HUSSERL'S TRANCENDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGY: CONTINUITY TO EXISTENTIALISM

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The philosophical development of Edmund Husserl, the founder of twentieth-century phenomenological philosophy, can be divided into three main periods, the first period of his pre-transcendental or epistemological phenomenology, the middle period of his fully transcendental phenomenology and the last period of his so-called "genetic" phenomenology. Although our attention will be concentrated on the middle period of his properly transcendental phenomenology, we shall nevertheless present Husserl's thinking in terms of these three phases.There is no one work which stands in the same relation to the Husserlian philosophy that *Being and Time*, *Being and Nothingness* and *Phenomenology of Perception* stand in relation to the thinking of their respective authors.[1]

The *Cartesian Meditations* provides a good over-all picture of transcendental phenomenology. The motifs of Cartesianism are strongly or faintly imprinted in different texts of Husserl, e.g., *Logical Investigations*, *Ideas* I, *First Philosophy* and in different unpublished treatises and lectures. The *Cartesian Meditations* consists of a series of lectures delivered by Husserl at the Sorbonne, Paris in 1928. Beginning with a generous expression of indebtedness to Descartes Husserl portrays phenomenology as the historical completion of the subjective movement inaugurated by Descartes' *Meditations*. Husserl begins by saying that his Cartesian Meditations are an explicit attempt to renew Descartes' programme of a reconstruction of knowledge. Husserl characterizes Descartes' aim as "a complete reforming of philosophy into a science grounded on an absolute foundation."[2] Accordingly, the first order of business for the Husserlian phenomenology is to locate "those cognitions that are first in themselves and can support the whole storied edifice of human knowledge", with a view to "constructing on their basis a science governed by the idea of a definitive system of knowledge ..."[3] The programme that Husserl sets for himself is that phenomenology is to be characterized as transcendental phenomenology of knowledge. However, the theory of knowledge is inseparable from the philosophy of the ego *qua* the knowing subject. Hence, Husserl's phenomenology is not only "transcendental theory of knowledge" but also "a science

of concrete transcendental subjectivity"; it is not only epistemology, but also at the same time "pure egology". Here, too, Husserl intends to follow the lead of Descartes' *Meditations* attempting to "renew with greater intensity the radicalness of their spirit …. to uncover thereby for the first time the genuine sense of the necessary regress to the ego."

Husserl proposes to begin with Descartes' point, the pure *ego cogito* and lead from there to transcendental phenomenology. The *ego cogito* indicates the way to the province of transcendental subjectivity, which is the domain of certain and first being. This is in consonance with Husserl's manner of speaking in the *Ideas* I that phenomenology as an a priori science, sets out the indissoluble essential structures of transcendental subjectivity which persists in and through all imaginable modifications.[4] The search for the essence of consciousness culminates in transcendental subjectivity. Ordinarily by subjectivity we mean the experience of the subject. The idea of subjectivity lays stress on the purely mental side of experience as opposed to objectivity. In its narrowest sense, it can go to the extreme of denying that the mind can at all know objects existing independently of it, besides its own ideas. And this paves the way for solipsism and idealism. The search for a criterion of the mental thus, leads to the investigation into the subjective experience.

For Husserl, the subject and its experiences are not a part of theoretical natural science. Transcendental consciousness takes form through the suspension of belief in the existence of the external world. It constitutes itself only when suspension of belief in the existence of the external world takes place. In his Encyclopedia Britannica article "The Idea of Phenomenology"[5], Husserl explains that transcendental phenomenology studies (the) 'transcendental subjectivity'. The sphere of the transcendental subjectivity is first brought to light by means of a technique that Husserl calls the 'transcendental-phenomenological-reduction'. Here we 'bracket' "not the world only but its souls as well, which cannot be found under the attitude of psychological or natural science, being is no part at all of the natural world.[6] This is the fundamental task of the constitution of a pure self. Husserl offers a transcendental argument to show this. He says, "Subjects can't be dissolved into nature, for in that case what gives nature its sense would be missing".[7] That is to say, subject is the origination of the attribution of meaning.

'Meaning' here is not understood as in analytical philosophy. As Robert. C Solomon says, "The central concept of 'meaning' in Husserl's philosophy is not to be identified with the linguistic analysts' notion of 'meaning'[8] Husserl was concerned with the meaning of intentional acts. The acts of perception, feeling, imagination, etc., have their meanings in the objects perceived, felt, or imagined. In his later work, *Cartesian Meditations*,[9] in connection with transcendental subjectivity or transcendental ego (Husserl uses these two terms interchangeably), Husserl stresses the notion of the active constitution of objects by the ego.

Husserl's conclusion with regard to the status of the world then is that, "the real world exists, but in respect of essences relative to transcendental subjectivity, and in such a way that it can have its meaning as existing reality only as the intentional meaning-product of transcendental subjectivity.[10] Now we place Husserl's phenomenology within the phenomenological tradition itself. We have pointed out in the course of our work that Husserl is acknowledged by all hands to be the founder of phenomenology. We also mentioned that phenomenology is associated with a number of influential "existentialist thinkers" who claim to employ the phenomenological method.

1. **Martin Heidegger:** Heidegger was Husserl's assistant from 1919-23. He dedicated his *Being and Time* to Husserl. What he does in this work is widely divergent from Husserl's phenomenology. The question he poses at the outset of *Being and Time* is "the question of the meaning of Being". It may be recalled that Husserl also raised the question of being. Being for him is simply the intentional correlate of consciousness: to be is to be an actual or possible object of consciousness. All beings are relative to the transcendental ego except the being of the transcendental ego itself which is absolute being. For Heidegger the pure ego as subject of consciousness is an empty abstraction. The only real I exists in the world. The real I is in the world which is transcendent to him and in which he finds himself. Hence, Heidegger rejects Husserl's transcendental phenomenology and the transcendental ego. He characterizes ego as Dasein, being-there "*da-sein* ". Naturally, he rejects the phenomenological projects of Husserl such as Husserl's ideal of presuppositionlessness, his programme to ground knowledge on absolutely certain foundations, his phenomenological standpoint, etc.

The above passage shows Heidegger's departure from Husserl on a number of crucial issues. These crucial issues involve Husserl's positing of the transcendental ego and transcendental experience; Husserl's adoption of a special phenomenological technique, namely, the *epoché* or phenomenological reduction, and Husserl's view that phenomenology escapably leads to transcendental idealism. To be precise, even when Heidegger seems to agree with Husserl, the agreement conceals profound differences. Heidegger rejects Husserl's 'transcendental ego', 'transcendent experience' and 'pure essences' as intellectual abstractions. Heideggerian phenomenology is not transcendent, but rather existential. It is the careful analysis of the concretely existing human being. In other words, phenomenology is concerned with elucidating concrete existence. We encounter objects in pragmatic engagements of or comportments with the environment. It is only because I encounter something environmentally and pre-conceptually that I am later able to make it the focus of theoretical objectification. Husserl was wrong in privileging theoretical activities over lived engagements. Husserl had become pre-occupied with methods for gaining access to the transcendental sphere of the apriori structures of consciousness.

To treat the meaning of Being phenomenology has to start from our own experience of Being. That does not mean to look inside our own minds or to separate our consciousness from objects. Our own Being is Being-in-the-world. We are, however, a particular part of the world by virtue of the fact that we are *conscious* of it. This human mode of Being Heidegger calls Dasein - "being there". Dermot Moran[12] has pointed out Heidegger's almost total disregard of Husserl's theory of intentionality. Husserl has made a detailed examination of intentionality which pervades almost the entire corpus of his phenomenology. Given the fundamental role of it in Husserl's thought, it becomes a shock that Heidegger *Being and Time*, while explicitly claiming to be a phenomenological treatise, contains only two brief references to intentionality[13]. Heidegger criticizes and rethinks it in his later works. [14] According to him, intentionality must be understood in terms of the structural features of the Dasein, especially Dasein's *transcendence*, that is, the fact that Dasein is already somehow beyond itself, already dwelling in the world and not locked up in the privacy of its own consciousness. The intentional relation must instead be founded on the 'being-with' or 'being-by' of Dasein, i.e., intentionality is a form of 'ontic' transcendence which can only be understood if Dasein's more basic

'ontological' transcendence is understood. The radical interpretation of intentionality in terms of transcendence leads Heidegger to the understanding of Dasein as nothing other than the very possibility of Being's gaining entry to the world, having world-entry.

Heidegger abandons intentionality altogether, in favour of the nature of our dwelling in the linguistic and significative domain (being-in-the-world).Heidegger's emphasis on transcendence has been understood by commentators as being opposed to Husserl's supposedly subjectivist account of intentionality. Heidegger regards *temporality* as the meaning of the Being of Dasein. Temporality is an integral element of Heidegger's phenomenology. We may point out that time or temporality is a concern of Husserl too. From the early 1900s Husserl had clearly identified the link between transcendence and time. It is temporal through and through as every act grasps a 'profile', 'adumbration' or 'aspect' which changes with a change in our perspective. Any act looks beyond itself to these other profiles and assumes them in grasping the object. So objects are never given consciousness in their fullness. The object spills over what is given to consciousness. This is a limiting feature of both objecthood as much as a feature of consciousness. This is hardly the position of a radical subjectivist.

But what about Heidegger's criticism of Husserl that he had prioritized the cognitive over the practical in his account of intentionality? So the question we ourselves pose is: Does Husserl overstress the cognitive dimension and ignore the practical? It is undoubtedly true that Husserl focused more on elucidating acts of consciousness rather than human actions. Yet it is not difficult to find in his writings detailed descriptions of our ordinary dealings with things in the natural attitude. But there is always the possibility of a shift in perspective, the possibility of one attitude giving way to the other – the practical attitude giving way to the theoretical. The theoretical attitude is to be valued in itself as one possible outcome of our lived engagement with things. Moreover, as Husserl's manuscripts continue to be published, they tend to reveal a greater-willingness to accommodate the practical than is evident during his lifetime. In his *Ideas* II the detailed description of our ordinary dealings with the things of the natural world is very close to Heidegger's accounted of the practical intentionality. Dermot Moran has even claimed that the two

philosophers' argument on the kind of encounter with things prevalent in the natural attitude is so close that it may be said that Heidegger has taken over from Husserl.

Moran has drawn our attention to a passage in *Ideas* II where Husserl characterizes the world of things discovered in the natural attitude as 'on hand' *(Vorhanden*). "I may also be concerned with things in their use. Things can offer themselves in our apprehension 'food as a means of nutrition, or as the use of objects of various sorts; heating materials, choppers, hammers, etc. For instance, I see coal as heating material; I recognize it and recognize it as useful and as used for heating … it is burnable'". Husserl here uses the very example of the hammer employed later to such effect in *Being and Time*. In support of his interpretation Moran quotes from an unpublished manuscript of Husserl labeled "*gagen Heidegger*" written in 1931. There Husserl emphasizes that "the 'theoretical interest is motivated, like the artistic, by a desire to play freed from concerns of the necessities of life, and this theoretical curiosity is by no means a deficient mode of the practical as Heidegger had claimed.'"[16]

Heidegger is enormously indebted to Husserl for his own ideas of phenomenology. Yet, he accuses Husserl of having 'fallen out of Being'. Husserl, Heidegger thinks, did not understand the problem of Being. Husserl started his researches by distinguishing between phenomenology and ontology. This presupposes that the phenomena encountered in the one were different from the entities encountered in the other. This suggests that the entities-in-themselves are not the entities that appear to us as the phenomena. Husserl wants to reject this conclusion and argues that the things that appear to us become the things themselves through transcendental constitution. But this is challenged by Heidegger: Can it be possible that phenomenology begins by distinguishing it from the study of being and then tries to bring them together? In this opinion once we have distinguished between phenomenology and the study of entities, we become trapped in a scepticism what Husserl wanted to avoide so much. How can it be believed that the objects of experience correspond to objects as they are in themselves? Heidegger, though he accepts Husserl's method, challenges Husserl's initial starting point in applying the method. Both are of the opinion that philosophy must examine phenomena, but they differ as to how these phenomena are to be encountered. Husserl introduced phenomenological epoché, a bracketing of the natural standpoint. Under it we

suspend judgements about existence and we make an enquiry into essences. This means that phenomenology is not concemed with existence at all. Heidegger points out that existence is not to be neglected, for philosophy is a study of the problem of being. Husserl may hope to show that objects are constituted and thus it is established that the natural standpoint is a derivative of the phenomenological standpoint. Heidegger does not accept this kind of meaningless hope. Once the phenomenological epoché is performed the bracketing of the world is permanent. Heidegger rejects the phenomenological bracketing and thus the phenomenological standpoint. In his opinion being simply cannot be bracketed. Our choice or adoption of a standpoint presents entities. In Heidegger's language, 'The entity is, it is given, it confronts us: accordingly it is to be found at any time and it is in certain realms known to us'. In his experience our experience of entities cannot be bracketed. Husserl begins with the presupposition that our familiarity with entities in the world is a philosophical theory imposed upon us. Heidegger does not think that our belief in the existence of entities is an imposition. It is, according to him, an essential aspect of the most 'primitive' experience. Heidegger, however, does accept Husserl's appeal to direct phenomena, but he rejects Husserl's appeal to particular objects. Heidegger has already maintained that no understanding of Being which he accepts as his goal can be derived from any knowledge of particular beings though it may be direct. He says, 'unless we are guided by a developed knowledge of treeness.....we can look over thousands and thousands of trees in vain---we shall not see the tree for the trees'. For Heidegger phenomenological examination is not an examination of individual objects, but the examination of the phenomenon of Being as such. The world, in the opinion of Heidegger, is not simply a totality of objects, but a peculiarly independent object for examination apart form any and all entities in it. Husserl thought to have solved the problem of our knowledge of objects by introducing transcendental constitution of objects by the pure or transcendental ego. A system of *noemata*, intuitions and exceptions of intuitions constitute an object. Each *noema* is a different 'aspect' of the object. Heidegger accepts the important elements of Husserl's theory of perception. He says, 'the main thing is to impress it on our experience that we cannot immediately grasp the Being of the entity itself...we get only aspects'. Heidegger does not agree with Husserl that is the ego which constitutes the world. In his later writings Huserl introduced transcendental reduction which reduces all

iobjects of intuition to the products of this ego. It is on this point that Heidegger makes the radical break with the philosophers of the past. It is true that there is a grammatical necessity for self-reference, when we talk about experiences of the world. Our grammar also distinguishes between subject and predicate. The language of perception has therefore the distinction between perceiver-subject and perceived-object. Heidegger raises the question.Why we do accept a distinction between subject and object? Heidegger suggests a total rejection of the most basic commonsense distinction and with it a host of epistemological concepts which have affected modern philosophy. In Heidegger's opinion, there is no ego, there is simply what he calls 'Being-in-the-world'. The world is not 'bracketable', nor is the concept of ego necessary. Once the concept of ego is removed, we are free from the threat of philosophical scepticism. In this context the 'phenomenological movement' is divided into two branches - and he establishes what is called "existential phenomenology" [17]

2. **Jean-Paul Sartre**: The most remarkable feature of Sartre's literary life was that it was, in the fullest sense of that word, *a literary life*. Sartre belongs to a very small band of *literati* (almost all of French provenance) whose writing covers virtually the entire spectrum of literary genres from plays, short stories and novels, through biographies, autobiographies and critical works of one kind or another, to original pieces of philosophical thinking. But the manifoldness of Sartre's accomplishments had little to do with any ostentatious display of literary versatility but was integrally bound up with the central concern of his life- to convey, by all available means, his own unique (and tragically qualified) vision of life and of the human condition.[18]

In the philosophy of Sartre, in particular we come across a more fully developed existentialist theory of consciousness. Sartre attempts to work through the phenomenological method in his study of the structure of consciousness; and consistent with this method, he eventually meets with a negative position. True to the phenomenological standpoint, Sartre takes consciousness necessarily as having reference to something. Consciousness can hardly have any reality beyond the referential function on the plane of phenomena. Already Heidegger, also proceeding on phenomenological lines, had exposed the fallacy of a conscious enclosed in itself.

However, denying, on the one hand, a substantive status to consciousness, Sartre nevertheless emphatically insists on the irreducible existentiality of

consciousnss. As Sartre remarks: "Consciousness has nothing substantial about it, it is a pure appearance in the sense that it only exists in so far as it becomes apparent". Immanence and concrete reality (existence) are thus sought to be combined in the Sartrean notion of consciousness. Pursuing the phenomenological analysis in its consistency, Sartre tends to go beyond the Husserlian position itself, so far as the central issue of "transcendental I" is concerned. In his small but significant book, "The Transcendence of the Ego", Sartre takes up his stand on a non-egological conception of consciousness. The phenomenological conception of consciousness, he argues, renders the unifying and individualizing role of 'I' to be totally redundent. For it is consciousness, instead of the ego as such, which makes possible the unity and personality of my 'I'. So Sartre concludes: "the transcendental *I* has no *raison d'etre*"

A phenomenological study of consciousness, according to Sartre, reveals it as presence to oneself and presence to the world. This table, that wall etc. Exist in themselves; but man alone in this world exists *for himself*---in Sartrein terminology, "*pour-soi*" (for itself) as distinguished from "*en-soi*" (in itself). Being, for Sartre, includes both 'being-in-itself' and 'being-for-itself'; and the latter is regarded as the nihilation of the former—consciousness conceived as lack of being, a desire for being, a relation to Being. Each 'For-itself' is the nihilation of particular being. Thus "*pour-soi"* becomes synonymous with consciousness, and for it alone there is a world. Consciousness is accordingly defined as that by means of which there is a world. Rejecting the idea of self as in classical metaphysics and psychology, Satre points out that consciousness is empty of content. All content is on the side of the object. Consciousness does not imply an ego (who is supposed to be the owner of that consciousness) ; the ego is neither formally nor materially in consciousness—it is outside, 'in the world'. Consequently, consciousness would prove to be simply a spontaneity—a sheer activity transcending towards objects.[19]

Sartre became acquainted with Husserl's phenomenology through reading Emmanuel Levinas' book, *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology.* In his first published article, "*Transcendence of the Ego*"[20]Sartre accepts Husserl's view of phenomenology as the search for essences as eidetic analysis but he never separated those essences from the world of facts, and in that sense, was already leading phenomenology in an existential direction. He rejected much of Husserl's

methodological apparatus, including the *epoché*, the reduction, Husserl's account of the noema and the intentional object and his account of ego.

Yet his *Being and Nothingness*[21], Sartre will study being by studying consciousness, the "locus" of appearing. From his studies of imagination he sees that it is essential to consciousness but its object is absent. He came to the conclusion that consciousness is the opposite of objectivity and opposite of being; which is to say that it is non-being. Unlike Husserl Sartre considers consciousness as the source of negativity or "nihilation". In that light we can understand Sartre's interpretation of Husserl's notion of intentionality, which because it is non-real is non-being. The being of consciousness is to negate reality and hence the determination which consciousness contributes is negativity, and this for Sartre is existence. Since by nihilation intelligibility is conferred, negativity is prominent in Sartre's thought. Freedom is also negative, since it cannot be a power to negate being-in-itself.

Sartre's brilliant phenomenological-psychological analysis of "bad faith" is interpreted as an attempt on the part of subjectivity to be "in-itself," making it equivalently a denial of freedom. Sartre's very original development of the theme of the other may be compared to Husserl's thoughts on the experience of the other which, according to some, is not a very satisfactory account. Sartre's treatment seems to go in the direction of the other as an "intolerable person", "invasion of subjectivity". It is nothing completely different from Husserl's constitutive analysis of inter-subjectivity. His thoughts have crossed the boundary of phenomenology and at the same time it is testimony to the possibility of broadening the field of phenomenological investigations.

Thus the peculiar paradox of the whole situation about man's existence is that man is ever that what he not yet is, and is not that what he already is. So he can, never be fixed as an essence; his existence is rather to be defined as 'being-out-of-itself', so that in whatever way his essence is sought to be determined, it is bound to remain ever beyond his existence. Consequently what Satre prescribes is a different approach: man must *create* for himself his own essence. Man makes out his existence in and through his *act*---the act of *choice*. This is the line with the fundamental activistic position of the Sartrean metaphysics, more or less present in every form of existentialism. "There is no reality except in action", Sartre declears"[22]

3. **Maurice Merleau-Ponty**: Maurice Merleau-Ponty was a French phenomenologist. Phenomenology, as Merleau-Ponty sees it, combines a form of subjectivism with a form of objectivism. It is subjectivist in that it recognizes that all experience is *someone's* experience, that 'how things appear' means 'how they appear to *a particular* 'subject'. A description of phenomena, that is, of how things appear, must thus necessarily be a description of *subjective experience*. But, since the being of subjects is being-in-the-world, that is, since experience consists in being 'involved with the world', a description *of* subjective experience is not a description of something purely 'inner', but of our involvement with the world which exists independently of our experience of it. The world, Merleau-Ponty says, is not something we merely think about, but the places in which we will live our lives, the world we act in, have feelings and hopes about, as well as the world we try to know about.

Merleau-Ponty opens his *The Phenomenology of Perception* with the question: What is Phenomenology? and stays for an answer, an answer, an answer which is admittedly somewhat contradictory. Phenomenology, he tells us, is *both* a philosophy of essences (Husserl) *and* a philosophy of existences (Heidegger), *both* a philosophy which starts with the reduction (Husserl) *and* a philosophy for which the world is always already there (Heidegger), *both* a 'rigorous science' (Husserl) *and* a description of the immediate structures of the life world (Husserl or Heidegger). Moreover, these contradictions, Merleau-Ponty insists, are not resolved by distinguishing between the transcendental phenomenology of Husserl and the ontological phenomenology of Heidegger because they recur in the development of Husserl's own thinking as he shifts from a transcendental mode of analysis to an investigation of the '*Lebenswelt*'.

It is this 'both-and' which defines Merleau-Ponty's own conception of phenomenology as he proceeds through the four themes which furnish the topic of his Introduction, the themes of description, the reduction, essences and intentionality. Phenomenology is a descriptive science and so has to be distinguished from any science which would seek to explain, that is, from science commonly so called, and this because phenomenology cannot take for granted the reality of the world which forms the starting point for any scientific investigation and so has to return to 'that world which precedes knowledge, of which knowledge always speak , and in relation

to which every scientific schematization is an abstract and derivative sign-language....(p.ix). To be sure, as much as this is accomplished by analytical reflection-by which Merleau-Ponty mostly has Kant in mind-but in the wrong way. For the reflection which starts from our ordinary experience of the world and then moves back to account for this objectivity in terms of the synthesizing activities of a transcendental subject finishes up by locking itself into an interiority or immanence which loses the very world it seeks to reconstruct. But the reflective activity to which phenomenology appeals is one which reflects upon the unreflected, one for which therefore the world is not in man but man in the world.

Merleau-Ponty says that reduction takes me away from the common world and locks me into a private (phenomenologically reduced) world of my own. On the contrary, Merleau-Ponty insists, the reduction is precisely that through which I first become fully aware of my relation to the world and to the other subjects with which I share a world. Merleau-Ponty's relation to Husserl is less of an antagonism and more of clarification.[24] He continues to develop Husserl's basic idea of philosophy as a radical, rigorous science, distinct from the empirical sciences. He criticizes different aspects of Husserl's theory but it is not a relation of simple opposition. He questions the possibility of phenomenological reductions. In that context, he does not suggest that we should give up the reduction but rather that we should assume that the endpoint of the interrogative project is in the form of a solution or an explanation. He does not deny that we should retain some of our claims, judgments and beliefs, scientific or commonsensical, but argues that all such attitudes – as well as suspensions of them – are based on a non-propositional, non-thetic connection, a different kind of bodily intentionality. Instead of rejecting Husserl's reductions, he wants to study their starting points. The nature and possibility of this study is the central and recurrent problem of his philosophy.

So, it is misleading to say that Merleau-Ponty gave up the suspension of the thesis. Rather he asks about the conditions of possibility of the idea of suspension itself. His answer is that it presupposes a pre-reflective, pre-thetic connection to the world, a connection that does not have the structure of a position. The doxic thetic attitude presupposes other kinds of relation to the world. The world is not encountered primarily as an object of belief but as an expressing gesture, a face or a figure.[25]The primordial attitudes or postures are affective attitudes, sensations, sense-

perceptions and emotions. This is what he calls the primacy of perception. They have an original intentionality which differs from belief in attitude. They do not allow reduction in the sense of suspension of the thesis. This is for the simple reason that the experience is not yet structured as a thesis. Both the thesis and its suspension presuppose – as their condition of possibility – the affective bonds that tie us to the world.[26] Merleau-Ponty points out that it is Husserl who led him to realize the autonomy and primacy of non-thetic experience. He had the occasion to go through Husserl's manuscripts at Leuven. He points out that the natural attitude turns into a thesis only in "naturalist" thinking. Suspending the thesis is not an operation performed in the natural attitude as such but an operation performed on the naturalist interpretation of their attitude.[27]

The question then becomes what can be done, if we still want to practice philosophy in the phenomenological sense of the word. Merleau-Ponty claims that Husserl himself approached the notion of the pre-reflective when developing the concept of *operative intentionality*. According to him, Husserl uncovered in his manuscripts and later publications the operative intentionality of desires, affective perceptions, and emotional evaluations which "furnishes the text which our knowledge tries to translate in passive language."[28]According to him, Husserl's originality lies beyond the notion of intentionality. Beneath the intentionality of representations, there is a deeper intentionality which others have called existence. But his treatment of intentionalities of passions, affections, etc., was restricted by his intellectualist interests. Thus Merleau-Ponty's position is sometimes summarized by saying that he rejected Husserl's transcendental phenomenology and set out to describe experiences and phenomena in all their particularity and plurality.

Conclusion

Now one very significant line of classification in the field of existentialist philosophy at large is that between phenomenological and non-phenomenological existentialism. Heidegger and Sartre represent the former, while the rest of the existentialist philosophers belong, broadly speaking , to the other group. Hence we may ponder a little over the title "Phenomenological existentialism". The question might legitimately be posed: is it not anomalous to couple phenomenology with existentialism---the two representing rather contrary attitudes? On the face of it it might appear that such an alliance would be unholy.

Like Husserl, but unlike early Heidegger and Sartre, Merleau-Ponty's thinking covers all three planes. However, it is not so much a matter of developing an epistemological and a transcendental as well as an ontological phenomenology. Rather the contrary, like Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty is exclusively committed to the exploration of the originary realm. But he gets there by employing a tactic whereby tht other two stages are taken account of in terms of their nominal representatives- the realists and the idealists, the empiricists and the intellectualists. Moreover, this nominal representation not only groups together a diversity of philosophical figures; the net is cast widely enough to cover different schools of psychology. What is missing (though it is implicit) in Merleau-Ponty's anslyses is the development of a logic whereby empiricism and intellectualism would no longer be placed side by side in an antinomical relation but in an order which, in my estimate, corresponds to a logoic inherent in the evolution of the schools in question. What is also missing 9though again it is implied) is an extension of the scope of the human science to cover disciplines such as psychoanalysis, child psychology, anthropology, mythology- in other words, disciplines whose theme is that of the originary.

To sum up and to situate each of our phenomenological philosophers in terms of the format established initially: Husserl operates upon all three levels- though in a development which proceeds *from* the second *through* the third and so on to the forth. Heidegger confines himself to a movement *from* the second *back* to the first (in the order of being) as the last (in the order of analysis). With Sartre we remain from first to last upon the second plane- though in such a way that both the ontological and the existential implications of such a stance are made explicit. Finally, with Merleau-Ponty, all three plans are covered but in such a way that two of these three (the second and the third) are subjected to a mutually destructive critique which leaves the way upon for the last (the fourth as 'reflection upon the unreflected', that is, upon the first).

Husserl's achievement has often been called the 'triumph of subjectivity' – and rightly so. It is, however, part of the 'triumphalism' of contemporary philosophy that it should think of itself as having finally reached a vantage point from which it becomes possible to dismiss such archaic concepts as 'interiority', 'subjectivity', 'consciousness', 'spirituality' etc. from the roster of relevant philosophical categories. It may well be that these categories need re-thinking and re-

defining, but I would like to suggest that whenever, and wherever, anything approaching civilization has emerged in human affairs, it has been due to something which deserves to go by one or other of these currently disreputable names. No one understood this better than Husserl whose *Crisis* assumes, in its historical perspective, the proportions of an extended cry of pain as the founder of phenomenological philosophy watched his cherished ideal of philosophical rationality collapse into the abyss of Nazi irrationalism. So it is simply not possible to overestimate the prophetic grandeur of the following, uncharacteristically rhetorical, passage with which Husserl concludes his Vianna Lecture of May 1935:

Notes and References:

1. *Four Phenomenological Philosopher, Husserl, Heidegger, Satre, Merleau-Ponty* by Christopher Macann, London and New York, 1993, p. 1.
2. *The Crisis*, p.12.
3. *Ibid*, p. 5.
4. *Ibid*, p. 6.
5. "*Die Idee Der Phenomenologie", Husserliana II*, Walter Biemel (ed), The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1958. Eng. Tr. By G. Nakhnikian and W. P. Alston in *Readings in Twentieth Century Philosophy*, New York: Free Press, 1963, pp. 622-677.
6. *Ibid.* p. 657.
7. *Ideas II*, Eng. tr. by R. Rojcewicz and A. Schuwer, Dordrech: Kluwer, 1989, p. 297.
8. *Phenomenology and Existentialism*, R.C. Solomon (ed), New York: Harper & row, 1972, Introduction, p. 24.
9. Op. cit.
10. Ideas I, op. cit., p. 14.
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