

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I

Phenomenology is one of the major trends of contemporary western philosophy. We can designate it as the contemporary philosophical movement which has the German philosopher, Edmund Husserl as its central and still dominating figure. However, every philosopher whose point of departure has been immediate experience and whose method has involved an analysis of this experience can be called a phenomenologist. Such an extension of the term would have to include Plato and Aristotle, Descartes and Bacon, Hegel and Nietzsche, among others. We can avoid calling them phenomenologists only by narrowing down the field. Otherwise, by virtue of a liberal definition, a whole band of writers may be ensnared. Having then narrowed down the field in the way just mentioned, we can understand by phenomenology the lines of enquiry developed by Edmund Husserl who was its outstanding spokesman. But it is to be noted that the diverse elements in the broader tendency comprised Scheler, Pfänder, Ingarden, Edith Stein, Heidegger and various types of Existential philosophers.

Quentin Lauer speaks of distinguishing three groups in terms of their relationship to Husserl's phenomenology. In his words:

If, ..., we take a certain faithfulness to the "constitutive intuition" of the late Husserl as a criterion, we have, I think hit on a

distinguishable position, which, if I mistake not, is the position of Professor Gurwitsch¹.

A second position, according to him:

... would be that of those who draw their inspiration from the Husserl of the *Logische Untersuchungen*. It would include the members of the original Göttingen and Munich circles, the collaborators of Husserl's *Jahrbuch für philosophie und phenomenologische Forschung*, and most of those who specifically call themselves phenomenologists today.²

A third group, he says:

... would include all those whom Herbert Spiegelberg includes in his monumental survey, or at least all those who employ phenomenology as "an intuitive method for obtaining insights into essential structures."³

However, having concurred with Herbert Spiegelberg, Lauer avers as follows:

If we are to take the extreme transcendental idealism of Husserl with its insistence on the universality of reduction and its refusal to accord validity to what has not been intentionally constituted in transcendental

subjectivity we have no group, we have only
Edmund Husserl himself in splendid isolation
...”⁴

Although Husserl has been acclaimed as the founder of phenomenology, he was not the first to employ the term “phenomenology”. It first began to appear in philosophy texts in the eighteenth century in Lambert, Herder, Kant, Fichte and Hegel – all of them being German thinkers. Quentin Lauer⁵ has mentioned three important precursors of phenomenology: they are Immanuel Kant, George Wilhelm Fredrich Hegel and Ernest Mach.

Phenomenology refers back to the distinction introduced by Kant between the *phenomenon* or appearance of reality to consciousness, and the *noumenon*. Kant himself did not develop phenomenology as such, “but since his *Critique of Pure Reason* recognizes scientific knowledge only of *phenomena* and not at all of *noumena*, his critique can be considered a phenomenology.... Still, according to Kant, it is possible to *think* what is not *known*, and this we think of as a ‘thing-in-itself’ or *noumenon*, of which the *phenomenon* is the known aspect.”⁶ In phenomenology of this sort, what does not in any way appear to consciousness cannot be known; it deals with things in their manner of appearing to us, appearances which are dependent on the observer, more specifically, on the structure of his cognitive apparatus.

According to Lauer, Hegel was the “First philosopher to characterize his own approach to philosophy as phenomenology.”⁷ Indeed, Hegel himself made the most prominent use of the term “phenomenology” when it featured in the title of his 1807

Phenomenology of Spirit.⁸ Beginning with sense perception, the simplest form of consciousness, he brings us through consciousness of self to vast reaches of the human spirit which is *all* reality. In such a totalizing philosophy, seeking to comprehend total reality, however, there is no break with what is existent, the factual objects of the world. In proclaiming that the Real is the Rational “Hegel sees no departure from the original phenomenon, since the dialectical process constitutes an unbreakable chain which has never lost contact with the first experience.”⁹

Another kind of phenomenology preceding Husserl’s is discernible, according to Lauer, in the positivism of Ernst Mach of the Vienna Circle. “The approach is exclusively descriptive – describing consciousness, the data of which are susceptible only of description, not of explanation. Such description is completely non-metaphysical”.¹⁰

Yet, from the beginning, Husserl was opposed to what he called the “dualism” of Kant, the “constructivism” of Hegel and the “naturalism” of the positivists. Husserl agrees with them in asserting that only phenomena are given, but he also claims that in the phenomena is given the essence of what is. There is no concern with reality as existing. Husserl does not use the word “phenomena” as opposed to “noumena” in the way Kant did. Husserl would not say that at the back of the phenomenal, there is the noumenal world, which is unknowable due to the structure of human cognition, and which merely appears before the human mind. For Husserl, the phenomena and the noumena coincide.

For Husserl, the objects of consciousness are not objects of some unusual kind, and in the *Logical Investigations* he says quite forcefully:

It is a serious error to draw a real (*reell*) distinction between ... 'intentional' objects on the one hand, and 'transcendent' actual objects - which may correspond to them, on the other.¹¹

A little further on, he says:

*...the intentional object of a presentation is the same as its actual object, and on occasion as its external object, and that it is absurd to distinguish between them. The transcendent object would not be the object of this presentation, if it were not its intentional object.*¹²

Kant understands phenomenology in a descriptive sense. Yet, in his ultimate identification of the phenomenal world with reality, Husserl is closer to Hegel than Kant.¹³ His main difference with Hegel being that for Husserl history is unimportant (though Husserl's last work, *The Crisis of European Civilization and Transcendental Phenomenology* is characterized by a thematic treatment of the problem of history).

So far we have attempted to provide an account of the historical background of Husserl's phenomenology together with an account of who can be called a phenomenologist. We shall now attempt to make a survey of the course of development of Husserl's phenomenology.

II

Both Marvin Farver¹⁴ and J.N.Mohanty¹⁵ have concurred in distinguishing four major periods in the development of Husserl's phenomenology. The difference between them consists in that while Farber has linked the periodization of Husserl's thought to the publications of several groups of Husserl's writings, Mohanty thinks that Husserl's publications do not necessarily link to the development of his ideas. What Mohanty says is true; reading Husserl on one theme reignites the image of his whole system, inviting the reader to look more closely to other parts of the system, developed at some other time in some other text. Again, Farber's focusing on Husserl's publications is also not without reason because each text dwells on specific themes of phenomenology. But each may be said to contain seeds of what is to be achieved latter. To our mind that difference is a not a major one to affect forming an idea of Husserl's philosophical development. Our survey intends to accommodate both positions. The periods distinguished are stated below:

I. The first period comprises of Husserl's mathematical writings with the attempt to establish a psychological account for logic and mathematics, adhering to psychologism as a methodological position. The basic work of Husserl of this period is *Philosophy of Arithmetic*. He also remained preoccupied with questions about logical calculi, logical semantics, with Brentanian descriptive psychology and with geometry and problems of space. This period corresponds to what Mohanty calls the Halle period (1886-1900).

II. The second period concerns the refutation of psychologism and the development of a descriptive phenomenology free from all assumptions of psychology and metaphysics. The relevant texts of this period are *Logical Investigations*, Vols. I and II.

III. To this period belong Husserl's published writings after the first edition of the *Logical Investigations* up to the publication of *Ideas I* in 1913 with its formulation of the method of reduction and other concepts. In the same year as the publication of the *Ideas I*, the Second Edition of the *Logical Investigations* was published in developed form. To this period also belong his phenomenological analysis of time which was published much later posthumously and his *Logos* essay, "Phenomenology as Rigorous Science" (1910), which illustrates, besides the nature of phenomenological description, the programmatic ideal of phenomenology as the most rigorous of all sciences. It is the period when Husserl planned that the *Ideas* was to have three parts and he also planned the themes of the Books II and III. But these works were never published during his life time, although Husserl drafted *Ideas II* in 1912. This period is roughly analogous to what Mohanty calls the Göttingen period spreading over the years from 1900-1916.

IV. The fourth period signifies the systematic account of constitution and the way to the transcendental sphere. Its more detailed elaboration is provided by the *Cartesian Meditations* (1931). This work introduces the problem of transcendental subjectivity which is necessary for a complete constitutive phenomenology. Herein too appears Husserl's thinking about inter-subjectivity. To this period also belong the *Formal and Transcendental Logic* (1929) and *Experience and Judgment* published

posthumously in 1939. These are works of great importance for logic, theory of knowledge and psychology. *The Crisis of European Sciences the Transcendental Phenomenology*, parts of which were published in 1936 and 1937, is Husserl's last work. It includes discussion of the life-world in contrast with the world of science and is a detailed exposition of the way modern science arises out of life-world which provides its "foundation of sense." This period partly covers Husserl's Freiburg teaching period and the post-Freiburg years after retirement.

The works that Husserl published during his lifetime are but "the tips of an iceberg." A huge manuscript remains untapped. Whatever is published out of that, remains largely inaccessible to the English speaking world. Pending their availability and further publications, the narrative of development is bound to remain incomplete.

If we apply our mind to this schematic presentation of the development of Husserl's thought, we would find that starting from the conception of phenomenology as a descriptive psychology and preoccupation with problems of meaning, crucial turning points occur and radical theses are introduced in the way of act-content, noesis-noema distinctions, the phenomenological attitude versus the natural attitude, phenomenological reduction, the transcendental subjectivity and transcendental ego, the problems of constitution, inter-subjectivity and the life-world. Each of these again, gives rise to its own terminology, definitions and constructions. And this has prompted some commentators to speak of two basic periods in Husserl's development - the pre-transcendental and transcendental and they speak of striking differences between the first and the second periods. Whether we speak of two or four periods, there is fundamental unity in his development. Husserl

himself believed that his development displayed an inner continuity. In fact, the question of the continuity of Husserl's ideas is taken up several times. The essay by Oscar Becker, "The Philosophy of Edmund Husserl", Walter Biemal's "The Decisive Phases in the Development of Husserl's Philosophy" and Eugen Fink's "The Phenomenological Philosophy of Edmund Husserl and Contemporary Criticism", all collected in *Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl*,¹⁶ take up the issue of relationship between different phases of Husserl's thought from the earliest to the latest. It is observed that Husserl's development proceeded in a continued fashion and the kernels of his later thought are in evidence much earlier than had been commonly believed. Bearing in mind this element of continuity Marvin Farber notes:

If one reads all of Husserl's writings consecutively, one cannot but be impressed by the continuity of his development. No position held earlier was ever fully wrong, so that the correct results of his investigations could always find their place in each successive systematic period.¹⁷

Mohanty, too, observes as follows:

... no major shifts characterize the development of his thought – there is rather a continuous, unceasing attempt to think through the same problems at many different levels.¹⁸

III

In what has been stated in sections I and II above, we have tried to identify the criteria for deciding upon who can be called a phenomenologist. We have also attempted an account of the evolution of Husserl's philosophical ideas. In that connection, we have utilized certain concepts, like "constitutive phenomenology", "phenomena", "intentionality", etc., which are integral for an understanding of Husserl's phenomenology. We have done all this without saying what phenomenology is. Let us now turn to this question: What is phenomenology *à la* Husserl?

The term "phenomenology" is a compound of the Greek words, *phenomena* and *logos*. Accordingly, etymologically, phenomenology means the science of phenomena. In the Introduction to the English translation of the *Ideas* I, referring to the programme of pure phenomenology, Husserl says, "It calls itself a science of phenomena."¹⁹ In the first chapter of this work he officially defines the science of phenomenology as the study of the essence of conscious experience and specially of intentional experience.²⁰ Yet, phenomenology began with Husserl as a kind of descriptive psychology, analyzing experiences as their subjects experience them. By "description", in the present context, Husserl means the analysis of the traits and components of mental states or acts and their objects. Husserl's early phenomenological analyses were taken to be nothing more than a psychology of the states of consciousness. He characterizes his early phenomenological investigation as "descriptive psychology". J.N. Findlay, in his Introduction to the Second Edition of the *Logical Investigation*, Vol. I says that in the First

Edition of the *Logical Investigations* the word “‘phenomenology’ is used only in the sense of ‘descriptive psychology’: the study of what enters into the ‘description’, the clarificatory analysis of conscious experience and its various sub-species”²¹ However, over the years Husserl lost interest in the descriptive psychology of the first volume of the *Logical Investigations* and in the Introduction to the Second Edition of the *Logical Investigations II* he withdraws this characterization. He says in unambiguous language:

Phenomenology, ... has, as its exclusive concern, experiences intuitively sizeable, and analyzable in the pure generality of their essence, not experience empirically perceived and treated as real facts, as experiences of human or animal experients in the phenomenal world that we posit as an empirical fact.²²

In his note 3 to the Introduction to the *Logical Investigations*, Vol. II, Husserl clearly states that if psychology is given its old meaning, ordinary ‘descriptive psychology’, a part of natural science, then:

... phenomenology is not descriptive psychology: its peculiar ‘pure’ description, its contemplation of pure essences on the basis of exemplary individual intuitions of experiences ..., and its descriptive fixation of the contemplated essences into pure concepts, is no empirical scientific description.”²³

This note, as Findlay observes, is a “typical account of what Husserl has come to mean by ‘phenomenology’ by the time the Second Edition of the *Logical Investigations* was published in 1913. It replaces what he meant by the term when the First Edition was published in 1901. There Husserl says, ‘phenomenology is descriptive psychology’ and wonders what is the point of the whole battle against psychologism.”²⁴

Indeed, as a matter of fact, the analyses of the *Logical Investigations* do not involve empirical, psychological analyses of events of consciousness at all. Rather they are purely eidetic analyses in order to gain the essence of conscious experiences. This phenomenology is exclusively focused on the general features of cognitive acts and their special traits, and thus are, plainly not in any way an empirical science of psychology. It was not aiming, as was predominant in the psychology of the time, at generalizations about features of empirical consciousness, in order to arrive at law-like regularities of it, but at the structures or essences of consciousness. The procedure for analyzing essences is explicitly characterized by Husserl as “pure” phenomenology to set it off from the procedures of psychology. If Husserl is criticized for relapsing into psychologism then he himself is partly responsible for it. On the one hand, he characterized his early “phenomenological investigations” as applying to the First Edition of the *Logical Investigations* as “descriptive psychology”. On the other hand, Husserl repeatedly pointed out later on that in the *Investigations* he was concerned with the analysis of essences. And in the *Ideas I*, the publication of which coincides with that of the Second Edition of the *Logical Investigations*, he explicitly denied that phenomenology could have anything to do with psychology, which is there said to be an empirical science concerned with facts.²⁵ Yet, in his *Phenomenological Psychology* of 1925, Husserl hinted at a “pure

psychology” and contended that “pure phenomenology” might also be defined as “pure psychology”.²⁶

The transcendental turn in Husserl’s phenomenology brings phenomenology deeper than any psychology, even phenomenological psychology, to the transcendental world-constitutive subjectivity. The relationship between psychology and phenomenology in Husserl’s work has evolved progressively as Husserl set about the pure programme of phenomenology, not just as the epistemological clarification of logic and mathematics, or even as the apriori science of consciousness, but rather as a pure eidetic science, a “science of essences”, a distinctive science of the ‘subjective’ structures of conscious experience. Since consciousness is nearly always consciousness of something, the central work of phenomenology is the analysis of the various types of intentionality, the directedness of consciousness towards its object. Western philosophy, as yet, has only one clear formulation of a positive distinguishing feature of consciousness: that is what Brentano and Husserl called intentionality. It was Husserl who first brought together the different strands of the theory that define the structure of intentionality.

In the *Logical Investigations*, intentionality is shown to be the essence of consciousness. All experiencing acts of consciousness or conscious acts are directed to objects. Every act of consciousness we perform, every experience that we have, is intentional. The term ‘intentionality’ derives from the Latin verb ‘*intendere*’, meaning “to point to”, in the sense of being the consciousness of something. As early as the Vol. II of the *Logical Investigations* (1900-1), Husserl sought to discover the essence of consciousness, as the “consciousness of

something.” Each conscious event can be said to “point to” or to be “directed toward something”.

Intentionality signifies the activity of giving an account of the various ways in which things can appear to our consciousness. Phenomenology, that is, Husserlian phenomenology is characterized as a study that gives primacy to what is given immediately to consciousness or experience, namely, the phenomena. Phenomena are the absolutely and directly given world of data that are presented to consciousness. All experiencing acts or conscious acts are directed to objects. Every act of consciousness we perform, every experience that we have, is intentional. Hence, phenomenology is basically concerned with consciousness, its experiencing of objects directly given to it. Phenomenology, however, is not a psychological study of consciousness. Rather, it is an attempt to examine each act of consciousness as a “pure act” seeking to discover in each its essence. Each conscious event can be said to “point to” or to be “directed toward” something. Thus, intentionality is often characterized as the “directedness of consciousness”. Consciousness is necessarily the consciousness of something. It would be puzzling to say that there is a specific form of consciousness but it is not the consciousness of anything. In Vol. II of the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl says:

Intentional experiences have the peculiarity of relating in various ways to presented objects....

An object is ‘meant’ (*‘gemeint’*) or ‘aimed at’ (*‘abgezielt’*) in them.²⁷

Intentionality is essentially “consciousness of” or an “experience of” something. If I see, I am seeing some visual object, such as a tree or a

flower vase; if I imagine, my imagining presents an imaginary object, say, the winged horse; if I am remembering, I am remembering a past object, perhaps my childhood home or my teacher in high school. Every act of consciousness, every experience is correlated with an object. Phenomenology, thus, is not a psychological account of consciousness. Rather, it is an attempt to examine each act of consciousness as a “pure” act, seeking to discover in each, its essence. As early as the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl sought to discover the essence of consciousness as the “consciousness of” something. This insight was carried forth in the *Ideas I*, where Husserl defines the intentionality of consciousness as “the unique peculiarity of experiences ‘to be the consciousness of something.’”²⁸

The same insight was expressed in the *Cartesian Meditations* published thirty years later, from the publication of the first edition of the *Logical Investigations*, that the Cartesian *Cogito* contains the *Cogitatum* as immediately as the *Cogito* itself.

Such an understanding of experience or consciousness distinguishes Husserl from the traditional empiricists Locke, Berkeley, Hume and Mill. Experience, in the phenomenological sense cannot be reduced to purely physical relation between a person’s body (sense organs) and the physical objects, or even to psychological relation between a person’s mind and the physical object, in a specific way. This does not mean, however, that Husserl had nothing to do with the thoughts of the empiricists. Spiegelberg in *The Phenomenological Movement* correctly points out that Husserl’s study of Locke and Hume was of fundamental importance for his wider development. Even the late Husserl rated Locke as the founder of a psychology out of “inner experience”.

Citing Husserl's words (*Husserliana*, Vol.9, p.29) Ludwig Landgrebe says:

He (Locke) could have been the first to lay out a history of "human interiority", a systematic description of the development of the soul. "He has seen the task of clarifying all of our self-acquired or borrowed concepts, of clarifying the significative ideas with which we operate in our life." And the necessity of tracing them back to that which is fundamentally and simply given. Thus it was Locke's question about the origin of all our ideas and the task of a history of our consciousness that persisted as motives determining the motive of the formation of Husserl's phenomenology.²⁹

No less important, for Husserl' was Hume. According to Landgrebe, "Husserl's theory of the 'general thesis of the natural attitude', of that 'belief in the world' upon which all human compartments – theoretical cognition as well as practical activity is based, is obviously inspired by Hume's analysis of the significance of "belief" for human life."³⁰

Husserl's concept of experience as intentional developed out of his critique of Locke. The experience is intentional experience, directed towards a given object, in a specific way. Description has to be performed from a first person point of view, so as to ensure that the respective item is described exactly as it is experienced, or intended by the subject.

Husserl attaches primacy to what is immediately given or intuited. The immediacy of intuition is typically bound with Husserl's phenomenology. What is fully intuited is precisely the thing as it is in itself. This is also called "self-givenness". Husserl's central insight is that consciousness is the condition of all experiences, all appearances. Intelligibility of an object is not independent of its awareness or experiencing. Consciousness is to be studied as it is and accordingly, the objects of consciousness, too, need to be characterized as they are given to consciousness without any preconceptions or metaphysical baggage. It is in this sense that we are to understand Husserl's slogan: "To the things themselves" or "back to the things themselves", *zu den Sachen selbst*.³¹

However, it is not Husserl's aim to confer intentionality on every mental occurrence. He takes pure sensations to be non-intentional although they occur as constituents of complex intentional phenomena such as perceptions.³² Thus, my experience of perceiving a house contains, as its real and immanent contents, sensations which themselves are not directed towards any objects of their own. The appearing of the thing (the experience) is not the thing which appears. That means that an intentional experience is not the object of another intentional experience. The appearing of the thing does not itself appear to us. "...we live through it."³³

Husserl's concept of consciousness includes all intentional experiences for which he uses the word "act". The use of the word "act" is not meant to introduce any sense of temporality. It does not mean activity – "*all thoughts of actions must be rigidly excluded.*" Here act may be taken to mean nothing but functions. The act involved in a judgement is the function of judging, the act involved in memory is the



function of remembering and so on. As Husserl himself introduces it, the term is simply shorthand or a briefer expression for “intentional phenomena” or “intentional experiences”.³⁴ Besides, the “act”, Husserl also speaks of the “content” of an act. The content of an act in every sense in which Husserl uses the word, is always something different from the act’s object. The content of an act is what makes the act the intentional act it is. It is the inner, “experiential” feature of the act which gives it, as part of its own intentional structure, the character of being a “consciousness of something”. Its correlation with the act accounts for the act being intentional. The content is not the object intended in the act. It is the object *as intended* in an act. Two acts may have the same intentional object but each may present the same object differently. Thus the number 2 may be presented in one as “the successor of 1 in the whole number series” or as “the only even prime number.” The content of an act is also sometimes called the “phenomenological content”. It is the focus on the inner structure of intentional acts in terms of the “phenomenological content” that characterizes Husserl’s resulting theory as “phenomenological”. Hence, for Husserl the question is not “what sort of object is intended in the act to account for its intentionality” but rather, “what is the phenomenological structure of this act by virtue of which it is an intentional experience?”

What, then, is the status of the object of presentation, the presented object? The transcendent object is the intentional object. There is no commitment to the existence or non-existence of the intentional object. Husserl says:

It makes no essential difference to an object presented and given to consciousness whether it

exists or it is fictitious, or is perhaps completely absurd. I think of Jupiter as I think of Bismark, of the tower of Babel as I think of Cologne Cathedral, of a regular thousand-sided polygon as of a thousand-faced solid.³⁵

Husserl reiterates this assertion as a truism at the Appendix to Sec. 21, Investigation V of the *Logical Investigations*. Husserl avers:

If I represent God to myself, or an angel, or an intelligent thing-in-itself or a physical thing, or a round square, etc., I mean the transcendent object named in each case, in other words my intentional object: it makes no difference whether this object exists or is imaginary or absurd ...³⁶

Intentionality remains at the foundation of almost all of Husserl's works and it has various phases of development. Husserl comes to see it as the key to the phenomenological analysis of cognition and consciousness, of the whole human endeavor to be self-consciously and universally rational. "Intentionality is the name of the problem encompassed by the whole of phenomenology."³⁷ However, the notion of intentionality has not arisen out of a vacuum. It has a history. It is formed out of Franz Brentano's famous thesis that all mental phenomena are characterized by a peculiar directedness towards objects. It would not be out of place to return to the Brentano thesis in brief and Husserl's reactions to it.

IV

Brentano's thesis has been recognized in contemporary philosophy by a large body of philosophers of widely different persuasions. For our present purpose, we shall discuss how for Husserl, Brentano's thesis that all mental phenomena are intentional remains the indispensable starting point. Let us have a look at Brentano's thesis.

The basic purpose of Brentano's *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, Vol. I is the clarification of the two terms, "physical" and "mental".³⁸ While distinguishing mental phenomena from physical phenomena Brentano makes use of such expressions as "intentional inexistence of the object", "relatedness to content", "directedness towards an object", etc. of all the defining properties of the mental phenomena, Brentano finds that the most important is "intentional inexistence". It dominates his way of speaking. He says:

Every mental phenomenon is characterized by what the scholastics of the middle ages have called intentional [or mental (*mentale*)] existence of an object and what we, although with a not wholly unambiguous expression, would call the reference to a content, direction to an object (by which is not to be understood a reality) or immanent objectivity.³⁹

According to him, all psychic phenomena and only psychic phenomena are characterized by the intentional or "mental" inexistence

of an object. "Inexistence" here is meant to be understood in the Latin sense of "*inexistentia*" meaning "existence within". Each psychic phenomenon includes something as an object within itself, though not always in the same way.

Brentano was Husserl's philosophical master. Husserl studied under Brentano in Vienna for two years from 1884-1886. Glancing back at one point in his lectures on phenomenological psychology Husserl says: "The *Logical Investigations* are a full consequent of the impetus coming from Brentano. This is obvious for I was a direct student of Brentano."⁴⁰ According to Landgrebe, Husserl took from Brentano the idea of a psychology on the basis of inner observations which stood in opposition to the psychology of the time that was dominated by psychophysics and a strict empiricist methodology. Brentano's great discovery, as Husserl saw, was to lay out "a pure descriptive science of the psychic life" based upon the "inner evidence of experience".⁴¹

Husserl concurs with Brentano when he defines the physical world as the correlate of intentional acts of consciousness. To this extent Husserl rejects traditional realism which for him is committed ultimately to the existence of a thing-in-itself. But he criticizes different aspects of Brentano's theory, and these occur primarily in *Logical Investigations* II, Chapter 2. He goes on to develop his highly original notion of intentionality, denying many of the basic aspects of Brentano's own analysis. Of the many inconsistencies that Brentano is accused of, two are particularly important. Husserl warns that the representational theory according to which the physical thing is "outside" consciousness and its representatives are "in" consciousness is erroneous. The second error is that the intentional object is immanent, that is, is a sign or representation.

These views are both fundamentally wrong. The intentional object is not an “internal representation” and the external thing is not something “represented.” Rather, the intentional object *is* the transcendent, external object. To say that an object is intentional is to say simply that it is the object (referent) of an actual or possible act of consciousness. It implies nothing about the object’s “reality” or “mode of being”.⁴²

Husserl’s most fundamental objection is based on the later developments of phenomenology from a “descriptive psychology” of the *Logical Investigations* to the mature statement of phenomenology as a transcendental philosophy in the *Ideas I*. Brentano was concerned to ground psychology on empiricist-naturalist principles and to delineate its own peculiar subject matter as opposed to that of the natural, physical sciences. For him, the notion of intentional inexistence was significant as a defining characteristic of mental phenomena. For Husserl, not psychology, but philosophy was the central concern. More specifically, the significance of intentionality lies in its implications for the establishing of philosophy as a “rigorous science”. Such a science is possible on the basis of a radical critique of knowledge traditionally conceived, which critique would serve to trace all our knowledge back to its original sources in immediate experience, to the evident self-givenness of all beings. This is the basic meaning of Husserl’s dictum: “Back to the things themselves” because a “thing” is the direct object of consciousness in its purified form. And since the things themselves are first “given” – constituted in subjectivity, the intentionality of consciousness becomes the guiding core (clue) for the project of a phenomenological philosophy.

In view of the later development in the *Ideas* it becomes clear that Husserl regards Brentano’s psychology and philosophy and hence, his

notion of intentional inexistence as a naïve naturalism, as inner worldly and mundane. Mental phenomena are thus parts of nature just as physical phenomena are. As James C. Morrison says:

...for Husserl, Brentano's fundamental mistake lay in not seeing that the intentional structure of consciousness ultimately implies that all beings in the world are relative to consciousness in so far as they must be conceived as a possible correlate or object of consciousness, and that, therefore, the latter itself cannot be *part* of the world or nature, but must be transcendental.⁴³

However, we must not be oblivious of Brentano's contribution in seeing the formal structure of consciousness as consciousness of and the inadequacy of the traditional conception of mind (consciousness) as thinking substance as in Cartesianism and a "bundle of ideas" as in empiricism. Closely allied with this insight is that of the difference between a descriptive psychology and genetic psychology which distinction opened the path of Husserl's own radically original conception of transcendental phenomenology. Even at a later stage in the *Ideas III* Husserl reviews his position in relation to Brentano's. He says:

... some take phenomenology as a kind of continuation of the psychology of Brentano. However highly I value this ingenious work, and however strongly it... has influenced me in younger years, it must, nevertheless, also be said here that Brentano remained far from a

phenomenology in our sense ... Nevertheless, he has gained for himself the epoch-making merits precisely for making phenomenology possible. He offered the modern period the idea of *intentionality* drawn from the consciousness itself in immanent description...⁴⁴

The above is common knowledge in the philosophical world. However, it is often assumed on the basis of this alone that Husserl's doctrine of intentionality is essentially the same as Brentano's. This is not quite true. The meaning and importance each gives to it is not the same even in fundamentals. Husserl's phenomenological views of intentionality are different from and far more developed than Brentano's. We find that Husserl, in spite of his above admissions, is keen to keep his distance from Brentano. In the *Ideas II* also he observes as follows:

However much I consider [Brentano's] transformation of the scholastic concept of intentionality to be a great discovery, without which phenomenology would never have been possible, nevertheless an essential distinction has to be drawn between pure psychology in my sense, a psychology contained implicitly in transcendental phenomenology and Brentano's psychology.⁴⁵

We close this reflection on Husserl's theory of intentionality as the essence of consciousness and proceed to consider the conception of phenomenology as presuppositionless inquiry. Phenomenology is claimed

by Husserl to be “presuppositionless”. Presuppositionlessness is the principle of all principles. That not only means that phenomenology must be free from theoretical bias but also that no concept should be immune to further criticism. Here we may distinguish between two claims. Phenomenology is presuppositionless because it demands that any concept and any proposition can be reassessed at any point. Phenomenology may be said to be presuppositionless in the much stronger sense that its descriptions, phenomenological descriptions neither presuppose nor involve any philosophical theory. The demand that phenomenology be without presuppositions is an attempt to guarantee that it will not be a system of dogmatic assertions without ultimate philosophical support. Husserl’s famous methodological devise, epoché is a disciplinary technique to assure that philosophical descriptions are not philosophical theories in disguise. Husserl stresses a kind of “immanent” seeing, bringing things to evidence, to evident intuition, adequately and apodictically. It is immediate seeing. It is in this way that the “originary self-governance” of the *Prolegomena* is carried through in *Ideas I* and all subsequent works. Let us see what Husserl means by “evidence”, “adequate”, etc. Evidence (Evidenz) introduced in the *Logical Investigations* is an “experiencing” of something that is and is thus. It is the “mental seeing of something itself. It refers to a “mental state or epistemic situation in which something is evident to a person who is in that state or situation.” “Adequacy” means the fulfillment of an intuition in all its aspects and “adequacy” means absolute evidence. Husserl accepts adequacy as a normal achievement, a successful traversing of the epistemic distance between intention and fulfillment, and apodicticity as a goal.

In the First Edition of the *Logical Investigations* for the first time Husserl advanced phenomenology as a pure, presuppositionless science of consciousness. In the *Logical Investigations II* (1901), the seventh section of the introduction bears the heading “‘Freedom from Presuppositions’ as a Principle in Epistemological Investigations”. In it Husserl demands that the theory of knowledge must exclude “all statements not permitting of a conclusive *phenomenological* realization”,⁴⁶ that it returns to the “adequate fulfillment in intuition.”⁴⁷ This claim was made in more radical form in the *Cartesian Meditations* where Husserl says that the philosopher must begin in “absolute poverty of knowledge”.⁴⁸

Now, the requirement of presuppositionlessness has been criticized on two grounds. First, the demand that phenomenology continuously reassesses all of its own concepts and presuppositions leads to the objection that the phenomenological enterprise is unavoidably circular. Secondly, the demand that phenomenology undergo constant reexamination leads to the objection that phenomenology will be so obsessed with itself as a method that it can never overcome this obsession to be productive. However, we must note that the weaker demand that every concept and proposition be always remain open to reexamination lies at the very heart of Husserl’s phenomenology. This is clear not only from what Husserl says but from what he does. Husserl’s phenomenology involves the reworking of every idea, alteration and rejection of it as he develops.

Despite the complexity of Husserl's ideas and the heavy terminology used by him the basic problematic of phenomenology is the fundamental quest of philosophy, namely, the relationship between consciousness and the world. Husserl's fundamental quest is to provide a foundation of knowledge. The concepts of truth, justification and evidence permeate his thoughts. Whether the paths pursued by him are through Cartesianism, through psychology or through ontology, the goal has been to provide a foundation of knowledge. For this reason he has been branded as an epistemologist of the foundationalist school. The orientation of phenomenology is, however, different from conventional epistemological enterprise. Instead of positing the existence or non-existence of certain entities we can still deal with the "content" of the transcendent object as given intuitively in the relevant phenomena. This insight of the *Investigations* is carried forth in the *Ideas I*, where the intentionality thesis takes the form of the noema-noesis correlation. And this is made possible by starting reflectively from completely new point of departure, operating in a thoroughly new dimension and with a radically new method. The objects of the world become included in consciousness; but it is not a real inclusion but an intentional inclusion; the world is a noematic correlate. However, within this broader epistemological context, Husserl gradually became interested in questions of meaning and reference, noema-noesis distinction, ideality of meaning, the constitution of sense, etc. Hence, the question, whether Husserl was concerned with epistemology or theory of meaning is not really relevant. It appears to be a matter of shift in emphasis. After all, problems of meaning are, in a way, problems within epistemology.

Each of Husserl's "introductions" begins with the development of a set of problems. Whatever differences there may be between the "introductions", there is one problem which emerges in all of them, namely, the problem of cognition of the world which ultimately requires a correlation between the subjective side and the objective side. Husserl's problem is still the elucidation of two kinds of being which are called, consciousness and the "natural reality" or world and the complicity of consciousness in the understanding of the world. In other words, phenomenology's problem is the reappropriation of the object in response to the kind of objectivism which puts human knowledge beyond the subject. This involves the object's relation to the subject as an essential relation and the recharacterization of subjectivity not as mere inwardness but as the source of the structures and constitutive activity. Thus, Husserl, at a fundamental level, remains involved in the question of the relationship between consciousness and the world-order but from the special point of view of constitutive phenomenology.

VI

We have already stated above that certain concepts appear and reappear in course of Husserl's phenomenological development. In fact Husserl sees the business of phenomenology as the explication and clarification of *all* concepts. Phenomenology's criticality consists in assuming that no concept is sufficiently familiar for us to accept or a definition or characterization without close analysis of the concept in question and explication of its meaning. The concepts, we have especially in mind are world, subjectivity and the life-world. What motivates us in choosing this

cluster of concepts as our theme is that the programme of phenomenology consists in rendering intelligible the world around us and to explicate its meaning. This explication also bears upon the correlativity of the phenomenological subject and its object such that we can never confront an object otherwise than an object for a subject; nor is there a subject that does not have objects and is not in a world. We cannot take up apposition outside consciousness to study the relationship of consciousness to the objects of the world. The concept of the life-world which is developed in Husserl's later work *The Crisis*⁴⁹ is a result of the need to reevaluate and reinterpret his earlier position, radically reworking the phenomenological categories of phenomenological versus the natural attitude, phenomenological reduction, transcendental subjectivity and transcendental ego, inter-subjectivity, etc. But Husserl's main insight is expressed in the thesis that the life-world is the forgotten foundation of the meaning of science. We shall critically discuss these crucial concepts and their interrelations in the forthcoming chapters. For the purpose of this introductory chapter we intend insert some brief preliminary observations. We begin with the world.

A. Conceptions about the world and the subject experiencing it are not something new in philosophy. Even the ordinary man, the man in the street entertains some idea about the world he experiences. While the problem of the being or existence of the world and our concerns to know the world lie at the heart of philosophical thinking reflecting metaphysical and epistemological issues and the question of why there is a world at all, is unanswerable and a mystery, the commonsense conception of the world deserves attention. It not only provides a starting point, but also enables us to be aware of the divergence between the commonsense view and the philosophical view of the world.

From the commonsense point of view the world exists as an unquestionable fact. It is real and not a fiction or chimera. The world is the world of objects – natural objects, like rivers, hills, meadows, beasts and birds and many others; human artifacts like, tables, chairs, books, motor cars, etc., cultural objects like art, literature, music, etc. and also other persons are there. From the commonsense point of view we are not aware of any intermediaries between ourselves and the object we know. I see a tomato with its determinate colour, shape and size. My perception is not mediated by some reddish, roundish, sensible qualities or sense data. This relationship may go awry when we have illusions, hallucinations and perceptual errors, etc. This, of course, does not affect the acceptance of the world as independent of our relation to it. Over all, the commonsense world is the world of stark realism.

Moreover, the experienced world is the “same” for all; it is not subject-relative. Although the ordinary man considers himself as the subject of his experiences and the center of his activities in the world, he may carve out a space for him as per his motivations, interests and action, distinguishing special worlds. We talk of the world of the artist, the world of the scholar, the world of the businessman, etc. But the persons occupying these special worlds are not cut off from the common world. They are oriented to the same world although in different ways and manners. When the artist in his studio tells someone “This is my world”, his world is defined in this context by his interest in art, but he is not cut off from the world.

It is obvious that the commonsense conception of the world would not pass the test of philosophical reflection. The philosopher is concerned with the clarification of the concept “world”. The philosopher uses

theories and concepts within a theory to explicate the sense of the theory. Philosophical theories of realism and idealism and their variations are theories pertaining to the world-problem. We may here make one observation. It is rather baffling that the commonsense conception of the world as outlined above does not come from the common man who lives it out; it comes from one who stands, as it were, outside it while reflecting on it. We cannot avoid reflection altogether when speaking of the common man's "world conception", however minimalist that may be. Hence, a theory of commonsense is open to the criticism that the *object* of this theory deviates from commonsense itself.

This account above is not a superfluous digression. Although Husserl himself does not use the word "common sense", he does, however, use the expressions, such as "life-world", "common surrounding world", "natural attitude", etc., which are closely related to the account of the world which is straightforwardly experienced in everyday life. Husserl's ideas in this regard stem largely from the Second Book of the *Ideas I* which presents the subtle analysis of perception and the world given in and through perception. In the crisis, the life-world of commonsense is developed in relation to the scientific world-determination. We shall see in the following pages how Husserl's ideas about commonsense experiences are woven into his phenomenological framework in a coherent whole.

B. It is pertinent to ask whether in our everyday empirical experience of the world we have the awareness of subjectivity – working into our experiences as subjects. Let us explain this with an example. Suppose we are looking for a pencil misplaced, or watching a gem of cricket on the TV. IF we stop searching the pencil or stop watching the game and look

inward and reflect on what we are doing, the activity of searching itself or the activity of watching the TV itself, we would have the awareness of our subjective states, the subject's awareness of his inner experiences. But this, to our mind, is introspection and will not qualify the phenomenologist's sense of subjectivity. Subjectivity, for Husserl, is constitutive subjectivity with its essential intentionality as world-positing acts. The constitutive of Husserl's transcendental phenomenology also entails the questions of solipsism and the connected problem of how to escape from it. This leads to the issue of inter-subjectivity as an escape route from enclosed subjectivity.

C. Husserl, in his last period, goes back to the world as it is prior to science, the, the life-world, with its original givenness, which is the underlying basis for scientific determination.

To conclude: this introduction provides a bare outline of phenomenology and of what we intend to do in this work. Our explicit purpose is to understand the three basic concepts of phenomenology, the world, subjectivity and life-world and exhibit their inter-relations and in that process we shall enter the diverse ways, the above important issues are interpreted and sought to be related in Husserl's phenomenology. We seek to do that in a critical spirit.

CHAPTER I

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Quentin Leuer, "Questioning the Phenomenologists", *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol.58, No. 21, 1961, p.633. We may note that in his article "The Problem of Existence in Constitutive Phenomenology" (*The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 58, No. 21, 1961), Aaron Gurwitsch himself prefers to use the term "phenomenology" to refer to "Husserl's constitutive phenomenology and not to later phenomenological trends, which, whatever their kinship with Husserl's phenomenology, have developed in somewhat different directions." *Ibid.*, p.625.
2. Quentin Lauer, "Questioning the Phenomenologists", *op.cit.*, p. 633.
3. *Ibid*, pp. 633-634. Cf. Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction*, Vol. I, The Hague: Martinus Nijoff, 1960, p.11.
4. *Ibid.*, Spiegelberg has described Husserl as the "central figure of the Movement", "its most radical representative", "the most extreme member of the Movement" and consequently, "the loneliest". *The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction*, Vol. I, *op.cit.*, p. xxviii.
5. Quentin Lauer, *Phenomenology: Genesis and Prospect*, New York: Harper and Row, 1965, p.1.
6. *Ibid.*, p.2.

7. *Ibid.*
8. G.W.V. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977.
9. Quentin Lauer, *Phenomenology: Genesis and Prospect*, *op.cit.*, p. 3.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations II*, trans. J.N. Findlay, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970, Investigation V, p. 595.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 596. Emphasis Husserl's.
13. We may say that Lauer has not been quite fair in sketching the intellectual relation between Kant and Husserl. It is indeed true that Husserl found Kant's approach to epistemology as affected by what he said "mythical unintelligibility." However, Kant began to change his opinion about the value of Kant's epistemology. He studied Kant's works and was close to several Neo-Kantians, Natorp, Rickert Cassirer, etc. "His attitude to Kant's philosophy changed from a very negative to a critical attitude to one of great admiration. ... But it is also true that Husserl never refrained from severely criticizing Kant with respect to a number of issues which are essential to Kant's, critical philosophy as a whole." Joseph J. Kockelmans, "Husserl and Kant on the Pure Ego", in *Husserl: Exposition and Appraisals*, eds., A. Elliston and P. McCormic, Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1977, p.276. Of course, Kant also had his constraints. On Kant's premises and with his historically conditioned motives, the thing in itself was a merit. It expressed, at once, his sense of the realism required by a man of

science, and his rejection of past forms of idealism. On the one hand, it provided a way of meeting problems that could not be solved on the ground of experience, or on the ground of the rationally known world. The reconciliation of the interests of religion, morality and science was a prime problem of the time, acutely felt by Kant.

14. Marvin Farber, "Edmund Husserl and the Background of His Philosophy", *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. 1, No., 1940.
15. J.N.Mohanty, "The Development of Husserl's Thought" in *The Cambridge Companion to Husserl*, Cambridge: CUP, 1995.
16. R.O. Elveton, ed. and trans. *Philosophy of Edmund Husserl: Selected Critical Readings*, Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970.
17. Marvin Farber, "Edmund Husserl and the Background of His Philosophy", *op.cit.*, p. 14.
18. J.N. Mohanty, "The Development of Husserl's Thought", *op.cit.*, p.74.
19. Edmund Husserl, *Ideas I*, Introduction, trans. W.R. Boyce Gibson, London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1969, p. 41.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 44. In his *Introduction to Phenomenology*, Dermot Moran contends that Husserl never developed a full critical understanding of essence. *Ibid.*, London: Routledge, p. 134. But this does not appear to be true. In the first chapter of the *Ideas I*, Husserl contrasts essences with facts. Essences are ideal entities. Invariant among variations, marked by universality and necessity and in that sense apriori.

Husserl also says that in the region of consciousness, we can hope to discover essential truths such as intentionality and temporality.

21. J.N. Findlay, Translator's Introduction, *Logical Investigations I*, 2nd edition, *op.cit.*, p. 1.
22. Edmund Husserl, Introduction, *Logical Investigations II*, *op.cit.*, p. 249.
23. *Ibid.*, p.261.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 262.
25. *Ideas I*, *op cit.*, p.14.
26. *Phenomenological Psychology*, Lectures , Summer Semester, 1925, trans. J. A. Scanlon, The Hague: Martinus Nijoff, 1970.
27. *Logical Investigations II*, *op.cit.*, Investigation V, Chapter II, p.558. Parenthesis added.
28. *Ideas I*, *op cit.*, Sec.84, p.242.
29. Ludwig Landgrebe, "The Phenomenological Theory of Experience", *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. 39, No. 4, 1974, pp. 3-4.
30. *Ibid.*, p.4.
31. This expression is interpreted by Eugen Fink as recommendation for overcoming the "oblivion of the experiences of being which are at the root of our tradition." Source" Richard Schmitt, "Phenomenology and

Metaphysics”, *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 59, 1962. Schmitt does not share Fink’s view for the phrase “oblivion of being” summarizes Heidegger’s diagnosis of the ills of our time. *Ibid.*, p.1, note3.

32. *Logical Investigations II, op.cit.*, p.544.

33. *Ibid.*, p.538.

34. *Ibid.*, p.563. Also, note2, p.563.

35. *Logical Investigations II, Investigation, V*, p.559.

36. *Ibid.*, p.596.

37. Franz Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, Vol.I, trans. Antos C. Rancurella et al, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973, pp.124-125.

38. *Ibid.*, p.115.

39. Cited by Ludwig landgrebe from *Husserliana 9*, p. 33 in his “The Phenomenological Concept of Experience”, *op. cit.*, pp.2-3.

40. *Ibid.* ,p.3.

41. *Logical Investigations,II, op. cit.*, Investigation V, pp. 552-557. This does not mean that all intentional objects are external physical ones, since “ideal” objects, for example, essences(*Wessen*) are intentional objects.

42. James C. Morrison, "Husserl and Brentano on Intentionality", *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol.31, No.1, 1970, p.20.
43. *Ideas* III, trans. Ted E. Klein and William Pohl, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1980, pp.50-51.
44. *Ideas* II, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Andre Schuwer, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989, p. 422.
45. *Ideas* II, p. 422.
46. *Logical Investigations*, II, p. 263.
47. *Ibid*, p. 265.
48. *Cartesian Meditations*, trans., Dorian Cairns, The Hague : Martinus Nijhoff, 1972, sec. I, p. 2.
49. *The Crisis*, p. 80.