

HUSSERL, HEIDEGGER AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL METHOD

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Abstract:-

This paper is on Husserl's phenomenological method; it is an attempt to show how Husserl in pursuit for a philosophy without presuppositions, established phenomenology to serve as a rigorous science of the world. Husserl in developing phenomenology insists that its procedure has to deal only with description of its objects rather than explanations. Phenomenology only begins after the phenomenologist has carried out transcendental phenomenological reductions, starting first with eidetic reduction through which all existential and natural attitudes are bracketed and put out of action to yield only essences before consciousness. This is followed by phenomenological reduction proper, which involves a complex of reductive phases Husserl, refers to as 'epoche' – which involves bracketing of all historical and existential judgments regarding what is 'given' and even the experiencer himself. What is left after the reduction is the transcendental ego with its transcendental life. It is then possible for consciousness to begin an entirely new task of interpreting the world at this level, as a coherent system constituted by itself alone. Husserl's Phenomenological method is contrasted with Heidegger's phenomenological method. Heidegger strongly rejected Husserl's bracketing of the actual world and his transcendental ego.

INTRODUCTION:

While all contemporary Phenomenologists recognize Husserl as the founding father of Phenomenological Movement, not many of them actually accepted his phenomenology without effecting some major changes in his doctrine¹. Again, while many of these leading Phenomenologists such as Scheler, Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and others, do recognize the exceptional quality of Husserl's ideas, yet they felt that his views on phenomenology do harbour some unacceptable presuppositions. It is the intention of this paper to highlight and discuss Husserl's original conception of phenomenology as a philosophic method and strict scientific discipline of the world as a whole; this view is to be contrasted with that of Heidegger's own phenomenology as a philosophic method. In this regard, we are to see why Heidegger refuses to follow Husserl's method as characterized by transcendental reduction in which "the whole realm of being is placed between parentheses in order to yield the transcendental ego"². As we shall see Heidegger refuses to follow such reductions in all his works.

HUSSERL'S PHENOMENOLOGICAL PHILOSOPHY.

By Phenomenological Philosophy Husserl has in mind a kind of Philosophy as a strict scientific discipline. Husserl by this envisions a kind of philosophy that is to be seen as an all-encompassing rational knowledge of all that is³. This philosophic discipline called "Phenomenology" has as its aim the description of its objects instead of constructing explanations⁴. In this regard, Husserl's phenomenology is quite different from all the others in respect of the conditions which any inquiry must meet in order to deserve being called "phenomenological". Phenomenology, according to Husserl, can only start after the "transcendental phenomenological reduction" has been carried out by the phenomenologist. For Husserl, any description done without first doing the "reduction" is not phenomenological at all.

In this respect, to understand Husserl and his "transcendental-phenomenology" and be able first of all to follow, and employ his phenomenological method, one must in fact, first understand and practice the transcendental-phenomenological reduction⁵. This is the initial stage of Husserl's phenomenology, and this goes to demonstrate that his "characterizations of the transcendental phenomenological reduction are in fact, suggestions for a phenomenological description of reflection as opposed to straightforward, nonreflective thinking"⁶. As a true philosophy, phenomenology is not 'a science of facts, but rather, a science of essential being', which aims at establishing exclusively 'knowledge of essences'⁷. It is only by being able to abstract and instantiate essences like – man, John Williams, that a certain object can count as a man or this particular man John Williams. According to Husserl, "it belongs to the meaning of everything contingent that it should have ...an *eidōs* [essence, idea] to be apprehended in all its purity"⁸. Phenomenology is the knowledge of these essences, particularly those of the greatest generalizations, like physical objects, thought, or value⁹. There are three important characteristics to be noted in positing of essences. Firstly, "the positing of essences ... does not imply any positing of individual existence"¹⁰. We can for example imagine a unicorn, i.e. a horse having only one horn, which in fact does not exist anywhere in the actual world, but we can still posit its essence as a unicorn. Secondly, an essence is not a psychological item such as a mental concept reached at through a process of abstraction, like a Lockean 'general idea'¹¹. Thirdly, essences can be known only through a non-perceptual kind of intuition, which is a kind of an immediate seeing different from the sensory seeing of experience¹². In general, essences are such that once intuited, it is impossible that the essence should turn out to be other than it is 'seen' to be. It is self-evident and it is due to this self-evident character of essences that made Husserl to refer to them as 'phenomena'. This term 'phenomena', for Husserl, refers simply to whatever is given in an intuition and for him too, an intuition is whatever is given to consciousness¹³.

The phenomena, as viewed in Phenomenology, are simply that which show themselves to consciousness; they are not natural or physical objects. Husserl insists that consciousness is an 'ideal timeless realm' and not part of the natural world of objects in space and time¹⁴. The objects of phenomenological investigation are therefore these phenomena that are given in intuition. It is the task of phenomenology to describe and characterize the essences of any given phenomena and the essential forms of intuition in general as they appear to consciousness¹⁵. Philosophy, Husserl insists must begin its own inquiry from a presuppositionless viewpoint that would not require any form of clarification because of their being immediately self-evident and cannot even be clarified¹⁶. It is only on this very note that philosophy as a science of the ultimate grounds is required to be a rigorous science¹⁷. Thus, the truly basic philosophic science is, for Husserl, not 'natural science', but the phenomenology of consciousness¹⁸. The roots of such a 'philosophical science' are the very origin of meanings in terms of which beings become accessible to us. Consciousness is the basis of this origin. Before considering his reductions, let us first talk about his intentionality of consciousness.

Husserl's intentionality of consciousness.

When Husserl wants to talk about phenomenological reduction in a general sense, and how we can best come to the realization of its necessity, he usually starts with an explanation of the concept of "intentionality" of consciousness. Historically, this notion of intentionality has its source and origin in Aristotle's psychology, but it was Husserl's teacher, Franz Brentano, in the 19th century, whose interpretation of Aristotle's work on this subject which introduced this concept into contemporary thought. We can therefore say that Husserl came to the notion of intentionality through the direct influence of Franz Brentano, but he made important contributions in modifying Brentano's account of this notion, which eventually enriched his own account of experience.

In Aristotelian philosophy, the term "intentional" means the orientation of the mind toward its object, and in union with this orientation this object begins to exist in an individual's mind in an intentional manner. This feature of directedness became for Brentano, one of the basic characteristics of all psychical activities. For Brentano, every psychical phenomenon is characterized by the "intentional inexistence" of its object¹⁹. Although Husserl became interested in

Brentano's thesis, he however objected against Brentano's conception of the immanence of the intentional object to consciousness. He agreed that it is characteristic for an act of consciousness to direct itself intentionally toward an object, but this object is not itself immanent to consciousness, it remains transcendent. Thus, the fact that all consciousness is always consciousness of something, that all consciousness is intentional, became for him one of the building blocks of his new philosophy²⁰.

One need not be a phenomenologist to realize that any act of consciousness, whether in the form of perception, imagination, memory or desire, is itself given as it is in its manifestations to consciousness, in such a manner that the subject of the act in its various modes cannot doubt the being of such act²¹. This was what Husserl discerned from Descartes' '*cogito*' itself, which disclosed to him not the existence of a substantial subject, but only the '*cogito*' itself, with whatever is immanent in it²². Thus, the basic discovery of modern philosophy is the Cartesian '*cogito*'; no object can be given without the light of the *cogito* or consciousness. The *cogito* is the basic certainty of knowledge and all other certainty of objects is to be measured from the inner certainty of the *cogito*. The certainty of the *cogito* remains the only criterion for all other certainty.

But according to Husserl, Descartes however, failed to realize that within the *cogito* itself, the object is already given with the same immediacy and certainty as the *cogito* itself. The *cogito* is an absolute and indubitable *datum* and so is its *cogitatum*, provided that this object is taken as it immediately manifests itself to consciousness²³. Thus, the being of an object as *cogitatum* is its true being, such that in the intentionality of consciousness an object is absolutely given (as an object in an intentional way) with evidential intuition²⁴. This, for Husserl, remains the basis of truth, since truth is what is evident, to pure consciousness, i.e. to a transcendental consciousness which is the basis of universality and objectivity of any truth²⁵.

The absolute and radical starting point of philosophy, therefore, lies not in a single certain thesis, but rather in an indefinite number of "theses", provided that these theses are taken precisely as they manifest themselves immediately and intuitively in an indubitably certain cogitation²⁶. This requires that the phenomenologist should try to attain the proper sphere before attempting an analysis and description of the content of his *cogito cogitatum*. The method of reduction is to assist the phenomenologist here. This would lead him to move from the level of derivative acts, tinted by our culture and most specifically by the influences of the natural sciences to that of acts which make things appear to us "bodily" in an original intuition, in an experience that is characteristic for each type of being²⁷. As from this point, the phenomenologist can then begin to analyze and describe accurately whatever manifests itself primordially in his consciousness. This analysis and description would have to be *noetico noematic*²⁸; in other words, in the process of analysis and description, attention must be directed to both the *noetic* and the *noematic* structures of the whole "givenness", that is to both the act in which the object (the *cogitatum*) is given and to this object (the *cogitatum*) itself which originally shows itself in this act²⁹. As a consequence, if we admit that all consciousness is always a consciousness of something, it is then evident that one cannot say anything about consciousness unless one directs his attention to what is before consciousness in its various acts. What is evident here is that the question concerning the essence of any being is reduced to that of the modes of consciousness in which the being of the object had to manifest itself originally to consciousness as "this" or "that". The essence of things therefore, can only be determined by going through an analysis of the acts of our consciousness in which any being constitutes itself originally as "this" or "that"³⁰. This is the result of the necessary consequence coming from the application of the idea of intentionality to human knowledge.

THE NOTION OF PHENOMENOLOGICAL REDUCTIONS.

According to Husserl, it is through the phenomenological reduction that we must grasp beings as they are given to us, and thereby apprehend their *eidōs* [essences or ideas], like we hinted above, through an immediate 'intuition'. This further reflects Husserl's call "back to the things themselves" which goes to show that we must return back to the immediate, original data of our consciousness. Husserl is of the view that whatever shows itself in so to speak 'bodily presence' is apodictically evident in that it does not require any further foundation because it is truly evident and certain³¹. This is why he began his phenomenological quest with the fundamental principle that "every originally giving [given] intuition is a legitimate source of knowledge, that everything which presents itself to us originally in intuition, so to speak in its bodily presence, has to be taken simply as what it presents itself to be, but only within the limits in which it presents itself"³². Husserl's basic method and technique in pursuit of his phenomenological program is, as we hinted already, the phenomenological reduction, and to this we now turn.

Generally speaking the method of phenomenological reduction is a means of arriving at what is constitutive and essential in our cognitive relationship with the world. This is a device for uncovering the basic 'phenomenological facts' which are the proper objects of phenomenology. This is a methodic procedure by means of which one places oneself in the 'transcendental sphere', i.e. the level at which we perceive things as they are in themselves, independently of any prejudices³³. This entails a change in attitude, i.e. from natural attitude to phenomenological attitude, by means of which we learn to see things we previously thought to perceive, in a different light, i.e. in an original and radical way³⁴. Through this method, "we penetrate deeper into things and learn to see the more profound layers behind what we thought to see"³⁵. There are various degrees of phenomenological reduction; and Husserl sometimes talks of reductions, but when he wants to refer to their unity as a whole he speaks of phenomenological reduction in singular.

1.] Eidetic Reduction:

The first presentation of reduction in Husserl's philosophy has to do with '*eidetic, reduction*', that is, a procedure for arriving at a pure ideation of essences. In the act of ideation the empirical existential aspects of the thing being experienced or perceived fades into the background; it is put out of action, disconnected or put into bracket, to yield only

the non-spatiotemporal “general object” or essence of the thing. Thus, in the intuition of essences, we leave out of account all the characteristics of particularity, i.e. all existential aspects of the object being experienced or perceived and that even includes to some extent, the experiencer or perceiver himself³⁶. Insight into essences is strictly restricted to the founded acts, that is acts to which the object is immediately given. Any perception or representation referring to something individual, real or imagined, may function as intentional experience to provide a foundation for essential insight. It does not matter whether what is given in such acts is meant as existing, real or imagined. I can, for instance, acquire knowledge of essence ‘red’ either on the basis of a concrete live perception of a red colour or just through my fantasy image corresponding to it.

Essential insight thus does not depend on the existence of that upon which it is founded nor is it a product of the individual psychical consciousness which has this insight here and now.

The *eidetic reduction* is meant to correspond to the distinction which Husserl made between FACT which often is particular, historical, or existential and empirical and ESSENCE which is universal in character, timeless, necessary and ideal. In *eidetic reduction* the fact is intellectually converted into an essence of “pure generalities”, whose validity is independent of experience³⁷. The presence of the chair which I see over there, for example, or this particular computer, is turned into the presence or evidential givenness of a pure essence, by setting aside all that is peculiar to this particular chair or this particular computer, through which the essence is given. This particular shade of “red”, for instance, is converted to the essence of red [redness], this particular man, Peter into the essence “Man”. This implies that we abstract from all particularity in order to conceive with our consciousness or intellect the essence as such. Here, we discover “the insight that consciousness in itself has a being of its own which in its own absolute mode of being, is not affected by phenomenological disconnection”³⁸. In *eidetic reduction* the essence intuited, although yielded from the empirical individual thing as such, is still regarded as an essence belonging to an entity in the world.. Even the experiencer or perceiver of the essence, although considered in his being, this particular individual, is still seen as an existent in the world. Therefore, a much more radical type of reduction is required if we are to be able to explain the ultimate presuppositions of knowledge.

2.] Transcendental Phenomenological Reduction and Constitution.

The transcendental phenomenological reduction is what is required here to assist us in this direction. This reduction involves a complex of reductive phases which are what Husserl refers to as “*epoche*”³⁹, or refraining from judgment or belief; its structures comprise such distinguishable components as firstly – historical bracketing which means setting aside everything we have been imbibed with by way of theories, education, opinions, whether from everyday cultural life, scientific briefings, logical notions, or even from religious faith, and so on. All these would have to be disconnected or bracketed and put out of action. Secondly, this involves – existential bracketing which means abstaining from all existential judgments concerning what is “given” and this also applies to those things of which we are most certain of their evidence, such as my own empirically existing self. It is worth emphasizing that these reductions do not neglect the world in which we live nor do they deny it, rather they put this world out of action. What is left after these reductions is nothing but the transcendental ego with its transcendental life. “Once we have gained access to the transcendental sphere with the help of the reductions we can start the task of clarifying the essence of what we find there by means of the intentional and constitutive analyses”⁴⁰.

The transcendental phenomenological reductions along with the theory of constitution are the two main pillars of Husserl’s phenomenology. The phenomenological reductions make it possible for consciousness to rediscover its own nature formerly lost in the world. It is by means of these reductions that consciousness regains itself and makes it possible for consciousness to begin an entirely new task of interpreting the world at a new level, as a coherent system constituted entirely by it. “The coherence and unity of the world are ultimately founded upon the unity of the *ego*, to which all elements of the world necessarily refer”⁴¹. It is the task of constitutive analysis to clarify how pure consciousness or the transcendental *ego* constitutes worldly being as well as the world itself. Husserl often uses the word “constitution” to indicate the original relationship existing between pure consciousness or the transcendental *ego* and any worldly being. It must be stressed that any worldly being as well as the world itself when analysed in terms of meaning will necessarily have some reference to the transcendental ego or pure consciousness. Thus, the explication of the constitution of the world is concerned with how pure consciousness itself gives meaning to whatever data that are presented to it. This also shows how pure consciousness gives certain aspects of the world an existential meaning⁴². To understand fully Husserl’s meaning of “constitution”, one must place oneself on the level of sense and meaning. According to Husserl, one must remember that “the whole Being of the world consists in a certain meaning which presupposes an absolute consciousness as the domain in which and by which all meaning is given”⁴³. It is the task of phenomenology to radically describe and explicate the meaning of the world, but not to deny its real existence. The same is true of pure consciousness itself. In the final analysis, its meaning has to be made explicit. The problem of constitution includes the transcendental *ego*. It is the task of the transcendental phenomenology to make explicit and to radically ground the meaning of any possible being⁴⁴.

For Husserl, “experience is a manner of possessing something in a conscious way; only consciousness itself can therefore distinguish between an original and real experience and an improper one”⁴⁵. This is achieved by going through derivative views on things and problems, back to the original experience in which any being whatever emerges originally as what it is in itself.

When we turn to “intentional analysis”, we can say that its task is to question “each and every being concerning the conscious modes and the conscious achievements in which it made its original appearance”⁴⁶. Phenomenological reduction is important in this direction since it allows us to reach the data in their purity; and in the original manner in

which they appear in pure consciousness, to the exclusion of every conception that transcends the original data.⁴⁶ In intentional analysis of a conscious act, as Husserl puts it, the act intends an object. This directedness or intentionality is the essential feature of consciousness. “Every intentional experience has its ‘intentional object’⁴⁷. This is one of the fundamental marks of all intentionality. This is particularly interesting because even if the object of conscious does not exist, it is still possible for a conscious act to direct itself to such a non-existent object. This non-object is still an ‘intentional object’. For Husserl, every perception contains a *noema* or meaning in virtue of which it ‘intends’ an object. Experiences “contain in their essence this peculiar feature of being related to...things through their...posited meaning”⁴⁸. Husserl’s theory of the *noema* is a “general attempt to get us to disconnect the actual world, so that we may focus on what is ‘immanent’ in consciousness”⁴⁹. According to Husserl, “whatever the world may be...must be represented...by meanings and positings”⁵⁰. These, in the light of David Cooper, serve to ‘animate the materials presented to the senses, i.e. “materials which would otherwise be without significance, but which can now be recognized as ‘fulfilling’ the schemata of sensory experiences”⁵¹.

To summarize a bit, the phenomenologist’s is not interested with empirical facts, but with the pure essences in virtue of which objects are what they are. To attain the level of essential intuition, we must put aside or disconnect all natural standpoint, that is, including the world of the scientists, and our beliefs in the existence of the external or objective world and my our empirical ego. Once this is done, we then can be free to direct our focus on an autonomous realm of pure consciousness or the transcendental ego, whose primary features is to ‘intend’ or direct itself towards the essential object. Pure consciousness does this “by casting a net of meaning or *noemata* for objects to ‘fulfil’”⁵². According to Cooper, “It is ... these *noemata* which are the essences studied by the phenomenologist” and in “studying them, he lays bare the ways in which consciousness, as the trafficker in meanings ‘animates’ and ‘constitutes the world as it is encountered’”⁵³.

II HEIDEGGER AND HIS HERMENEUTICAL PHENOMENOLOGY.

When we turn to Heidegger, we notice that he, no doubt, occupies an eminent position within the phenomenological movement. He was at a time, Husserl’s student and later one of his personal assistants. Heidegger’s own approach to phenomenology was not only a land mark within the phenomenological movement, but he also had a great influence in the reinterpretation of Husserlian phenomenology. Within the context of his larger quest for a more radical fundamental ontology, Heidegger made use of Husserl’s phenomenological method which he greatly modified to assist him in his quest to lay bare the processes of being in human existence, in such a way that being and not just one’s personal opinion might come to light. In *Being and Time*, this was his first *magnum opus*; Heidegger asserts that philosophy is universal phenomenological ontology which takes its point of departure from the hermeneutics of human *Dasein*. This hermeneutics of human *Dasein*, as an historical analytic of human existence, provides the guiding thread for all philosophical inquiry, constituting the whence of its originations and the whither of its returns [BT: 62, 38]⁵⁴. It is in this context that Heidegger explicitly expressed the nature and task of his philosophy. The major preoccupation in this philosophical task has to do with the problem of Being, and the proper method for a philosophical analysis whereby one can determine the structure and explicate the meaning of being is phenomenology; the point of departure for such an ontological analysis using the phenomenological method is hermeneutics or the historical interpretation of existence⁵⁵. The task of the philosopher as an ontologist, Heidegger insists, is to exhibit the character and the universal structures of being as they manifest themselves in the very way they are. The ontologist’s task is “to explain being itself and to make the being of entities stand out in full relief” [BT: 49, 27]. “Only as phenomenology”, Heidegger insists, “Is ontology possible” [BT: 60, 35]. Philosophy, for Heidegger, therefore, has to be viewed as phenomenological ontology, which has to be descriptive in character. The phenomenological method of inquiry takes as its guiding principle the maxim – “to the things themselves” [BT: 59, 28]. This is in line with Husserl’s insistence that phenomenology must abandon all established theory, all traditional, prejudiced, and metaphysical speculations in order to have full access to a pure and primordial experience in which ‘things’ present themselves to us in a genuinely original way⁵⁶. Phenomenology, for Husserl, as a discipline has the task to describe what is genuinely given to consciousness without obscuring preconceptions and hypothetical speculations. Thus, rather than making intellectual speculations about what reality is all about, philosophy must embrace “pure description” of what is; hence, his motto – “to the things themselves”.

Heidegger, of course, adopted this Husserlian principle, but he gave it a different interpretation. He insisted, of course, like Husserl that only by adhering strictly to this phenomenological principle, can the ontologist be able to avoid “all free floating constructions and accidental findings; [or] taking over any conceptions which only seem to have been demonstrated, [as well as] those pseudo-questions which parade themselves as problems often for generations at a time” [BT: 50, 23]. The phenomenologist’s task, Heidegger insists, is simply to describe, analyze, and interpret the phenomena, of our immediate experience as they manifest themselves for what they are. It is remarkable to note here, that both Husserl and Heidegger differ in their understanding of what a ‘phenomenon’ is. Husserl for example understands a ‘phenomenon’ as the self-evident essence of a thing given in an intuition; while Heidegger understands it as “that which shows itself in itself” [BT: 51, 28], or as “the Being of beings, its meaning, its modifications and derivatives” [BT: 60, 35]. Heidegger, of course, arrived at this interpretation against Husserl’s because he understands intentionality as a relating to that which is, i.e. as a relation to the world⁵⁷. For Heidegger, the phenomenon by itself remains incomplete since it cannot show itself to itself alone, but rather it needs something to which it can show itself; and this ‘something’ which it needs in order to reveal itself for what it is, is nothing other than human *Dasein* in its concrete existence. For Husserl, it is the transcendental ego, and this for Heidegger, is an outright abomination, a mere artificial abstraction which could only inhibit an understanding of man as concrete ek-sistence, in other words, of man as ‘standing out’ as the gateway to understanding of things in the world and to the world itself⁵⁸. In addition to this, Heidegger did not see the phenomena as things that

could simply be read-off from the way they are given in the various acts of consciousness. These have to be uncovered as it were from beneath the surface appearance, i.e. from beneath what lies hidden behind the things of which we are already familiar with and which we normally take for granted as ‘natural’ in the first place and for the most part. This is the task of hermeneutical phenomenology to uncover the phenomena that have been covered up, buried, or hidden in such a way as to get them liberated or laid bare. This conception constitutes the basis of truth for Heidegger, which has the character of “unhiddenness” and also for understanding which has the character of “disclosing” of the meaning of what we can call Being⁵⁹. For such an ontological analysis to remain faithful to phenomenological method, strict attention must be given to the original data of human experience. Heidegger rejects in its entirety any rationalist metaphysical speculations or *a priori* epistemological theory which focuses upon mental and cognitive processes to the complete neglect of the phenomena themselves⁶⁰.

The main objective of his phenomenological ontology is to go back to the original data of human experience and to provide a conceptual framework within which the constitutive universal elements of these original data could be brought to light and made manifest for what they are⁶¹. It is by paying close attention and focusing only on the phenomena that the ontologist could be liberated from any possible epistemological prejudice and *a priori* limitations that could distort the original data or prevent their manifestation⁶². These phenomena are always preontologically known before any logical or epistemological theories concerning them are articulated. The ontologist’s task is to restrict his attention to what is immediately given to consciousness and to try to describe, analyze, and interpret the data concerned.

HEIDEGGER’S MEANING OF PHENOMENOLOGY.

Heidegger developed phenomenology in a new and radical way such that phenomenology and phenomenological method took on a totally different character. As a philosopher, Heidegger always had the passion to go back to the very roots of words, most especially Greek words which are intrinsically philosophical in character, in order to dig out their hidden nuggets of meanings. Heidegger thought that by going back to the root of words, we can rediscover certain truths which the Greeks themselves, through the long history of their language have either neglected or forgotten in their thinking. Thus, in his explication of what phenomenology means, Heidegger went straight back to the Greek language from which the expression “phenomenology” was formulated. Only a clear examination and clarification of the constitutive elements which joined together to form the term “phenomenology” can reveal insights into the workings of the phenomenological method. The expression “phenomenology”, has for Heidegger two components, namely: “phenomenon” and “*logos*”; both of these come from the Greek terms “*phainomenon*” and “*logos*” which together make phenomenology to be understood as science of phenomena [BT: 50, 28] The Greek word: “*phainomenon*” is taken from the Greek verb: “*phainesthai*”, meaning literally – that which shows itself, the manifest. The phenomenon then, is that which shows itself, or that which is manifest, or can be brought to light. Phenomena (plural) are the totality of what can be brought to the light of day or what can be brought to light [BT: 51, 29]. In its original Greek sense it is “*ta onta*” – meaning entities, the things that are or what is, in singular. Thus, the phenomenon is that which shows itself or that which manifests itself in the way in which it is. It is in this sense that the term “phenomenon” is clearly distinguished from mere “appearance”. Phenomena are not simply appearances, but rather that which shows itself, as it is, the manifest. Appearances always refer to some phenomenon; they are appearances of something – i.e. of that which shows itself [BT: 52, 29].

In defining the signification of the word “*logos*” which goes together with the word “*phainomenon*” to make up what phenomenology is, Heidegger reminded us that Plato and Aristotle has already used the concept of *logos* in the context of meaning literally “discourse”, i.e. in the context of statement or speech [*Rede*] [BT: 55, 32]. *Logos*, in this deeper sense of “discourse” (speech)⁶³, means exactly the thing as the Greek word – “*deloun*” which means to make manifest what one is talking about in one’s discourse. This deeper sense of *logos* then, is itself, to let something be seen; in this sense, what the discourse is all about; this is so either for the person doing the talking or for persons involved in the talking. The *logos* as discourse “opens to sight” or “lets something be seen” (*Apo*). And that which the discourse “opens to sight” is itself the phenomenon or that which shows itself (*phainesthai*) in the light of day. *Logos* as speaking (speech) or discourse has the function of disclosing, that is, of letting something be seen or bringing forth to manifestation, what a thing is; it brings it out of concealment into the light of day. Here the mind does not project meaning onto the phenomenon, but rather what shows itself is an ontological manifestation of the thing under discourse. Thus, *logos* as speaking is not really a power given to language by its user, but rather it is a power which language bestows on the speaker; a means of being seized by what is manifest through the medium of language.

The combination of *phainesthai* and *logos*, which gives us the term: “phenomenology” means letting things become manifest for what they are, without forcing our own categories on them. This indicates a reversal of direction from that of which we have been used to. It is not man then who points to things, but rather, it is the things which disclose and show themselves to us. In effect, we are being led by the power of the things that manifest or show themselves to us for what they are. Phenomenology then is a means of being led by the phenomenon through a way of access genuinely belonging to the phenomenon. Heidegger, of course, is aware that a thing can be forced, through manipulation or dogmatism, to be seen only in the desired way [BT: 56f, 33]. Hence, allowing a thing to manifest itself for what it is now becomes a matter of learning to allow it to do so; for it lets itself to be seen as it is. This conception is in tune with Husserl’s avowed intention of always returning to things themselves. Phenomenological method is designed to always go back to the original phenomena and to allow them to display themselves for what they are. The phenomenon of phenomenology is not an entity, but rather the being of an entity. The term “phenomenology” as Heidegger sees it, is different from such other expressions as theology, biology, or sociology and so on. These other sciences only refer to

their respective subject matters, which are undertaken by their disciplines; Phenomenology neither refers to the object of its researches nor characterizes the subject matter that is to be treated.

Phenomenology only tells us of the 'how' with which what is to be treated by it gets exhibited and handled. In other words, phenomenology only informs us about the way in which the matters it investigates are to be brought to "show themselves" and this way follows the maxim: "to the things themselves". What phenomenology shows are always "Being", its structures, and characters, its meanings, its possible modifications, and derivatives.

Phenomenology, thus provides the appropriate mode of access to what constitutes the legitimate theme of ontological inquiry, namely – "Being". With the use of the phenomenological method Heidegger intends to provide the precise description of the various structures of being as they manifest themselves in the phenomena. Phenomenology remains the only appropriate approach toward understanding Being, because Being and its various structures are usually half-hidden or covered up or disguised, "the most dangerous of which ... are those ossified concepts within a system which claims to be crystal clear, self-evident and requiring no further justification"⁶⁴. It is in this sense that ontology is for Heidegger, phenomenological, since according to him, "only as phenomenology is ontology possible. In the phenomenological conception of 'phenomenon' what one has in mind as that which shows itself, is the Being of entities, its meaning, its modifications, and derivatives [BT: 66, 35].

HEIDEGGER'S NOTION OF INTENTIONALITY – A RELATION TO THE WORLD.

Intricately woven around Heidegger's phenomenological method is the notion of intentionality. In Heidegger's phenomenological method, we find a more radical and emphatic interpretative doctrine of intentionality than what we find in Brentano and Husserl who were clearly in the background of this doctrine. This doctrine, as we hinted above, has its genesis and roots in Aristotelian psychology, but was introduced into modern and contemporary philosophy by Franz Brentano and Edmund Husserl. We can say right away that Heidegger followed Brentano and Husserl in their views that intentionality is the presupposition of phenomenological method. For Husserl in particular, "every experience is a consciousness of something, and is thus properly said to be 'intentionally related' to this something"⁶⁵. Intentionality of consciousness is for Husserl, one of the basic structures of consciousness. "The act of consciousness (the *noesis*) is always directed toward its intentional object (the *noema*)"⁶⁶.

Heidegger followed Husserl in stressing the notion of intentionality as a fundamental presupposition of the phenomenological method; this, we might straight away consider as his greatest debt to Husserl, but he differed widely from Husserl in his understanding of how intentionality properly functions in human experience. Whereas Husserl's notion of intentionality provides him with the general epistemological and metaphysical framework for analysis of experience, Heidegger on his part, sees intentional structures pervading and functioning not only in the realm of consciousness with regards to Man's cognitive and theoretical relations to his world, but also in the whole realm of Man's precognitive awareness. Heidegger sees intentionality as a relation to that "which is", i.e. as a relation to the world. This is directly evident from his description of Man [*Dasein*] as Being-in-the-world [BT: 78, 53]. Right here, one can immediately see the reason why Heidegger's intentional analysis refuses to follow Husserl's form of constitutive analysis; and why he rejected Husserl's phenomenological or transcendental reduction, along with transcendental subjectivity, - the theory of transcendental *ego*, which treats its object as no more than immanent to consciousness. Regarding this Heidegger states that, "the idea of a subject which has intentional experiences merely inside its own sphere and is not yet outside it but encapsulated within itself is an absurdity which misconstrues the basic ontological structure of the being that we ourselves are"⁶⁷. This criticism of Heidegger is clear evidence that Husserl's method can hardly take note of *Dasein's* original experience of itself as Being-in-the-world. This also demonstrates that Husserl is still very much steeped in the Cartesian tradition in which one may toy with the doubt of the external world by clinging only to the representation of the object in the representing unworldly transcendental *ego*.

Heidegger by passed this gulf by replacing the idealized subject of Husserl's intentionality with the factual concretely human existence.

As Heidegger sees it, "Existence" belongs exclusively to Man [*Dasein*]. It belongs to Man essentially "to exist" [BT: 67, 42], since Man [*Dasein*] is that entity which is both ontically and ontologically distinct from all other entities, by the very fact that constitutionally in his very Being – this Being is always already an issue for him [BT: 32, 12; 67, 42]⁶⁸. This means that essentially, Man has a close affinity with his own Being, and this is the way Man has been made.

Man has a pre-conceptual awareness that in some way 'he is' and does so explicitly. According to Heidegger, "it is peculiar to this entity [Man] that with and through its Being, this Being is disclosed to it" [BT: 32, 12]. Before any cognitive reflection begins, Man already has a preontological awareness through which he understands himself as fundamentally related to his world and to entities discoverable within this world. Man as such 'intends' his world not just in perceiving and judging but equally in his everyday dealings and practical preoccupations with things and in encounter with other people implicated alongside his world.

Thus, because Man is always already "outside" existing alongside entities he encounters and which belong to an already disclosed world, his Being is essentially both ontically and ontologically that of "concern" [BT: 84, 57]. This means that, human existence from the beginning is irretrievably Being-in-the-world, and can only be viewed as such; and Being-in-the-world, in its turn, implies from the beginning, Being-with-other-entities and with-other-people. This implies that the question which has teased modern philosophers since Descartes, concerning the existence of the external world beyond the ideas of my thinking *ego*, does not arise for Heidegger. Before this question is even raised, there is already a pre-ontological disclosure of Man's relation to his world. In this very sense, Man is never isolated, encapsulated in his Being. Man is always already given alongside his world, fully engaged and dwelling there.

The mistake Descartes made was in failing to understand the meaning of the Being of the 'I am' [*sum*] which is presupposed by the 'I think' [*cogito*]. According to Heidegger, "with the '*cogito sum*', Descartes had claimed that he was putting philosophy on a new and firm footing. But what he left undetermined when he began in his 'radical' way, was the kind of Being which belongs to the *res cogitans*, or more precisely – the meaning of the Being of the '*sum*'" [BT:46, 24]. Thus, for Heidegger, what is basic is not the thinking-subject or the Cartesian *cogito*, but the actual fact that 'I am' [*sum*], that is, that 'I exist'. The act of existing in the world is what is primarily given before any questions are raised, before reflections commence, and before any sort of inquiry into the nature of knowledge begins. "Ontically as well as ontologically, the priority belongs to Being-in-the-world", Heidegger insists [BT: 85, 58]. In this sense, 'knowing' in the epistemological sense is not what is primarily indicated in Man's first encounter with entities in his world, 'knowing' in the theoretical sense is rather predicted upon and is derivative from Man's pre-ontological awareness of his existence. Heidegger rejects entirely the subject-object dichotomy that has plagued modern philosophical thinking since Descartes. The basis of his criticism of this dichotomy is that subject and object "do not coincide with *Dasein* and the world" [BT: 87, 60]. Man, for Heidegger, is not a subject in the sense of an *ego* or consciousness enclosed inside his own skin which then gets to know the object 'out there' somehow from his inner sphere through contemplation. He defines Man as "Being-in-the-world"; Man and his world are both inseparable and are defined as the phenomenon. Hence, he says that "the compound expression 'Being-in the-world' indicates in the very way we have coined it, that it stands for a unitary phenomenon. This primary datum must be seen as a whole" [BT: 78, 53]. Therefore, it makes no sense to raise the question how Man [*Dasein*] could leap beyond himself to grasp the world out there; Man is already 'outside' alongside the entity to be known, and is there as a Being-in-the-world which knows [BT: 89, 62].

It is worth re-emphasizing that for Heidegger, this sort of knowing is not yet theoretical knowing which only arises much later in Man's experience, and is itself founded upon Man's original awareness of Being-with and having a world. It is rather a kind of knowing which first manipulates things and puts them to use concern fully [BT: 95, 67]. It is in this respect that Man is primordially an entity intentionally related to his world in his daily pre-theoretical preoccupations and concerns. In all of Man's practical behaviours and concerns a world is presupposed. Man finds himself existing in the world to which he is related in any or several of the manifestations of 'Care' – which is a generalized structure of concern [BT: 157, 21; 84, 57].

Man's relationship to the world is thus fundamentally practical with intentional dimensions, for example, in raising of shelter and using of tools; in understanding and accomplishing projects and in his encounter and dealings with other beings like himself.

HUSSERL, HEIDEGGER - THEIR DIFFERENCES IN PHENOMENOLOGICAL METHOD.

When we try to compare Husserl's phenomenological method with that of Heidegger, the weak points in Husserl's position begin to manifest themselves. To start with, Husserl's method requires that we suspend our entire natural attitude towards every object of experience, including our own empirical *ego*, in order to arrive at the 'unquestionable' that is the ultimate ground of all that is. Husserl calls this unquestionable ground – the transcendental *ego*. It is the transcendental *ego* as the ultimate ground of all that is, that every being is ultimately constituted.

In this sense, all beings ultimately must be dissolved in the transcendental *ego*'s consciousness of them⁶⁹. The transcendental *ego* becomes the only absolute and real being. This achievement in Husserl's method is made through transcendental phenomenological reduction in which the whole realm of being is disconnected and put out of action to yield the transcendental *ego*. Heidegger on his part made no use of these reductions, since the relationship between *Dasein* and the world belongs exclusively to the essence of *Dasein* itself, as Being-in-the-world.

Whereas Husserl by means of his phenomenological reductions attempted to liberate the transcendental *ego* from the world, Heidegger regards *Dasein* as the very being that discloses the world. This relationship between *Dasein* and the world is so important in Heidegger's scheme of things that he refers to *Dasein* as Being-in-the world. For Heidegger, Man as *Dasein* 'stands out' in his concrete *ek-sistence*, towards things in the world and to the world itself. Husserl and Heidegger differ most remarkably in their understanding of what a 'phenomenon' is all about. Whereas Husserl sees a 'phenomenon' as the self-evident character of an essence that is given in an intuition; for Heidegger, a 'phenomenon' is that 'which shows itself in itself, the manifest' or "the being of beings, its meaning, its modifications and derivatives" [BT: 51, 28; 60, 35]

This is in contrast to Husserl's because Heidegger understands intentionality as relating to whatever is, that is, as a relation to the world as such. This directly stems from his description of *Dasein* as Being-in-the-world. Thus, on this very ground, we can see the reason why Heidegger's intentional analysis cannot take the form of constitutive analysis as one finds in Husserl's phenomenology. This is also the reason why Heidegger refuses to follow Husserl's "phenomenological or transcendental reductions or his transcendental subjectivity, with a theory of the *ego* as a 'disinterested observer', or with a complete and universal reflection"⁷⁰.

Heidegger refuses to follow Husserl's method simply on the ground that it did not sufficiently take notice of *Dasein*'s primordial experience of itself as Being-in-the-world. Husserl's method cannot sufficiently take account of *Dasein* in the originality of its *ek-sistence*⁷¹. His method can only account of an idealized subject, but never that of *Dasein*'s essence which lies in its *eksistence*. "The subjectivity in its most essential meaning is thus bypassed"⁷². According to Landgrebe, "once the true meaning of subjectivity is revealed we immediately become convinced of the impossibility of a statement that equates Being with object. With that insight the possibility of Husserl's transcendental idealism comes to an end"⁷³. Heidegger is in agreement with Husserl that intentionality is one of the presuppositions of the phenomenological method. Intentionality, for Husserl, is a basic structure of consciousness, the act of consciousness is always directed towards an intentional object⁷⁴. Heidegger is in line with Husserl in this regard, but he has a more inclusive framework in which

intentionality adequately functions. For Husserl the intentional relation of the act of knowing and the object as known is primarily a cognitive or theoretical operation which he calls “pure consciousness”. This is still in line with the Cartesian tradition⁷⁵. For Heidegger, the intentional structure is present not only within the realm of consciousness understood in terms of man’s cognitive and theoretical relations to his world, but already within the whole of man’s pre-cognitive awareness. Man, for Heidegger, intends his world not only in perceiving and judging, but also in making use of tools and utensils; in his daily practical concerns and in his encounter and response to other beings like himself, who share his world, which Heidegger calls “personal concern”⁷⁶.

Whereas Husserl in his eidetic reduction was particularly interested in science of essential being, in his transcendental reduction, he suspended the world of facts by placing it into brackets, Heidegger on his part insists that it is precisely this bracketed “factual world” of existence which is to be described and subjected to a fundamental ontological analysis⁷⁷.

Husserl’s phenomenology is directed toward a “science of essences”; Heidegger’s phenomenology is consistently channeled towards a fundamental ontology of human existence⁷⁸ It is important to note that while Husserl employs the *epoche* as absolutely necessary and central to phenomenology, later phenomenologists “found it either unnecessary or impossible” to implement⁷⁹. Heidegger, for example, found it unnecessary, since phenomenology for him was destined to be ontology, as a bracketing of existence ‘reduction is in principle inappropriate’ for laying bare the problematic account of Being [BT: 143, 109].

NOTES AND REFERENCES:

- [1]. Kockelmans, J. (1967), Husserl’s Phenomenological Philosophy in the light of Contemporary Criticism, taken from: *Phenomenology: The Philosophy of Edmund Husserl and Its Interpretation*, [Anchor Books, Doubleday and Company, INC; Garden City, New York], 221. Cited hereafter as Kockelmans, J. (1967).
- [2]. Ibid. 226.
- [3]. Ibid. 223. By ‘all-encompassing rational knowledge of all that is’, Husserl understands a kind of philosophy that has the same aspirations and characteristic intention of philosophy since the time of the ancient Greeks.
- [4]. Schmitt, Richard (1960), Husserl’s Transcendental-Phenomenological Reduction, First Published in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 20 (1959-1960), 238-245. Reprinted with permission of the author and editors in Kockelmans, J. (1967), in *Phenomenology: The Philosophy of Edmund Husserl and Its Interpretations* Hereafter cited as Schmitt Richard, in Kockelmans, (1967), Ed.
- [5]. Schmitt, Richard, in Kockelmans, (1967), Ed.
- [6]. Ibid, 58.
- [7]. Husserl, (1962), *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, Collier Macmillan; 40.
- [8]. Ibid, 47.
- [9]. Cooper, E. David, (1990), *Existentialism: A Reconstruction*; Basil Blackwell; 40.
- [10]. Husserl, (1962), *Ideas*, 51.
- [11]. Cooper, (1990), 40.
- [12]. Husserl, (1962), 75.
- [13]. Solomon, Robert, (1972), *From Rationalism to Existentialism*, Harper and Row, New York, 155.
- [14]. Ibid, 156.
- [15]. Ibid, 156.
- [16]. Kockelmans, (1967), 27.
- [17]. Ibid, 27.
- [18]. Becker, Oscar, (1970), *The Philosophy of Edmund Husserl*, in *The Phenomenology of Husserl*, edited, translated, with an introduction by R.O. Elveton; Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 59.
- [19]. Cf. Kockelmans, (1967), 32.
- [20]. Ibid. 32.
- [21]. Quentin, Lauer (1965), “Introduction: Structure of the Ideal”, in *Edmund Husserl, Phenomenology and Crisis of Philosophy*, Trans. By Quentin Lauer, (New York), Harper and Row Publishers; Reprinted in J.J. Kockelmans, (1967), with the title: “On Evidence” – 150 – 151. All references to this work hereafter will be from: Kockelmans, (1967) edition.
- [22]. Ibid. 151.
- [23]. Ibid. 151.
- [24]. Kockelmans, (1967) ed. “Intentional and Constitutive Analysis”, 138.
- [25]. Quentin, Lauer, in Kockelmans (1967) ed., 151.
- [26]. Ibid. 151.
- [27]. Cf. Kockelmans, (1967), 138...
- [28]. Ibid. 138.
- [29]. Ibid. 139.
- [30]. Husserl often uses such technical terms like “*noetic*” and “*noematic*” in his analysis of intentional consciousness. The term “*noetic*” indicates the intentional acts of consciousness, that is, acts which are constitutive for their objects; but he later reverted to use the term “*noesis*” [meaning: *nous* or intellect] to make the same reference. He also uses the term “*noema*” in correlation to “*noesis*” to refer to the intentional object, e.g. this chair, insofar as it is intentionally present in a *noetic* experience. The *noema* is thus the meaning or sense [essence] of the intentional object insofar as it is constituted by consciousness and not the transcendent object as such. (Cf. Richard Schmitt, in Kockelmans, 1967) ed., 67.
- [31]. Kockelmans, (1967), ed., 139.

- [32]. Ibid. 29.
- [33]. Ibid. 29-30.
- [34]. Ibid. 30. ³⁴The term ‘radical’ here is one of the popular terms in Phenomenology; negatively it means freedom from any assumptions or beliefs of any kind; but positively it means the insightful establishment of all elements of knowledge. (Cf. Marvin Farber, in Kockelmans (1967), 49. ³⁵Kockelmans, (1967), ed., 30.
- [35]. Marvin, Farber (1940), “The Ideal of Presuppositionless Philosophy”, in Marvin Farber, ed., Philosophical Essays in Memory of Edmund Husserl [Cambridge]; Reprinted with permission in J.J. Kockelmans, (1967), ed., 50.
- [36]. Kockelmans, (1967), ed., 30-31.
- [37]. Husserl, Ideen, 72 (Gibson, 113) quoted in “The Philosophy of Edmund Husserl” written by Oskar Becker, and published in The Phenomenology of Husserl, Selected Critical Readings, edited by R.O. Elveton, (1970) 63.
- [38]. Husserl often in connection with transcendental phenomenological reduction uses the term ‘*epoche*’; at first this may sound like a ‘reduction’, but he made a distinction between the two terms: the change of attitude, i.e. the suspension of all natural attitude towards the objects of experience is called *epoche*, this is a precondition for reducing the natural world to a world of phenomena. Transcendental phenomenological reduction, however, encompasses both the *epoche* and the reduction in a narrower sense. [Cf., Kockelmans, (1967), 61].
- [39]. Cf. Kockelmans, (1967), ed., 222.
- [40]. Ibid, 223.
- [41]. Ibid, 223.
- [42]. Husserl, Ideen I, 135; as quoted in Kockelmans (1967) ed., 223.
- [43]. Gaston Berger, (1941), *Le Cogito Dans la Philosophie de Husserl* (Paris: Aubier) 94-95; as quoted in Kockelmans (1967), edited, 223.
- [44]. Cf. Kockelmans, (1967), 224.
- [45]. Ibid, 224.
- [46]. Husserl, Ideas, 241
- [47]. Husserl, Ideas, 346.
- [48]. Cooper, D. (1990), 45.
- [49]. Husserl, Ideas, 345.
- [50]. Cooper, D. (1990), 45.
- [51]. Ibid, 46.
- [52]. Ibid, 46.
- [53]. Cf. also: Schrag, O. Calvin, in Kockelmans (1967) ed., 277; hereafter, references to this work will be cited as Schrag, O. Calvin, in Kockelmans (1967) ed., followed by the reference page.
- [54]. Ibid, 277.
- [55]. Cf. Kockelmans, (1967), ed., 223-224.
- [56]. Ibid, 229.
- [57]. Ibid, 227.
- [58]. Schrag, O. Calvin, in Kockelmans, (1967), ed., 278.
- [59]. Ibid, 278.
- [60]. Ibid, 278. ⁶²Ibid, 279.
- [61]. The word ‘*logos*’ apart from being translated as ‘discourse’, has other interpretations which include ‘reason’, ‘judgment’, ‘concept’, ‘definition’, ‘ground’, ‘science’, etc; [Cf. footnote, BT:47].
- [62]. King, Magda (1964), *Heidegger’s Philosophy: A Guide to his Basic Thought*, [Basil Blackwell, Inc., Cambridge, Massachusetts], 40.
- [63]. Cf. Schrag, O. Calvin, in Kockelmans (1967) ed., 280.
- [64]. Ibid, 281.
- [65]. Heidegger, M. (1983), *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, [Indiana University Press], 64.
- [66]. Ontology” is the study of existence; it is the most general branch of metaphysics concerned with the nature of being; or a particular theory of being. While “ontic” pertains to things of real existence.
- [67]. Cf. Kockelmans, (1967), ed., 226.
- [68]. Landgrebe, Ludwig (1952), *Philosophie der Gegenwart*, [Bonn]; Athenaum Verlag; 87-94, as quoted in Husserl’s *Phenomenological Philosophy in the Light of Contemporary Criticism*, by J.J. Kockelmans in (1967) edition; 229.
- [69]. Ibid, 229. ⁷²Ibid, 229.
- [70]. Landgrebe, Ludwig (1952), 99-100; quoted in J.J. Kockelmans (1967), ed., 229.
- [71]. Cf. Schrag, O. Calvin in Kockelmans, (1967), ed., 281.
- [72]. Ibid, 281.
- [73]. Ibid, 281.
- [74]. Ibid, 289
- [75]. Ibid, 289
- [76]. Crowell, Steven (2009) in *A Companion to Phenomenology and Existentialism*, edited by Hubert Dreyfus and Mark A. Wrathall, Wiley Black, 20-21.