of 'perception of object' is ignored. We have therefore to settle our mind on the question whether we should fix upon perceived object or perceiving of object ; perception may be analysed from either of these viewpoints.

Only, while the point of view of the 'perceived object' belongs to phenomenology or the intentional tale of the object of perception reporting itself to consciousness. And since the procedure of psychology is but the expression of the naturalistic or physicalistic point of view, it does fulfil the requirement from which 'perceiving of object' may be studied.

Concentrating, then, on the appearing of the object, in the perceptual mode of awareness, what now can we say about the object that escapes one who adopts the point of view of psychology? Let us, in answering this question, bear in mind a two-fold point of crucial importance, viz., (i) the object is not a correlate of (the subjective act of) appearing, but (ii) is 'meant'. to quote Husserl again, "*der Gegenstand ist gemeint*".¹³

The Husserlian text quoted, which is a matter of principle with us in our analysis of perception, may be joined to the Merleau-Ponty text¹⁴ which may sound like a platitude and yet is pivotal to the task of ushering our final viewpoint.

But the viewpoint may best be crystallised through our examination of the two extremes of idealism or psychologism and realism or objectivism. Neither can do justice to the relation of apposition expressed in 'of' in 'perceiving or appearing of-object'. The former reduces the object to some mental state or happening and fails to see that when I perceive a house the relationship of consciousness contained in the perceptual experience is, to quote Husserl, "Indeed a relation to the house perceived in itself".¹⁵ The latter reduces appearing or perceiving to the object: in respect of this latter kind of reductionism, Husserl is well worth quoting again. "Of course there can be no talk of external-internal psycho-physical causality if the house is a mere hallucination. But it is clear that the momentary experiencing is in itself not only a subjective experiencing but precisely a perceiving of this house"¹⁶. What follows is of decisive importance relating as it does to the question of principle: "... descriptively the object-actually exists or not".¹⁷ To revert to our terminology, the idealist party is interested in perception, the latter in the object as the correlate of the subjective fact of perception. It cannot be claimed on behalf of the idealists that it is they who are interested in perceiving or in what we have called, 'act'. They analyse perception from the psychologist's point of view building their doctrine on introspection which, it may be claimed, is quite distinct from extrospection. What is the basis of the distinction between introspection and extrospection? Is the distinction after thought, i.e., a distinction made after the idealist has committed himself to the distinction between the 'mental' and the 'non-mental'? But then, is the distinction between the 'mental' and the 'non-mental' itself an ontological or a methodological distinction? It cannot be anything but an ontological distinction: what is mental is one kind of entity. For introspection, which discovers what is mental, is just parallel to extrospection. It is so designed as to reveal another kind of object. It is modulated to the 'mental' — 'non-mental' distinction, — which is, after all, a distinction between objects. Introspection then reveals what is mental as object. The idealist or the introspectionist is not able to overstep the objective, physicalistic, or, in Husserl's diction, 'naturalistic' point of view. If, however, he equates the 'mental' — 'non-mental' distinction to the distinction between the subjective 'act' and the appearance of the object, to what Husserl calls the '*noetic*' — '*noematic*' distinction, we have

only to reply that (i) introspection either reveals what is objective or is no introspection and that (ii) the intentional-phenomenological distinction between '*noesis*' and '*noema*' just free the noema from the objective or physicalistic framework which is just the thing which the idealist or psychologist or introspectionist has not done with reference to the appearance of the object : to the end of the chapter, he clings on to the physicalist point of view. And the main point that emerges out of the analysis of introspection in the context of the idealist claim of being faithful to the subjective 'act' in perceptual experience, to what we have called 'perceiving' is this that idealism has to be either phenomenological or it is just physicalism, it does not attain the point of view from which perceiving can be understood. All that it can lay its fingers on is just the perceived object.

What we have said about idealism applies to realism, for the objective or physicalist point of view is common to both. It cannot be claimed by the realist that his physicalism in respect of 'perception' focusses on one unique feature of the object, viz., its perceivedness, a character which is not a character alongside e.g., brown, rectangularity, circularity etc. of the object. For so-called perceivedness is either perception-as-given-to-object, when considered in the light of the object's appearing to consciousness, — in which case it outreaches introspection. Introspection cannot reveal anything but perception as object and perceivedness, if such there be, outstrips introspection.

The implication of our discussion so far is two-fold : (i) in the analysis of perception, we should decide whether we fix on perception as a mental occurrence and / or perceived object — both of which are identified in the physicalistic framework and in the physicalistic framework only, or whether we fix on perceivedness (a) being on our guard, is so doing, lest 'perceivedness' should not be devoured up within the physicalistic framework and (b) being again careful that it is placed only within the intentional-phenomenological framework. But (b) can be ensured only (ii) if all extraphenomenological considerations are exercised. Extra-phenomenological considerations are psychological, introspective, physicalistic or naturalistic, objectivistic and realistic, idealistic, speculative or intellectual.

III

But, finally, is this the way the game has to be played ? I think if it is played this way, it is only played safe. Should one rest content only with the 'appearance' of the object or the '*noema*' or the 'perceivedness'? Call it as one wills to, the consequence — or, rather the inconsequence — remains the same. The question remains whether it is a satisfactory consequence. Should 'appearance' be the final word lest any move beyond that should not be regarded as phenomenological ? It is indeed a salutary thing to advocate a programme of philosophical analysis which casts off any kind of theorisation or any consideration of '*standpunkt*'.¹⁸ But should we be, for fear of committing ourselves to a '*standpunkt*', wary practitioners ? Is 'perceivedness' or 'appearance' nothing ? There is a demand, i) on the part of the appearance ii) on the subject (iii) to which it makes itself felt, that the problem as to why it appears should be solved. In so far as there is a demand that the problem should be solved, the subject which feels the demand wants not so much that the problem should be solved

as that it should be resolved. The problem is understood in depth as containing implicitly its own solution, where problem raising and solution-finding are two distinct activities, the solution to the problem does not cancel the problem. I may, e.g., retrospectively understand how, on account of certain deficiency in understanding a situation or failure to take notice of all aspects of it and so on and so forth, I was faced with a problem. But then the problem does not, in my psychological history, disappear when I find a solution to it. In the present context, however, the problem as to why perceivedness or appearance of the object comes to be presented demands its own dissipation.

So much in the foregoing paragraph by way of understanding the peculiar nature of the problem. And now something by way of indicating the direction in which it may be solved.

'Perceivedness' or the appearance of the object may be regarded as a character of the object, but then while other characters of the object may be either necessarily, i.e., analytically or contingently related to it, 'perceivedness', in being apprehended as a character, is at once apprehended as a character that the object may do without. 'Perceivedness', then, may be regarded as a 'wandering adjective'. The wandering adjective is nothing other than the subjective hue that the perceived object wears. It is a constitutional limitation of the Husserlian method of intentionality that it (i) concentrates just on the '*noema*' and (ii) does not advance beyond the '*Akt*'. The '*noema*' is no problem as 'perceivedness' is with us because it has no subjective hue in it: the intentionality - doctrine is, strictly, non-ontological. It can however, be only *covertly* non-ontological. For lurking within the '*noetic act*' is the subject that has to be recognised and recognised not merely as 'presupposition' in the Kantian manner but as a fact, a fact presented in our experience, an assuredly phenomenological datum. There need be no apprehension that the subject is a specular construction: for the subject, to start with, is our body. In perception, we are sensitively aware of the world: I perceive my body. Were it not for the body, I could not perceive the world, and were it not my body, i.e., for the body being owned by me being thus marked off from the physicalistic framework, I could not perceive the world. The perceived world, then, presents a built-in-tension, being at once objective and subjective, an appearance and yet the most concrete realisation of subjectivity, the most primordial form of being in the world faith in which, as Merleau-Ponty insightfully points out, has sustained science and philosophy for centuries.

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SELECTION FROM EDMUND HUSSERL

From *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental
Phenomenology* translated by David Carr
Northwestern University Press
Evanston 1970

THE EXTRACT IS FROM PART III A.

**34. *Exposition of the problem of a science
of the life-world***

a. The difference between objective science and science in general.

Is not the life-world as such what we know best, what is always taken for granted in all human life, always familiar to us in its typology through experience? Are not all its horizons of the unknown simply horizons of what is just incompletely known, i.e., known in advance in respect of its most general typology? For prescientific life, of course, this type of acquaintance suffices, as does its manner of converting the unknown into the known, gaining "occasional" knowledge on the basis of experience (verifying itself internally and thereby excluding illusion) and induction. This suffices for everyday praxis. If, now, something more can be and is to be accomplished, if a "scientific" knowledge is supposed to come about, what can be meant other than what objective science has in view and does anyway? Is scientific knowledge as such not "objective" knowledge, aimed at a knowledge substratum which is valid for everyone with unconditioned generality? And yet, paradoxically, we uphold our assertion and require that one not let the handed-down concept of objective science be substituted, because of the century-old tradition in which we have all been raised, for the concept of science in general.

The ¹ title "life-world" makes possible and demands perhaps various different, though essentially interrelated, scientific undertakings; and perhaps it is part of genuine and full scientific discipline that we must treat these all together, though following their essential order of founding, rather than treating, say, just the one, the objective-logical one (this particular accomplishment within the life-world) by itself, leaving the others completely out of scientific consideration. There has never been a scientific inquiry into the way in which the life-world constantly functions as subsoil, into how its manifold prelogical validities act as grounds for the logical ones, for

1. This whole paragraph is crossed out in the MS.

theoretical truths.² And perhaps the scientific discipline which this life-world as such, in its universality, requires is a peculiar one, one which is precisely not objective and logical but which, as the ultimately grounding one, is not inferior but superior in value. But how is this completely different sort of scientific discipline, for which the objective sort has always been substituted up to now, to be realized? The idea of objective truth is predetermined in its whole meaning by the contrast with the idea of the truth in pre and extrascientific life. This latter truth has its ultimate and deepest source of verification in experience which is "pure" in the sense designated above, in all its modes of perception, memory, etc. These words, however, must be understood actually as prescientific life understands them; thus one must not inject into them, from current objective science, any psychological, psychological interpretation. And above all — to dispose of an important point right away — one must not go straight back to the supposedly immediately given "sense-data," as if *they* were immediately characteristic of the purely intuitive data of the life-world. What is actually first is the "merely subjective-relative" intuition of prescientific world-life. For us, to be sure, this "merely" has, as an old inheritance, the disdainful coloring of the $\delta\lambda\zeta\alpha$. In prescientific life itself, of course, it has nothing of this, there it is a realm of good' verification and, based on this, of well-verified predicative cognitions and truths which are just as secure as is necessary for the practical projects of life that determine their sense. The disdain with which everything "merely subjective and relative" is treated by those scientists who pursue the modern ideal of objectivity changes nothing of its own manner of being, just as it does not change the fact that the scientist himself must be satisfied with this realm whenever he has recourse, as he unavoidably must have recourse, to it.

**b. The use of subjective-relative experiences for the objective sciences,
and the science of them.**

The sciences build upon the life-world as taken for granted in that they make use of whatever in it happens to be necessary for their particular ends. But to use the life-world in this way is not to know it scientifically in its own manner of being. For example, Einstein uses the Michelson experiments and the corroboration of them by other researchers, with apparatus copied from Michelson's, with everything required in the way of scales of measurement, coincidences established, etc. There is no doubt that everything that enters in here — the persons, the apparatus, the room in the institute, etc. — can itself become a subject of investigation in the usual sense of objective inquiry that of the positive sciences. But Einstein could make no use whatever of a theoretical psychological -psychophysical construction of the objective being of Mr. Michelson; rather, he made use of the human being who was accessible to him, as to everyone else in the prescientific world, as an object of straightforward experience, the human being whose existence, with this vitality, in these activities and creations within the common life-world, is always the presupposition for all of Einstein's objective-scientific lines of inquiry, projects, and accomplishments pertaining to Michelson's experiments. It is, of course, the one world of experience, common to all, that Einstein and every other researcher knows

2. This sentence was added by Finki. It does not seem to fit in, and it breaks the continuity between the preceding and following sentences.

he is in as a human being, even throughout all his activity of research. [But] precisely this world and everything that happens in it, used as needed for scientific and other ends, bears, on the other hand, for every natural scientist in his thematic orientation toward is "objective truth," the stamp "merely subjective and relative". The contrast to this determines, as we said, the sense of "objective" task. This "subjective-relative" is supposed to be "overcome"; one can and should correlate with it a hypothetical being-in-itself, a substrate for logical-mathematical "truths-in-themselves" that one can approximate through ever newer and better hypothetical approaches, always justifying them through experiential verification. This is the one side. But while the natural scientist is thus interested in the objective and is involved in his activity, the subjective-relative is on the other hand still functioning for him, not as something irrelevant that must be passed through but as that which ultimately grounds the theoretical-logical ontic validity for all objective verification, i.e., as the source of self-evidence, the source of verification. The visible measuring scales, scale-markings, etc., are used as actually existing things, not as illusions ; thus that which actually exists in the life-world, as something valid, is a premise.

c. Is the subjective-relative an object for psychology ?

Now the question of the manner of being of this subjective sphere, or the question of the science which is to deal with it in its own universe of being, is normally disposed of by the natural scientist by referring to psychology. But again one must not allow the intrusion of what exists in the sense of objective science when it is a question of what exists in the life-world . For what has always gone under the name of psychology , at any rate since the founding of modern objectivism regarding knowledge of the world, naturally has the meaning of an "objective" science of the subjective, no matter which of the attempted historical psychologies we may choose. Now in our subsequent reflections the problem of making possible an objective psychology will have to become the object of more detailed discussions. But first we must grasp clearly the contrast between objectivity and the subjectivity of the life-world as a contrast which determines the fundamental sense of objective-scientific discipline itself, and we must secure this contrast against the great temptations to misconstrue it.

**d. The life-world as universe of what is intuitable in principle ;
the "objective-true" world as in principle nonintuitable
"logical" substraction.**

Whatever may be the chances for realizing, or the capacity for realizing, the idea of objective science in respect to the mental world (i.e. not only in respect to nature), this idea of objectivity dominates the whole *universitas* of the positive sciences in the modern period, and in the general usage it dominates the meaning of the word "science". This already involves a naturalism insofar as this concept is taken from Galilean natural science, such that the scientifically "true", the objective, world is always thought of in advance as nature, in an expanded sense of the word. The contrast between the subjectivity of the life-world and the "objective," the "true" world, lies in the fact that the latter is a theoretical-logical substraction, the substraction of something that is in principle not perceivable, in principle not

experienceable in its own proper being, whereas the subjective, in the life-world, is distinguished in all respects precisely by its being actually experienceable.*

The life-world is a realm of original self-evidences.³ That which is self-evidently given is, in perception, experienced as "the thing itself", in immediate presence, or, in memory, remembered as the thing itself; and every other manner of intuition is a prescientification of the thing itself. Every mediate cognition belonging in this sphere — broadly speaking, every manner of induction — has the sense of an induction of something untuitable, something possibly perceivable as the thing itself or rememberable as having-been-perceived, etc. All conceivable verification leads back to these modes of self-evidence because the "thing itself" (in the particular mode) lies in these intuitions themselves as that which is actually, intersubjectively experienceable and verifiable and is not a substraction, insofar as it makes a claim to truth, can have actual truth only by being related back to such self-evidences.

It is of course itself a highly important task, for the scientific opening-up of the life-world, to bring to recognition the primal validity of these self-evidences and indeed their higher dignity in the grounding of knowledge compared to that of the objective-logical self-evidences. One must fully clarify, i.e., bring to ultimate self-evidence, how all the self-evidence of objective-logical accomplishments, through which objective theory (thus mathematical and natural-scientific theory) is grounded in respect of form and content, has its hidden sources of grounding in the ultimately accomplishing life, the life in which the self-evident givenness of the life-world forever has, has attained, and attains anew its prescientific ontic meaning. From objective-logical self-evidence (mathematical "insight", natural-scientific, positive-scientific "insight", as it is being accomplished by the inquiring and grounding mathematician, etc.), the path leads back, here, to the primal self-evidence which the life-world is ever pre-given.

One may at first find strange and even questionable what has been simply asserted here, but the general features of the contrast among levels of self-evidence are unmistakable. The empiricist talk of natural scientists often, if not for the most part, gives the impression that the natural sciences are based on the experience of objective nature. But it is not in this sense true that these sciences are experiential sciences, that they follow experience in principle, that they all begin with experiences, that all their inductions must finally be verified through experiences: rather, this is true only in that other sense whereby experience [yields] a self-evidence taking place purely in the life-world and as such is the source of self-evidence for what is objectively established in the sciences, the latter never themselves being experiences of the objective. The objective is precisely never experienceable as itself; and scientists

* In life the verification of being, terminating in experience, yields a full conviction. Even when it is inductive, the inductive anticipation is of a possible experienceability which is ultimately decisive. Inductions can be verified by other inductions, working together. Because of their anticipations of experienceability, and because every direct perception itself includes inductive moments (anticipation of the sides of the object which are not yet experienced), everything is contained in the broader concept of "experience" or "induction".

3. Husserl's use of *Evidenz* does not permit of its always being translated in the same way. But when used in its most special or technical sense, as it is here, "self-evidence" is better than simply "evidence".

themselves, by the way, consider it in this way whenever they interpret it as something metaphysically transcendent, in contrast to their confusing empiricist talk. The experienceability of something objective is no different from that of an infinitely distant geometrical construct and in general no different from that of all infinite "ideas," including, for example, the infinity of the number series. Naturally, "rendering ideas intuitive" in the manner of mathematical or natural -scientific "models" is hardly intuition of the objective itself but rather a matter of life-world intuitions which are suited to make easier the conception of the objective ideals in question. Many [such] conceptual intermediaries are often involved, [especially since] the conception itself does not always occur so immediately, cannot always be made so self-evident in its way, as is the case in conceiving of geometrical straight lines on the basis of the life-world self-evidence of straight table-edges and the like.

As can be seen, a great deal of effort is involved here in order to secure even the presuppositions for a proper inquiry, i.e., in order first to free ourselves from the constant misconstructions which mislead us all because of the scholastic dominance of objective-scientific ways of thinking.

e. The objective sciences as subjective constructs — those of a particular praxis, namely, the theoretical-logical, which itself belongs to the full concreteness of the life-world.

If the contrast [under discussion] has been purified, we must now do justice to the essential interrelatedness [of the elements contrasted] : objective theory in its logical sense (taken universally : science as the totality of predicative theory of the system of statements meant "logically" as "propositions in themselves," "truths in themselves," and in this sense logically joined) is rooted, grounded in the life-world, in the original self-evidences belonging to it. Thanks to this rootedness objective science has a constant reference of meaning to the world in which we always live, even as scientists and also in the total community of scientists — a reference, that is, to the general life-world. But at the same time, as an accomplishment of scientific⁵ persons, as individuals and as joined in the community of scientific activity, objective science itself belongs to the life-world. Its theories, the logical constructs, are of course not things in the life-world like stones, houses, or trees. They are logical wholes and logical parts made up of ultimate logical elements. To speak with Bolzano, they are "representations-in-themselves" [*Vorstellungen an sich*] "propositions in themselves", ideal unities of signification whose logical ideality is determined by

As can be seen from the context here, it means "self-giveness"; whereas the English word "evidence" usually has a very different meaning, that a something testifying to the existence of something else (e.g., evidence in a trial).

4. "Es selbst". The use of the word "thing" in this expression is not out of place as long as Husserl is talking about perception. But in another context that which is "itself" given might not be a "thing"; it could be an ideal state of affairs, for example in mathematical or logical intuition.

5. The text reads "prescientific persons", which must be a mistake.

their telos, "truth in itself".

But this or any other ideality does not change in the least the fact that these are human formations, essentially related to human actualities and potentialities, and thus belong to this concrete unity of the life-world, whose concreteness thus extends farther than that of "things". Exactly the same thing is true, correlative to this, of scientific activities — those of experiencing, those of arriving at logical formations "on the basis of" experience — activities through which these formations appear in original form and original modes of variation in the individual scientists and in the community of scientists : the original status of the proposition or demonstration dealt with by all.

But here we enter an uncomfortable situation. If we have made our contrast with all necessary care, then we have two different things : life-world and objective-scientific world, though of course [they are] related to each other. The knowledge of the objective-scientific world is "grounded" in the self-evidence of the life-world. The latter is pre-given to the scientific worker, or the working community, as ground; yet as they build upon this, what is built is something new, something different. If we cease being immersed in our thinking, we become aware that we scientists are, after all, human beings and as such are among the components of the life-world which always exists for us, ever pre-given, and thus all of science is pulled, along with us, into the merely "subjective -relative" — life-world. And what becomes of the objective world itself ? What happens to the hypothesis of being-in-itself, related first to the "things" of the life-world, the "objects," the "real" bodies, real animals, plants, and also human beings within the "space-time" of the life-world — all these concepts being understood, now, not from the point of view of the objective sciences but as they are in prescientific life ?

Is it not the case that this hypothesis, which in spite of the ideality of scientific theories has direct validity for the scientific subjects (the scientists as human beings), is but *one* among the many practical hypotheses and projects which make up the life of human beings in this life-world — which is at all times consciously pre-given to them as available ? Do not all goals, whether they are "practical" in some other, extrascientific sense or are practical under the title of "theory", belong *eo ipso* to the unity of the life-world, if only we take the latter in its complete and full concreteness?

On the other hand, we have seen also that the propositions, the theories, the whole edifice of doctrine in the objective sciences are structures attained through certain activities of scientists bound together in their collaborative work — or, to speak more exactly, attained through a continued building-up of activities, the later of which always presuppose the results of the earlier. And we see further that all these theoretical results have the character of validities for the life-world, adding themselves as such to its own composition and belonging to it even before that as a horizon of possible accomplishments for developing science. The concrete life-world, then, is the grounding soil [*der gründende Boden*] of the "scientifically true" world and at the same time encompasses it in its own universal concreteness. How is this to be understood ? How are we to do justice systematically — that is, with appropriate scientific discipline — to the all-encompassing, so paradoxically demanding, manner of being of the life-world ?

We are posing questions whose clarifying answers are by no means obvious. The contrast and the inseparable union [we have been exploring] draw us into a reflection which entangles us in more and more troublesome difficulties. The paradoxical interrelationships of the "objectively true world" and the "life-world" make enigmatic the manner of being both. Thus [The idea of a] true world in any sense, and within it our own being, becomes an enigma in respect to the sense of this being. In our attempts to attain clarity we shall suddenly become aware, in the face of emerging paradoxes, that all of our philosophizing up to now has been without a ground. How can we now truly become philosophers ?

We cannot escape the force of this motivation . It is impossible for us to evade the issue here through a preoccupation with aporia and argumentation nourished by Kant or Hegel, Aristotle or Thomas.

**f. The problem of the life-world not as a partial problem
but rather as a universal problem for philosophy .**

Of course, it is a new sort of scientific discipline that is required for the solution of the enigmas which now disquiet us : it is not mathematical, nor logical at all in the historical sense ; it cannot already have before it, as an available norm, a finished mathematics, logic , or logic, since these are themselves objective sciences in the sense which is presently problematical and, as included in the problem, cannot be presuppositions used as premises. At first, as long as one only makes contrasts, is only concerned with oppositions, it could appear that nothing more than or different from objective science is needed, just as everyday practical life undertakes its rational reflections, both particular and general, without needing a science for them. It just is this way, a fact familiar to all, unthinkingly accepted rather than being formulated as a fundamental fact and thought through as a subject for thinking in its own right — namely , that there are two sorts of truth : on the one side, everyday practical situational truths, relative, to be sure, but, as we have already emphasized , exactly what praxis, in its particular projects , seeks and needs; on the other side there are scientific truths, and their grounding leads back precisely to the situational truths, but in such a way that scientific method does not suffer thereby in respect to its own meaning, since it wants to use and must use precisely these truths.

Thus it could appear — if one allows oneself to be carried along by the thoughtless naïveté of life even in the transition from the extralogical to the logical, to the objective-scientific praxis of thinking — that a separate investigation under the title "life-world" is an intellectualistic enterprise born of a mania, peculiar to modern life, to theorize everything. But on the other hand, it has at least become apparent that we cannot let the matter end with this naïveté, that paradoxical enigmas announce themselves here : merely subjective relativity is supposedly overcome by objective-logical theory, yet the latter belongs, as the theoretical praxis of human beings, to the merely subjective and relative and at the same time must have its premises, its sources of self-evidence, in the subjective and relative. From here on this much is certain : that all problems of truth and of being, all methods, hypotheses, and results conceivable for these problems — whether for worlds of experience or for metaphysical higher worlds — can attain their ultimate clarity, their evident sense

or the evidence of their nonsense, only through this supposed intellectualistic hypertrophy. This will then include, certainly, all ultimate questions of legitimate sense and of nonsense in the busy routine of the "resurrected metaphysics" that has become so vocal and so bewitching of late.

Through this last series of considerations the magnitude, the universal and independent significance, of the problem of the life-world has become intelligible to us in an anticipatory insight. In comparison with this the problem of the "objectively true" world or that of objective-logical science — no matter how pressing it may repeatedly become, and properly so — appears now as a problem of secondary and more specialized interest. Though the peculiar accomplishment of our modern objective science may still not be understood, nothing changes the fact that it is a validity for the life-world, arising out of particular activities, and that it belongs itself to the concreteness of the life-world. Thus in any case, for the sake of clarifying this and all other acquisitions of human activity, the concrete life-world must first be taken into consideration ; and it must be considered in terms of the truly concrete universality whereby it embraces, both directly and in the manner of horizons, all the built-up levels of validity acquired by men for the world of their common life and whereby it has the totality of these levels related in the end to a world-nucleus to be distilled by abstraction, namely the world of straightforward intersubjective experiences. To be sure, we do not yet know how the life-world is to become an independent, totally self-sufficient subject of investigation, how it is supposed to make possible scientific statements — which as such, after all, must have their own "objectivity", even if it is in a manner different from that of our sciences, i.e. a necessary validity to be appropriated purely methodically, which we and everyone can verify precisely through this method. We are absolute beginners, here, and have nothing in the way of a logic designed to provide norms ; we can do nothing but reflect, engross ourselves in the still not unfolded sense of our task, and thus secure, with the utmost care, freedom from prejudice, keeping our undertaking free of alien interferences (and we have already made several important contributions to this); and this, as in the case of every new undertaking, must supply us with our method. The clarification of the sense of the task is, indeed, the self-evidence of the goal *qua* goal ; and to this self-evidence belong essentially the self-evidence of the possible "ways" to it. The intricacy and difficulty of the preliminary reflections which are still before us will justify themselves, not only because of the magnitude of the goal, but also because of the essential strangeness and precariousness of the ideas which will necessarily become involved.

Thus what appeared to be merely a problem of the fundamental basis of the objective sciences or a partial problem within the universal problem of objective science has indeed (just as we announced in advance that it would) proven to be the genuine and most universal problem. It can also be put this way : the problem first appears as the question of the relation between objective-scientific thinking and intuition; it concerns, on the one hand, then, logical thinking as the thinking of logical thoughts , eg., the physicist's thinking of physical theory, or purely mathematical thinking, in which mathematics has its place as a system of doctrine, as a theory. And, on the other hand, we have intuiting and the intuited, in the life-world prior to theory. Here arises the ineradicable illusion of a pure thinking which, unconcerned

in its purity about intuition, already has its self-evident truth, even truth about the world — the illusion which makes the sense and the possibility, the "scope", of objective science questionable. Here one concentrates on the separateness of intuiting and thinking and generally interprets the nature of the "theory of knowledge" as theory of science, carried out in respect to two correlative sides⁶ (whereby science is always understood in terms of the only concept of science available, that of objective science). But as soon as the empty and vague notion of intuition — instead of being something negligible and insignificant compared to the supremely significant logical sphere in which one supposedly already has genuine truth — has become the problem of the life-world, as soon as the magnitude and difficulty of this investigation take on enormous proportions as one seriously penetrates it, there occurs the great transformation of the "theory of knowledge" and the theory of science whereby, in the end, science as a problem and as an accomplishment loses its self-sufficiency and becomes a mere partial problem.

What we have said also naturally applies to logic, as the a priori theory of norms for everything "logical" — in the overarching sense of what is logical, according to which logic is a logic of strict objectivity, of objective-logical truths. No one ever thinks about the predications and truths which precede science, about the "logic" which provides norms within this sphere of relativity, or about the possibility, even in the case of these logical structures conforming purely descriptively to the life-world, of inquiring into the system of principles that give them their norms a priori. As a matter of course, traditional objective logic is substituted as the a priori norm even for this subjective-relative sphere of truth.

6. I.e. the subjective and the objective.

Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), the German Philosopher was the founder of the philosophical movement known as phenomenology. The main influence on Husserl's thought was the intentional psychology of Brentano under whom he studied in Vienna in 1884-86. Husserl taught at Halle, and held philosophical chairs at Gottigen and Freiburg. His principal works are: *The Philosophy of Arithmetic* (1891); *Logical Investigations* (1900-01, revised edition 1913-21); *Ideas for a Pure Phenomenology* (Book I, General Introduction, 1013; Book II and III posthumously published, 1952); *Phenomenology of Internal Time-consciousness* (1905-10, published 1928), *Formal and Transcendental Logic* (1929), *Cartesian Meditations* (1931); *Experience and Judgment* (1948) and *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (1954).