

2 Criticisms

For their enterprise to be successful, it is necessary that phenomenologists actually produce plausible 'translations' of statements about the physical world into statements employing purely 'phenomenal' language – that is, statements referring to nothing other than minds and their sensations. Any reference to physical objects will 'contaminate' the subjunctive conditionals employed by the phenomenologist and will defeat the whole purpose of the analysis which is to reduce fully talk about the physical world to allegedly less problematic talk about sensations. Historically, the most influential objections to phenomenism focused on the alleged impossibility of plausibly completing a phenomenistic analysis. The clearest of these objections was advanced by Roderick Chisholm (1948) and has become known as 'the argument from perceptual relativity'. The phenomenologist, C.I. LEWIS, argued (1946) that part of what it means to claim that there is a doorknob in front of me and to the left is that if I were to seem to see the doorknob and seem to be initiating a certain grasping motion, then in all probability the feeling of contacting a doorknob would follow. CHISHOLM points out that if the conditional really were part of what the existence of a doorknob involved, then it would be impossible for the doorknob to be there without the conditional being true. But it is easy to imagine a situation in which, though the doorknob is there, I would not be able to have any tactile sensations of it. My hand might be anaesthetized; then, even though the doorknob is there, I would not feel anything upon seeming to reach out to touch it. The proposition that there is a doorknob there does not entail anything about what sensations I would have were I to have others, because the sensations I would have always depend on facts about the internal and external *physical* conditions of perception (facts about the lighting conditions, sense organs, and so on). We cannot, however, revise the conditionals we employ in a phenomenistic analysis to make reference to standard or normal physical conditions of perception (the argument goes) without referring to the physical world and thus defeating the goal of providing an analysis that refers to nothing other than connections between sensations.

Another closely related objection to phenomenism argues that contingent subjunctive conditionals of the sort employed by phenomenologists in their analyses presuppose *lawful* regularities between sensations. But again, because sensations are always causally dependent on physical conditions, there simply are no lawful regularities involving sensations alone.

The above objections are often presented by philosophers sympathetic to the general philosophical

framework presupposed by phenomenologists. Certainly many contemporary philosophers reject many of the assumptions that motivated phenomenologists. Thus, for example, many contemporary epistemologists reject the kind of foundationalism that led phenomenologists to worry that a resolution of sceptical problems was impossible if we separate physical objects from sensations. A good many of these epistemologists embrace some version of externalism which allows one to know facts about the physical world simply by having one's beliefs caused in the appropriate way (see INTERNALISM AND EXTERNALISM IN EPISTEMOLOGY). Still other contemporary philosophers reject the conception of philosophical analysis as an attempt to specify necessary and sufficient conditions for the truth of propositions. Again, many of these will accept an externalist or causal theory of *meaning* which makes the meaning of expressions largely an empirical question inaccessible to a priori analysis. Such views of meaning will either reject, or significantly reinterpret, the verifiability criterion of meaning that drove so many phenomenologists (see MEANING AND VERIFICATION).

3 Responses

It is impossible in this context to evaluate challenges to the phenomenologist's basic philosophical presuppositions. But is there any response that the phenomenologist might make to the argument from perceptual relativity? The key to such a response would seem to involve 'protecting' the antecedents of the subjunctive conditionals employed by the phenomenologist. That something round is before me now entails only that if I were to seem to reach out and grasp the object *under certain conditions*, I would seem to feel something round. The phenomenologist's critics claim that one cannot specify the relevant conditions without introducing reference to the physical world, thereby defeating the whole purpose of the analysis. But is that true? A phenomenologist might argue that one can introduce into one's phenomenistic analysis a clause about normal or standard conditions whose purpose is to *denote* those conditions (*whatever* they are) that normally (defined statistically) accompany certain sequences of sensations. The normal conditions clause might include reference to other facts about what sensations would follow others, facts about 'things-in-themselves' (construed as entities whose intrinsic nature will always remain a complete mystery), facts about the intentions of a God and so on. While the introduction of such a clause would move one away from 'pure' versions of phenomenism by allowing into one's analysis expressions that might denote things other than minds and sensations, it might be

argued that the modification is epistemically harmless, for we are always justified in believing, other things being equal, that conditions are normal, that is to say that conditions are as they usually are.

Once one modifies the analysis this much, however, it is not altogether clear why one should not move all the way to a version of what might be called a causal theory of objects, one that resembles classical phenomenism much more than representative realism. On this 'phenomenistic' causal theory, to assert the existence of a physical object is simply to assert the existence of a thing (whatever its intrinsic character might be) that has the power to produce certain sensations and that would produce certain patterns of sensations following an initial sequence of sensations *when conditions are normal*. This 'causal' theory looks a great deal like phenomenism – indeed it may be another natural way of construing Mill's reference to physical objects as the permanent possibilities of sensations. Unlike traditional phenomenism, however, this theory might have an easier time analysing physical-object statements which assert only the existence of something (somewhere, sometime) having certain physical characteristics. Such statements are a real problem for traditional phenomenism, for when the physical-object statement fails to describe a physical object in relation to potential perceivers of those objects, it is not clear whose sensations we can plausibly refer to in our subjunctive conditionals. Notice, however, that the kind of causal theory sketched above faces identical problems to classical phenomenism when it comes to specifying *subjunctively* the relevant powers to produce sensations. If this is right, there may not be as huge a gap as was historically supposed between phenomenism and at least some causal theories of the physical world.

See also: EMPIRICISM; IDEALISM; PERCEPTION, EPISTEMIC ISSUES IN

References and further reading

- Ayer, A.J. (1936) *Language, Truth and Logic*, New York: Dover, 2nd edn, 1946. (Contains a vigorous defence of logical positivism and a phenomenistic analysis of physical-object propositions in terms of actual and possible sense-data.)
- * Berkeley, G. (1713) *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous*, ed. C.M. Turbayne, Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1954. (Attacks representative realism and defends the view that physical objects can be reduced to 'ideas' – where 'ideas' include sensations. There are passages in which he seems to defend the phenomenistic view that one should

appeal to counterfactuals describing possible sensations in the analysis of physical objects.)

- * Chisholm, R. (1948) 'The Problem of Empiricism', *Journal of Philosophy* 45 (1948): 412–17. (Contains what is probably the single most influential objection to phenomenism, presented in a remarkably clear and straightforward manner.)
- Firth, R. (1950) 'Radical Empiricism and Perceptual Relativity', *Philosophical Review* 59 (1950): 164–83, 319–31. (A vigorous defence of phenomenism against the argument from perceptual relativity. Firth's defence rests on certain general considerations about meaning, and the article, while clearly written, will be accessible only to those with a strong philosophical background.)
- * Lewis, C.I. (1946) *An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation*, La Salle, IL: Open Court. (Despite his reservations about the word, Lewis in this book presents what I take to be the most sophisticated and detailed defence of phenomenism. The book is accessible to relatively unsophisticated philosophy students provided that they are willing to spend some time studying it.)
- * Mill, J.S. (1865) *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*, London: Longmans, Green, 1889. (Mill's identification of physical objects with the permanent possibility of sensations and his explication of what he means using subjunctive conditionals describing sensations makes him a good candidate for one of the earliest phenomenologists.)

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PHENOMENOLOGICAL MOVEMENT

The phenomenological movement is a century-old international movement in philosophy that has penetrated most of the cultural disciplines, especially psychiatry and sociology. It began in Germany with the early work of Edmund Husserl, and spread to the rest of Europe, the Americas and Asia. In contrast with a school, a movement does not have a body of doctrine to which all participants agree; rather, there is a broad approach that tends to be shared. The phenomenological approach has at least four components.

First, phenomenologists tend to oppose naturalism. Naturalism includes behaviourism in psychology and positivism in social sciences and philosophy, and is a worldview based on the methods of the natural sciences. In contrast, phenomenologists tend to focus on the socio-historical or cultural lifeworld and to oppose all

kinds of reductionism. Second, they tend to oppose speculative thinking and preoccupation with language, urging instead knowledge based on 'intuiting' or the 'seeing' of the matters themselves that thought is about. Third, they urge a technique of reflecting on processes within conscious life (or human existence) that emphasizes how such processes are directed at (or 'intensive to') objects and, correlatively, upon these objects as they present themselves or, in other words, as they are intended to. And fourth, phenomenologists tend to use analysis or explication as well as the seeing of the matters reflected upon to produce descriptions or interpretations both in particular and in universal or 'eidetic' terms. In addition, phenomenologists also tend to debate the feasibility of Husserl's procedure of transcendental epoché or 'bracketing' and the project of transcendental first philosophy it serves, most phenomenology not being transcendental.

Beyond these widely shared components of method, phenomenologists tend to belong to one or another of four intercommunicating and sometimes overlapping tendencies. These tendencies are 'realistic phenomenology', which emphasizes the seeing and describing of universal essences; 'constitutive phenomenology', which emphasizes accounting for objects in terms of the consciousness of them; 'existential phenomenology', which emphasizes aspects of human existence within the world; and 'hermeneutical phenomenology', which emphasizes the role of interpretation in all spheres of life. All tendencies go back to the early work of Husserl, but the existential and hermeneutical tendencies are also deeply influenced by the early work of Martin Heidegger. Other leading figures are Nicolai Hartmann, Roman Ingarden, Adolf Reinach and Max Scheler in realistic phenomenology, Dorion Cairns, Aron Gurwitsch and Alfred Schutz in constitutive phenomenology, Hannah Arendt, Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Simone de Beauvoir in existential phenomenology, and Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur in hermeneutical phenomenology.

- 1 Matrix and origins
- 2 Realistic phenomenology
- 3 Constitutive phenomenology
- 4 Existential phenomenology
- 5 Hermeneutical phenomenology
- 6 Prospects

1 Matrix and origins

Phenomenology began in the reflections of Edmund HUSSERL during the mid-1890s, but some find forerunners as far back as PLATO and Aristotle. There are immediate anticipations in the work of four figures, not all of whom influenced all phenomenol-

ogists. In *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* (Time and Free Will) (1889), Henri BERGSON offered a concrete and qualitative description of conscious life with an emphasis on how it flows and how abiding geometrized objects are constructed. He did not influence Husserl, but sits in the background for Roman INGARDEN, Kitarō NISHIDA and French phenomenology. In *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt* (Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint) (1874), Husserl's teacher Franz BRENTANO urged the priority of a descriptive over an explanatory psychology of psychical phenomena, which he distinguished from physical phenomena by their *Intentionalität* (intentionality) or directedness at immanent contents. Husserl eventually opposed his teacher's immanentism, denying that physical objects have an 'inexistence' in intentional acts; developed a richer classification of mental phenomena; and came to call his work phenomenology rather than descriptive psychology.

Wilhelm DILTHEY similarly called for a descriptive psychology, held that it would be fundamental among the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*), and described the construction of the historical world in such sciences. Husserl's interest in these matters took some time to be recognized; the debt Martin HEIDEGGER owed to Dilthey has been more easily appreciated. Finally, in *Principles of Psychology* (1890) William JAMES was also concerned to describe what he called the stream of thought, including believing and willing, and his distinction between 'the object of thought' and 'the topic of thought' resembles that between 'the object as it is intended' and 'the object that is intended'. James was read by Husserl and some later phenomenologists.

After studying mathematics and astronomy at Leipzig, pursuing mathematics at Berlin, and hearing Brentano lecture at Vienna, Husserl took his doctorate in mathematics at Vienna under Leo Königsberger. He then habilitated under Brentano's disciple Carl Stumpf at Halle in 1887 and taught there as *Privatdozent* until 1901, when he became an Extraordinarius at Göttingen. He became Ordinarius at Freiburg in 1916, retired in 1928 and died in 1938.

Husserl's Berlin teacher in mathematics, Carl Weierstraß, encouraged the quest for absolutely secure foundations within mathematics, but Husserl went beyond mathematics to seek grounds for all the sciences. His first work, *Philosophie der Arithmetik* (1891), attempted to account for the concept of number by relating it, in the manner of Brentano's psychology, to the mental operation of counting. This work in descriptive psychology was soon contested by Gottlob FREGE as being psychologistic – psychologism being the doctrine, prominently defended by

John Stuart MILL and his followers in Germany, that empirical psychology is the fundamental philosophical discipline and that because concepts and propositions are mental contents, logic is a branch of psychology and logical laws are empirical psychological laws. The myth later arose that Frege helped Husserl overcome his psychologism, but close study by J.N. Mohanty, Karl Schuhmann and others of correspondence and minor writings has shown that Husserl took this step in 1894 for other reasons.

Early in his second major work, *Logische Untersuchungen* (Logical Investigations) (1900–1) – the work that actually launched the phenomenological movement – Husserl contended that logic is not fundamentally an art based on the facts of mental life, but instead fundamentally contains 'pure logic' as a theoretical science of ideal logical forms that are not themselves parts of conscious life. Later in this work he then reflected on the correlative psychical processes in which logical forms are intended, provoking accusations of a relapse into psychologism from those for whom any reference to conscious processes is anathema. What Husserl's less extreme anti-psychologism forbade was in fact the reduction of logical structures to real intentional processes.

The key doctrine in the latter part of the *Investigations* proposes that just as there can be fulfilment of empty intentions of sensuous objects, for example, when we see or hear the same matters as had merely been conceived of previously, there can also be fulfilment of empty categorial intentions by categorial intuition, that is, a non-sensuous seeing of how predication takes form. Propositional truth is accomplished when a formerly empty predicative judgment is brought into coincidence with a predicatively formed state of affairs. Husserl could then call for a return '*zu den Sachen selbst*', best rendered as 'to the matters themselves', that is to say, a return from the blind manipulation of symbols to an insightful approach to the corresponding states of affairs, which include the matters themselves of concern to formal logic. This injunction was soon generalized beyond the theory of logic, formal ontology and the theory of parts and wholes to regions of all sorts; the phenomenological movement then ensued.

The four successively emerging, intercommunicating and sometimes overlapping tendencies within the phenomenological movement thus far all stem from the so-called 'descriptive' phenomenology of the first edition of the *Logical Investigations*.

2 Realistic phenomenology

Immediately after the publication of the *Logical Investigations*, Johannes Daubert persuaded a group

of fellow students of Theodore Lipps at Munich to abandon Lipps' psychologism and accept the *Logical Investigations* as their philosophical bible. Many of these students, including Adolf REINACH, soon went to Husserl at Göttingen. The phrase 'phenomenological movement' first arose in this group, and realistic phenomenology became a distinct tendency within it only when Husserl developed the so-called 'transcendental turn' that its members did not accept. Daubert published nothing in his lifetime. Alexander Pfänder's *Phänomenologie des Willens* (Phenomenology of Willing) (1900) is retrospectively seen as the earliest major document of realistic phenomenology, and he and Reinach, as well as Max SCHELER and Moritz Geiger, led the first generation of realistic phenomenologists. In 1913, together with Husserl, they began editing the *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung*, the quasi-official organ of the movement. The second generation includes Theodor Celms, Hedwig Conrad-Martius, Dietrich von Hildebrand, Roman Ingarden, Aurel Kolnai, Edith Stein and Kurt Stavenhagen.

In order to gain a systematic body of a priori knowledge on a wide range of matters, this first tendency emphasizes Husserl's eidetic method. Eidetic method involves suspending belief in any actual facts with which one begins, feigning variations of the matter at issue, and then grasping the invariant or universal essence that the facts, fantasies and any 'thought experiments' exemplify or instantiate. Since there is always already a vague and tacit acquaintance with essences, eidetic method is a procedure of clarification and description: a method of discovery, not invention. Terms and relations of possibility, compossibility, necessity and contingency by virtue of which facts are intelligible are thus disclosed. Husserl importantly distinguished formalizing universalization, which yields formal ontology, from generalizing universalization, which yields taxonomies. Mistakes in employing this method – its use in accounting for itself included – can be made, but are also in principle discoverable and corrigible by means of it.

The realistic phenomenologists maintained a meta-physical realism of universals and particulars. Geiger contributed to aesthetics and the a priori foundations of geometry. In *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik* (Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values) (1913, 1916) Scheler objected to Kant's ethical formalism and advocated a value-realism in ethics. Reinach analysed accusing, commanding, promising, questioning and other social speech acts in *Die apriorischen Grundlagen des bürgerlichen Rechts* ('The Apriori Foundation of the Civil Law') (1913), thereby contributing to the philosophy of law as well as the human sciences.

Conrad-Martius and Stavenhagen contributed to the philosophy of religion, and Stein is now recognized not only for reflections on empathy and the human sciences, but also, through lectures from around 1930 collected posthumously under the title *Die Frau* (1959), for contributions to feminism. HARTMANN showed the influence of Husserl and Scheler in his rejection of Neo-Kantianism and his central reliance on eidetic method in *Grundzüge einer Metaphysik der Erkenntnis* (Outline of a Metaphysics of Knowledge) (1921) and *Ethik* (1925). Ingarden, chiefly known for *Das literarische Kunstwerk* (The Literary Work of Art) (1931), carried realistic phenomenology to Poland. Gustav SHPET introduced phenomenology into Russia.

Herbert Spiegelberg, a student of Pfänder, later wrote the monumental *The Phenomenological Movement* (1960) as well as descriptively oriented studies; more recently, Karl Schuhmann has functioned as the historian of realistic phenomenology. Barry Smith and David Woodruff Smith lead the efforts to connect current Anglo-American analytical philosophy not only with Brentano and related Austrian philosophy, but also with realistic phenomenology.

3 Constitutive phenomenology

The founding text of constitutive phenomenology is the first book of Husserl's *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie* (Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy) (1913). Posthumous works have made it clear that Husserl's transcendental constitutive phenomenology began by 1906 and is broader than the books published in his lifetime seem to show. Even during his lifetime he recognized in 'Nachwort zu meinen Ideen...' (Postscript to my Ideas...) (1930) a 'constitutive phenomenology of the natural attitude', also called a 'mundane' or 'worldly' phenomenology, that amounts chiefly to phenomenological psychology. Much in the realistic, existential and hermeneutical tendencies can be seen as convergent with this mundane constitutive phenomenology. Nevertheless, the aim of most constitutive phenomenology is transcendental.

Constitutive phenomenology emphasizes processes within conscious life as they are intensive of objects, but it also reflects correlatively on the objects as intended in such processes. Constitutive phenomenology is specified by its concern with constitution. To analyse the 'constitution' of a matter is definitely not to distinguish the components of which it is composed, but rather to describe the syntheses of intensive processes in conscious life with which it correlates as an intentional object. The expression

was taken from Kantianism, but is not confined to operations of conceptually structuring objects. There is pre-predicative experience in which objects are constituted as perceived, valued, willed and so on, but not yet formed into states of affairs.

Between *Logical Investigations* and *Ideas I*, Husserl published 'Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft' (1911). It shows how his concern had broadened from the formal sciences of logic and mathematics to include the natural as well as the human or cultural sciences. Thus what he seeks in *Ideas I* are subjective conditions for the possibility of science of all kinds. His transcendentalism, however, differs from those of Kant and others in so far as he holds that the conscious life in which the world and worldly sciences could be subjectively grounded is itself the object of reflective observation, eidetic intuition and description.

The opening part of *Ideas I* is devoted to eidetic method. It has unfortunately led to confusion between the eidetic and the transcendental methods, between going from 'facts' to 'essences' and going from conscious life in the world to conscious life as transcendental. Conscious life in its non-worldly or transcendental status is the same life that is originally encountered in the 'natural' or naively world-accepting attitude of the zoological and cultural sciences as well as in everyday life; but if the world is not to be grounded in part of itself, part of this worldly or natural (and realistic) attitude needs to be reduced to a transcendently reflective attitude, and the conscious life, then reflectively thematized, needs to have its 'being in the world' placed in suspense. This is accomplished through transcendental phenomenological bracketing or 'epoché', a species of suspended judgment focused on the spatial, temporal and causal relations of conscious life with the rest of the world. In this attitude the world can be seen as an object intended to by non-worldly conscious life that, in the technical signification of the word, 'constitutes' it. 'Constitution' refers to the ways in which types of objects correlate with types of conscious processes. Husserl went on then to assert that conscious life has a more fundamental being than its being in the world, which not even all other transcendental phenomenologists accept.

In its middle parts *Ideas I* describes the natural attitude and transcendental epoché, offering detailed analyses of the parallel structures of the 'noema' or object as it is intended to and the 'noesis' or intensive conscious process in which objects are constituted. It also discusses how conscious life has an inner time in which each conscious process is 'protentive' to later and 'retroentive' to earlier processes; how there is an 'I' who can engage in the processes strictly called acts;

how sensuous 'stuff' is formed in perception; and how objects have characteristics as believed in, valued and willed, as well as modes of appearance and manners of givenness, including clarity and distinctness in recollection and imagination as well as in perception and 'eideation'.

The last part of *Ideas I* is devoted to rational justification. The theory of reason is the culmination of transcendental phenomenology. Justification for Husserl comes from the seeing, intuiting or 'evidencing' of the matters themselves. There is adequate and inadequate evidence, and apodictic and assertoric evidence, and such can directly and indirectly justify not only believing, but also valuing and willing; there is then epistemological, axiological and practical reason.

The second book of Husserl's *Ideas*, chiefly composed in 1912–15 and devoted to the natural and human sciences, was also worked on by his assistants Edith Stein and Ludwig Landgrebe; although it was not published until 1952, it was known in manuscript to Martin Heidegger before *Sein und Zeit* (Being and Time) (1927) and to Maurice Merleau-Ponty before *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Phenomenology of Perception) (1945). Husserl returned to the formal sciences in 'Formale und transzendente Logik' (Formal and Transcendental Logic) (1929).

At Freiburg during the 1920s and in retirement until his death in 1938, Husserl went beyond the 'static phenomenology' that uses eidetic method to disclose types of possible objects and consciousness. 'Genetic phenomenology', as he termed it, seeks to elucidate how active syntheses have origins in passive syntheses, a search that emphasizes time in individual life but also extends into history, intersubjectivity, the genesis of the lifeworld, and the teleology of conscious life in what he more broadly calls 'generative phenomenology'. These are all central issues in the later Husserl and in the background of his last work, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie* (The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology) (1936).

Husserl's thought was eclipsed in Germany during the Nazi period, but continued to be developed after the Second World War by a number of figures, three of whom can be mentioned. First, in *Théorie du champ de la conscience* (The Field of Consciousness) (1957), Aron Gurwitsch draws upon Gestalt psychology to revise Husserl's accounts of the 'I' and attention, denying the need for the former as organizer and asserting the inherent organization of the field of consciousness into theme, thematic field, and margin. Second, in *Collected Papers* (1962–96), Alfred Schutz reflects from the standpoint of the

'constitutive phenomenology of the natural attitude' on the everyday common-sense constitution of the socio-cultural lifeworld and on how the cultural sciences – economics and sociology in particular – can know aspects of it. And, third, in *Zur Kritik der hermeneutischen Vernunft* (The Critique of Hermeneutical Reason) (1972), Thomas Seebohm returns to the traditional methodical hermeneutics as interpretation and critique of texts and traces that was pursued in Friedrich Schleiermacher, Augustus Boeckh and Wilhelm Dilthey, and seeks a transcendental phenomenological grounding for it.

It has been easy on the basis of the publications of his lifetime to caricature the mature Husserl as a modern-day (but nonrepresentationalist) Cartesian for whom disembodied and situationless intellects reflect upon the forms of their own thinking and have great difficulties knowing and interacting with one another. Closer study shows, however, that places for philosophy of the cultural as well as the natural sciences, for value theory and ethics, and for embodiment, empathy and communal life are sketched in those very same publications, although only developed in lectures and manuscripts, many of which have been published posthumously in *Husserliana* (see PHENOMENOLOGY, EPISTEMIC ISSUES IN).

4 Existential phenomenology

Existential phenomenology is not structured by the complex concern for reason and the theory of science so prominent in constitutive phenomenology. Existential phenomenology draws ultimately upon the mundane reflective-descriptive spirit of the *Logical Investigations* as well upon the intensified interest in the 1920s and 1930s in NIETZSCHE and KIERKEGAARD, the latter urging a new signification for the word 'existence'. The immediate occasion, however, is a misconstrual of Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*. This incomplete masterpiece is actually not devoted to human existence but rather 'fundamental ontology'.

The old word 'ontology' had been revived by Husserl to name eidetic accounts of objects and their regions; realistic phenomenologists continue that usage, and Husserl investigates the regional ontologies of nature, body, psyche and culture in *Ideas II*. Attempting to radicalize constitutive phenomenology, Heidegger's work is 'ontology' because it explicates the Being of beings (*Sein der Seienden*) and 'fundamental' because it seeks grounds beyond the mundane regional ontologies recognized by Husserl. The work contains an 'existential analytic' of human being or 'Dasein', not for a philosophical anthropology but as a means to this fundamental ontology.

Dasein – also translated as ‘existence’ or, in the early French translations of Henri Corbin, *réalité humaine* – is the being where the world is disclosed and the being whose mode of being is to understand Being, to bring it and related matters to light through seeing rather than constructing, and to find words for such matters. Dasein, Heidegger says, is being-in-the-world. This is not the world referred to in the positive sciences that Husserl emphasized even in *Die Krisis*, but rather the world as a set of everyday concerns and purposes, the world in which equipment is used and talk goes on. Dasein finds itself thrown into a situation not of its choosing; it is concerned with the future; it is for the most part distracted; and, deep down, it is anxious before its most extreme possibility – its own nothingness. But Dasein can heed the call of its own inmost possibility to live authentically and resolutely. Such terms were also used by Heidegger to support National Socialism during the 1930s, but they disappeared from his writing after the war, when he completed his turning (*Kehre*) from the oblique approach through Dasein to the direct thinking of Being.

Being was always Heidegger’s central issue. The third division of Part I of *Sein und Zeit* was to have gone beyond Dasein to show how the meaning of Being is time, but that division was not written, which made it even easier to construe the analytic of Dasein as philosophical anthropology, a construal that Heidegger emphatically challenged in his *Brief über den ‘Humanismus’* (‘Letter on Humanism’) (1947).

Hannah ARENDT was influenced by Karl JASPERS as well as Heidegger during the 1920s, and is thus arguably the first existential phenomenologist, even though her contributions to political theory and problems of ethnicity, such as *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), only appeared after the war. It is also arguable that existential phenomenology appears in Japan with Miki Kiyoshi’s *Pasukaru niokeru Ningen no Kenkyu* (A Study of Man in Pascal) (1926) and Kuki Shuzou’s *Iki no Kouzou* (The Structure of Iki) (1930). Chiefly, however, the existential tendency developed in France during the 1930s. The early Emmanuel LEVINAS interpreted Husserl and Heidegger together and helped introduce phenomenology into France and overall has more in common with the existential than with the other tendencies. Gabriel MARCEL reflected upon fidelity, having, hope, promising and so on; opposed intellectualism and ‘objectivity’; and emphasized the embodiment, finitude, sensuousness and situatedness of existence in the world. His chief interest, however, independently paralleling Heidegger, is in Being as the ground of existence. Like Arendt, Sartre and Beauvoir, Marcel was not a

professional academic and often wrote for general audiences.

The background influences on phenomenology in France in the 1930s also included Scheler, the rediscovered early and humanistic MARX, and especially HEGEL as presented by Jean Wahl and Alexandre Kojève, who both argued for extensive convergencies between the phenomenologies of Hegel and Husserl. The issues of finitude, freedom, history, negation and individual and group conflict became prominent for Beauvoir, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre, who led the classic period of French phenomenology.

Jean-Paul SARTRE studied Husserl and began to write on the ego, imagination and emotion in the mid-1930s, soon also studying Scheler and Heidegger. His *L’être et le néant* (Being and Nothingness) appeared in 1943. Sartre’s approach relies on reflection upon, and eidetic description of, types of intentionality and objects as they present themselves, and he produced concrete analyses of many matters, for instance, historicity, authenticity, situation and especially individual freedom, which, for him, is the source of meaning and value. Human reality is what it has chosen to be, for existence precedes essence. In later work Sartre’s emphasis on freely choosing individuals declined, he became doubtful about phenomenology’s ability to explain historical conditioning, and turned to the writings of Marx.

Maurice MERLEAU-PONTY did pursue an academic career and chiefly wrote for fellow academics. He found many insights in science – especially cultural or human science, psychology in particular – but, like other existential phenomenologists, he opposed objectification and categorization and emphasized the ambiguous, concrete, contingent and particular. Against the early Sartre, he considered human freedom to be limited by its situation. In his main work, *Phenomenology of Perception*, he was concerned not with pure consciousness, but rather with human existence as embodied perception (or behaviour) in the world, and with how what is perceived has, for subjects, inherent structures of the sort described in Gestalt psychology and Aron Gurwitsch’s work (see GESTALT PSYCHOLOGY). While the body can be objectified in science, it is originally lived as subjective, and art, language, the other, politics, sexuality, space and so on, are to be analysed in relation to it. Merleau-Ponty died having composed only part of his body-focused ontology.

Simone de BEAUVOIR, often too closely associated philosophically with Sartre, is the third leading French existential phenomenologist. She likens existential conversion, a suspending of will in order to grasp the conditions of one’s life, to Husserl’s transcendental epoché; appreciates Heidegger’s concern

with the future, but finds change rather than being-toward-death central; and accepts from Merleau-Ponty that the human body is historical, denying, however, that a woman is her reproductive or sex-object body. For her, phenomenology is centrally concerned with friendship, as her autobiography and letters show, and also with age, class, ethnicity, gender, oppression and liberation. Beauvoir inspired the second wave of feminism with *Le deuxième sexe* (The Second Sex) (1949), opposing the myth by which categories defined in contrast with male categories are imposed on women; analysing the lived experience of meaning in feminine being-in-the-world; and urging that females are not born but become women (see FEMINISM).

Existential phenomenology spread widely from France. It was also extended to the human sciences, beginning with work in The Netherlands and Flanders during the 1950s, and has been represented in the United States by Maurice Natanson and in a structural version by Bernhard Waldenfels in Germany. It was eventually eclipsed by structuralism in France, but became central to the vast expansion of phenomenology in the United States that began in the 1960s – where the relevance of existential phenomenology for new problematics, such as feminism, is increasingly recognized (see EXISTENTIALISM; EXISTENTIALIST ETHICS; EXISTENTIALIST THEOLOGY).

5 Hermeneutical phenomenology

According to the *Logical Investigations*, perception, recollection, imagination and so on have a sense or meaning prior to expressions in propositional form, and some consider this insight an anticipation of hermeneutical phenomenology. This fourth tendency also begins – and without the ‘existential’ interpretation – in Heidegger’s *Being and Time*. Traditional hermeneutics was chiefly interpretation of texts, but now all experience is seen as being affected by language and interpretation. Heidegger interprets ‘phenomenology’ as the *logos* of the *phainomenon*, these words being construed, respectively, as what makes matters manifest and what is made manifest, the latter including undisclosed as well as disclosed aspects. The phenomena of authenticity, death, care and above all Being itself are thus interpretable. Dasein always already has some understanding of Being that can be refined through philosophical interpretation, although the truth thus won conceals as well as reveals. The analysis of Dasein that so influenced existential phenomenology is actually a hermeneutics of Dasein that seeks to bring out hidden aspects. This includes self-interpretations, which refer back to earlier generations and are thus historical.

The hermeneutical approach, especially to texts, continues in Heidegger’s later work, although the word hermeneutics does not.

The first phenomenological interpretation beyond Heidegger is Hans-Georg Gadamer’s *Platons dialektische Ethik* (Plato’s Dialectical Ethics) (1931) (see GADAMER, H.-G.). It accepts Heidegger’s notion of revealing and concealing truth as well as his focus on the active participant in life rather than the scientific observer. Its emphasis on the ethical aspects of the openness of one interlocutor to another is continued in his quite influential *Wahrheit und Methode* (Truth and Method) (1960). Not exclusively focused on texts, this is a ‘philosophical hermeneutics’ that is concerned with the general theory of understanding, that defends tradition and authority against Enlightenment attacks, and that is urged for use in law, literature and theology. It remains phenomenological in its use of Husserl’s notion of intentionality and theory of perception to oppose naturalism and relativism. Interpretations even of the unthought in a text seek to be fulfilled by the matters themselves referred to by the text.

Paul RICOEUR studied Marcel and Jaspers as well as Husserl and Heidegger while interned as a prisoner of war. In 1950 he published the translation of Husserl’s *Ideen I*, which he began in the camp; he subsequently played a central role in advancing French Husserl scholarship and regularly contended that his own evolving position was compatible with Husserl’s original inspiration, whereby meaning is transcendent of conscious life. The first expression of his own thought converged with realistic phenomenology in employing eidetic method to analyse the voluntary and involuntary (he had also studied Pfänder’s work). His concerns then with freedom, the other and evil converged with existential phenomenology, and, finally, he has focused on understanding as requiring texts or text-like structures and he thus joined hermeneutical phenomenology. He interprets not only religious symbols, for example, of the creation, but also the unconscious of psychoanalysis in works such as *Le conflit des interprétations* (The Conflict of Interpretations) (1969a). More recent work interprets metaphor, time, narrative, the ‘same’ or ‘self’ and the other.

Gadamer and Ricoeur have promoted hermeneutical phenomenology quite actively and this tendency has been strong in the United States. Calvin O. Schrag has contributed to the philosophy of language in *Experience and Being* (1969), Don Ihde to the philosophy of technology in *Technics and Praxis* (1979), Graeme Nicholson to the philosophy of perception in *Seeing and Reading* (1984), and then there is Patrick Heelan’s *Space-Perception and the*

Philosophy of Science (1983) and Joseph J. Kockelmans' *Ideas for a Hermeneutic Phenomenology of Natural Science* (1993). Other philosophical work has been done in aesthetics, ethics, history, language, law, literature, politics and religion. Hermeneutical phenomenology has extensively influenced not only the philosophy of the human sciences but the human sciences themselves.

Lest the debates within the movement and the structure of this essay give the impression that phenomenology went off in four separate ways, it must be emphasized that hermeneutical phenomenology draws nearly as much on existential and constitutive phenomenology as on the early Heidegger; that, while highly original, existential phenomenology is conscious of its central inspiration in Husserl and Scheler as well as Heidegger; that there has been from the outset extensive mutual borrowing as well as criticism between constitutive and realistic phenomenology; and that, by virtue of his effort reflectively to analyse and describe the matters themselves of conscious life and what is, in manifold ways, intended in it, Husserl is, as Ricoeur has said, not the whole of phenomenology, but he is 'more or less its centre' (see HERMENEUTICS).

6 Prospects

The phenomenological movement began with Husserl's *Logical Investigations*. History has shown that Wilhelm Dilthey was correct to proclaim this work 'epochal'. Besides the tendencies sketched above, a shifting geographical focus can be noted. This focus was in Germany until 1933, then shifted to France until about 1960; after that, while inspiration came from both Germany and France, the largest part of phenomenologists have come from the United States. Other enduring national traditions of phenomenology began in Japan, Russia and Spain before the First World War; arose in Australia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Italy, Korea, The Netherlands and Flanders, Poland and Yugoslavia, as well as the United States and France between the wars; and emerged after the Second World War in Canada, China, Great Britain, India, Portugal, Scandinavia and South Africa. By the 1980s, genuinely international (and not just transatlantic) conferences and other forms of collaboration were intensifying; now that generations-deep underground tendencies have begun surfacing after the end of the Cold War, it is all the more likely that this trend will continue. It may turn out that the German, French and American periods of the phenomenological movement began to be succeeded in the early 1990s by an international period in which there are many centres.

As a century-old, world-wide, still growing and increasingly multidisciplinary movement, phenomenology is arguably the central movement in twentieth-century philosophy, and its vitality and momentum should carry it far into the twenty-first century.

See also: PHENOMENOLOGY IN LATIN AMERICA; PHENOMENOLOGY OF RELIGION

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PHENOMENOLOGY

see ARENDT, HANNAH; BEAUVOIR, SIMONE DE; BRENTANO, FRANZ CLEMENS; CATTANEO, CARLO; GADAMER, HANS-GEORG; HARTMANN, NICOLAI; HEIDEGGER, MARTIN; HUSSERL, EDMUND; INGARDEN, ROMAN WITOLD; MERLEAU-PONTY, MAURICE; PHENOMENALISM; PHENOMENOLOGICAL MOVEMENT; PHENOMENOLOGY, EPISTEMIC ISSUES IN; PHENOMENOLOGY IN LATIN AMERICA; PHENOMENOLOGY OF RELIGION; RICOEUR, PAUL; SCHELER, MAX FERDINAND; SARTRE, JEAN-PAUL; SHPET, GUSTAV GUSTAVOVICH

PHENOMENOLOGY, EPISTEMIC ISSUES IN

Phenomenology is not a unified doctrine. Its main proponents – Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty – interpret it differently. However, it is possible to present a broad characterization of what they share. Phenomenology is a method of philosophical investigation which results in a radical ontological revision of Cartesian Dualism. It has implications for epistemology: the claim is that, when the foundations of empirical knowledge in perception and action are properly characterized, traditional forms of scepticism and standard attempts to justify knowledge are undermined.

Phenomenological method purports to be descriptive and presuppositionless. First one adopts a reflective attitude towards one's experience of the world by

putting aside assumptions about the world's existence and character. Second, one seeks to describe particular, concrete phenomena. Phenomena are not contents of the mind; they all involve an experiencing subject and an experienced object. Phenomenological description aims to make explicit essential features implicit in the 'lived-world' – the world as we act in it prior to any theorizing about it. The phenomenological method reveals that practical knowledge is prior to propositional knowledge – knowing that arises from knowing how.

The key thesis of phenomenology, drawn from Brentano, is that consciousness is intentional, that is, directed onto objects. Phenomenologists interpret this to mean that subjects and objects are essentially interrelated, a fact which any adequate account of subjects and objects must preserve. Phenomenological accounts of subjects emphasize action and the body; accounts of objects emphasize the significance they have for us.

The aim to be presuppositionless involves scrutinizing scientific and philosophical theories (Galileo, Locke and Kant are especially challenged). Phenomenology launches a radical critique of modern philosophy as overinfluenced by the findings of the natural sciences. In particular, epistemology has adopted from science its characterization of the basic data of experience.

The influence of phenomenology on the analytic tradition has been negligible. The influence on the Continental tradition has been greater. The phenomenological critique of modern science and philosophy has influenced postmodern thought which interprets the modernist worldview as having the status of master narrative rather than truth. Postmodern thought also criticizes the positive phenomenological claim that there are essential features of the lived-world.

- 1 Phenomenological reduction
- 2 Presuppositionless description
- 3 Uncovering essence
- 4 Phenomenological ontology

1 Phenomenological reduction

The first phenomenological move is the phenomenological reduction, also called by HUSSERL 'bracketing' or 'the epoché'. The move involves distancing oneself from one's everyday 'immersion' in the ordinary practical activities of life, adopting a reflective standpoint upon one's experience of the world. This is taken to be the necessary standpoint from which to engage in genuine philosophical enquiry, one which phenomenologists criticize other philosophers for failing to adopt. The philosophical standpoint is radically different from the 'natural' attitude of common sense and of scientific enquiry.