

Part IV

PHENOMENOLOGY,  
HERMENEUTICS,  
EXISTENTIALISM, AND  
CRITICAL THEORY



# 15

## PHENOMENOLOGY

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Is there something like a phenomenological tradition? Opinions are divided. According to one view, phenomenology counts as one of the dominant traditions in twentieth-century philosophy. Edmund Husserl (1859–1938)<sup>1</sup> was its founder, but other prominent exponents include Adolf Reinach (1883–1917), Max Scheler (1874–1928), Edith Stein (1891–1942), Martin Heidegger (1889–1976),<sup>2</sup> Aaron Gurwitsch (1901–73), Roman Ingarden (1893–1970), Alfred Schütz (1899–1959), Eugen Fink (1905–1975), Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–80), Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908–61),<sup>3</sup> Simone de Beauvoir (1908–86), Emmanuel Lévinas (1906–95), Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900–2002), Paul Ricoeur (1913–2005), Jacques Derrida (1930–2004), Michel Henry (1922–2002), and Jean-Luc Marion (1946– ) (see also “Twentieth-century hermeneutics,” Chapter 16; “German philosophy (Heidegger, Gadamer, Apel),” Chapter 17; “French philosophy in the twentieth century,” Chapter 18). Given that phenomenology has been a decisive precondition and persisting interlocutor for a whole range of later theory formations, including hermeneutics, deconstruction, and post-structuralism, it rightly deserves to be considered as the cornerstone of what is frequently and somewhat misleadingly called Continental philosophy.

Husserl is the founding father of phenomenology but it has often been claimed that virtually all post-Husserlian phenomenologists ended up distancing themselves from most aspects of his original program. Thus, according to a second competing view, phenomenology is a tradition by name only. It has no common method and research program. It has even been suggested that Husserl was not only the founder of phenomenology, but also its sole true practitioner.

The thesis to be defended in this chapter is that the latter view, which for opposing reasons has been advocated by ardent Husserlians and anti-Husserlians alike, is wrong. It presents us with a distorted view of the influence of phenomenology in twentieth-century philosophy, and it conceals to what extent post-Husserlian phenomenologists continued the work of the founder. Although phenomenology has in many ways developed as a heterogeneous movement with many branches; although, as Ricoeur famously put it, the history of phenomenology is the history of Husserlian heresies (Ricoeur 1987: 9); and although it would be an exaggeration to claim that phenomenology is a philosophical system with a clearly delineated body of doctrines, one should not overlook the overarching concerns and common themes that have united and continue to unite its proponents.

Many still tend to think of Husserl's transcendental phenomenology and Heidegger's and Merleau-Ponty's hermeneutical and existential phenomenology as excluding alternatives. The argument given is frequently that only the latter introduced the topics of intersubjectivity, sociality, embodiment, historicity, language, and interpretation into phenomenology and that this led to a decisive transformation of the Husserlian framework. For some, this conviction has been so strong that they have even questioned the sincerity and validity of Merleau-Ponty's own rather positive appraisal of Husserl. Thus it has been argued that Merleau-Ponty's writings on Husserl are not so much about what Husserl did say, as they are about what Merleau-Ponty thought he should have said, and that they must consequently be read as an exposition of Merleau-Ponty's own thoughts rather than as a genuine Husserl interpretation (Madison 1981: 170, 213, 330; Dreyfus and Rabinow 1983: 36; Dillon 1997: 27).

Given Merleau-Ponty's persistent and rather enthusiastic (though by no means uncritical) interest in Husserl – an occupation that lasted throughout his life, and which actually increased rather than diminished in the course of time – why this unwillingness to take his Husserl interpretation seriously? Why this certainty that the philosophies of the two are antithetical and that Merleau-Ponty must have misrepresented Husserl's position more or less knowingly in order to make it less offensive? The reason seems to be that many scholars are convinced that Husserl remained an intellectualist, an idealist, and a solipsist to the very end, regardless of what Merleau-Ponty might have said to the contrary. Thus, according to the received view, Husserl's commitment to a Cartesian foundationalism made him conceive of phenomenology as an investigation of a detached transcendental ego for whom its own body, worldly things, and other subjects were but constituted objects spread out before its gaze.

If this standard interpretation had been correct, it would indeed have been difficult to maintain that Husserl's phenomenology had much in common with Merleau-Ponty's or Heidegger's phenomenology. But we are dealing with a pejorative caricature that recent Husserl research has done much to dismantle. The continuing publication of *Husserliana* has made an increasing number of Husserl's research manuscripts available, and a study of these has made it clear that Husserl is a far more complex thinker than the standard reading is suggesting. He frequently anticipated and formulated many of the critical moves made by subsequent phenomenologists.<sup>4</sup>

During the twentieth century, phenomenology made major contributions in most areas of philosophy, including philosophy of mind, social philosophy, philosophical anthropology, aesthetics, ethics, philosophy of science, epistemology, theory of meaning, and formal ontology. It has provided ground-breaking analyses of such topics as intentionality, embodiment, self-awareness, intersubjectivity, temporality, historicity, truth, evidence, perception, and interpretation. It has delivered a targeted criticism of reductionism, objectivism, and scientism, and argued at length for a rehabilitation of the life-world. By presenting a detailed account of human existence, where the subject is understood as an embodied and socially and culturally embedded being-in-the-world, phenomenology has also provided crucial inputs to a whole range of empirical disciplines, including psychiatry, sociology, literary studies, architecture, ethnology, and developmental psychology.

Since it will be impossible to treat all of these topics in a single chapter, I will in the following address a rather meta-philosophical issue. I will focus on the very conception of philosophy found in phenomenology. I will discuss the question of method, the rejection of objectivism, scientism, metaphysical realism, and the first-person perspective. I will argue that phenomenology is a type of transcendental philosophy, but also that it differs rather markedly from other more traditional (Kantian) types of transcendental philosophy, for instance by emphasizing the embodied and intersubjectively embedded nature of subjectivity. I will conclude the chapter with a discussion of some of the challenges facing phenomenology in the twenty-first century.

Given that it will also be impossible to do justice to all the phenomenologists, my main focus will be on Husserl, (the early) Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty, three thinkers whose decisive influence on the development of twentieth-century philosophy is undeniable.<sup>5</sup> Rather than articulating their differences, differences that in my view have frequently been overstated, my emphasis will be on their commonalities, and will be guided by what I consider to be some of Husserl's most promising attempts at articulating and capturing the basic thrust of phenomenology. A close reading of Merleau-Ponty's preface to his *Phénoménologie de la perception* of 1945 will serve as my point of departure.

### Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology of Perception

In his famous preface to *Phénoménologie de la perception* (*Phenomenology of Perception*), Merleau-Ponty seeks to provide a short answer to the question "What is phenomenology?" Merleau-Ponty starts out by noting that even half a century after Husserl's first writings a univocal definition of phenomenology is still missing. In fact, many of the proposals given seem to point in different directions:

- 1 On the one hand, phenomenology is characterized by a form of essentialism. It is not interested in a merely empirical or factual account of different phenomena, but seeks on the contrary to disclose the invariant structures of, for example, the stream of consciousness, embodiment, perception, etc. On the other hand, however, the point of departure for its investigation of the world and human existence remains factual existence. Phenomenology is not simply a form of essentialism, it is also a philosophy of facticity.
- 2 Phenomenology is a form of transcendental philosophy (see "Kant in the twentieth century," Chapter 4 and "German philosophy (Heidegger, Gadamer, Apel)," Chapter 17). It seeks to reflect on the conditions of possibility of experience and cognition, and it suspends our natural and everyday metaphysical assumptions (in particular, our assumption about the existence of a mind-independent world) in order to investigate them critically. At the same time however, it admits that reflection must start from an already existing relation to the world, and that the main task of philosophy consists in reaching a full comprehension of this immediate and direct contact with the world.

- 3 Phenomenology seeks to establish a strictly scientific philosophy, but it also has the task of accounting for our life-world and of doing justice to our pre-scientific experience of space, time, and world.
- 4 Phenomenology is frequently described as a purely descriptive discipline. It describes our experiences just as they are given. It is interested neither in the psychological nor biological origin of the experiences, nor does it seek to provide a causal account. But at the same time, Husserl himself has emphasized the importance of developing a genetic phenomenology, i.e. a phenomenology that analyzes the origin, development, and historicity of the intentional structures.

As Merleau-Ponty remarks, it might be tempting to seek to overcome these apparent discrepancies by simply differentiating between Husserl's (transcendental) phenomenology, which has often been seen as an attempt to thematize the pure and invariant conditions of cognition, and Heidegger's (hermeneutical and existential) phenomenology, which has frequently been interpreted as an attempt to disclose the historical and practical contextuality of cognition. But Merleau-Ponty rejects this suggestion as being far too naive. As he points out, all the contrasts can be found internally in Husserl's thinking. Moreover, and more important, we are not dealing with true contrasts or alternatives, but rather with complementary aspects that phenomenology must include and consider (Merleau-Ponty 1945: i–ii; for Merleau-Ponty on Husserl, see Zahavi 2002b).

Husserl's dictum "to the things themselves" should be interpreted as a criticism of scientism, and as a call for a disclosure of a more original relation to the world than the one manifested in scientific rationality. It is a call for a return to the perceptual world that is prior to and a precondition for any scientific conceptualization and articulation. Scientism seeks to reduce us to objects in the world, objects that can be exhaustively explained by objectifying theories like those of physics, biology, or psychology. But as Merleau-Ponty points out, we should never forget that our knowledge of the world, including our scientific knowledge, arises from a first-person perspective, and that science would be meaningless without this experiential dimension. The scientific discourse is rooted in the world of experience, in the experiential world, and if we wish to comprehend the performance and limits of science, we have to investigate the original experience of the world of which science is a higher-order articulation. The one-sided focus of science on what is available from a third-person perspective is for Merleau-Ponty both naive and dishonest, since the scientific practice constantly presupposes the scientist's first-personal and pre-scientific experience of the world (Merleau-Ponty 1945: ii–iii).

Phenomenology's emphasis on the importance of the first-person perspective should not be confused with the classical (transcendental) idealistic attempt to detach the mind from the world in order to let a pure and worldless subject constitute the richness and concreteness of the world. This attempt was also naive. The subject has no priority over the world, and truth is not to be found in the interiority of man. There is no interiority, since man is in the world, and only knows him- or herself by means of inhabiting a world. To put it differently, the subjectivity disclosed by the phenom-

enological reflection is not a concealed interiority, but an open world relation. To use Heidegger's phrase, we are dealing with a "being-in-the-world," a world that moreover shouldn't be understood as the mere totality of positioned objects, or as the sum total of causal relations, but rather as the context of meaning that we are constantly situated within (*ibid.*: iii–v).

Had idealism been true, had the world been a mere product of our constitution and construction, the world would have appeared in full transparency. It would only possess the meaning that we ascribe to it, and it would consequently contain no hidden aspects, no sense of mystery. Idealism and constructionism deprive the world of its transcendence. For such positions, knowledge of self, world, and other are no longer a problem. But things are more complicated. Phenomenological analyses reveal that I do not simply exist for myself, but also for an other, and that the other does not simply exist for him- or herself, but also for me. The subject does not have a monopoly, either on its self-understanding or on its understanding of the world. On the contrary, there are aspects of myself and aspects of the world that only become available and accessible through the other. In short, my existence is not simply a question of how I apprehend myself, it is also a question of how others apprehend me. Subjectivity is necessarily embedded and embodied in a social, historical, and natural context. The world is inseparable from subjectivity and intersubjectivity, and the task of phenomenology is to think world, subjectivity, and intersubjectivity in their proper connection (*ibid.*: vi–viii, xv).

Our relation to the world is so fundamental, so obvious and natural, that we normally do not reflect upon it. It is this domain of ignored obviousness that phenomenology seeks to investigate. The task of phenomenology is not to obtain new empirical knowledge about different areas in the world, but rather to comprehend the basic relation to the world that is presupposed in any such empirical investigation. When phenomenology emphasizes the methodological necessity of a type of reflective reserve – what Husserl has called the *epoché* or the reduction (see below) – this is not because phenomenology intends to desert the world in favor of pure consciousness, but because we can only make those intentional threads that attach us to the world visible by slacking them slightly. The world is, as Merleau-Ponty writes, wonderful. It is a gift and a riddle. But in order to realize this, it is necessary to suspend our ordinary blind and thoughtless taking the world for granted. Normally, I live in a natural and engaged world-relation. But as a philosopher, I cannot make do with such a naïve being-in-the-world. I have to distance myself from it, if ever so slightly, in order to be able to describe it. This is why Merleau-Ponty argues that an analysis of our being-in-the-world presupposes the phenomenological reduction (*ibid.*: viii–ix).

The analysis of intentionality, the analysis of the directedness or aboutness of consciousness, is often presented as one of the central accomplishments of phenomenology (on intentionality, see also "Philosophy of mind," Chapter 12 and "Philosophy of psychology," Chapter 13). One does not merely love, fear, see, or judge, one loves a beloved, fears something fearful, sees an object, and judges a state of affairs. Regardless of whether we are talking about a perception, thought, judgment, fantasy, doubt, expectation, or recollection, all of these diverse forms of consciousness are characterized by

intending objects, and cannot be analyzed properly without a look at their objective correlate, i.e., the perceived, doubted, expected object. It is consequently not a problem for the subject to reach the object, since its being is intentional. That is, the subject is per se self-transcending, per se directed towards something different from itself. But apart from having analyzed our theoretical object-directedness in great detail, phenomenology has also made it clear that the world is given prior to any analysis, identification, and objectification. There is, in short, a pre- and a-theoretical relation to the world. As Merleau-Ponty points out, this is why Husserl distinguished two types of intentionality. There is what Husserl in the Fifth Logical Investigation called *act-intentionality*, which is an objectifying form of intentionality. But there is also a more fundamental passive or *operative* form of non-objectifying intentionality, which Husserl analyzed in detail in later works such as *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis*.<sup>6</sup> According to Merleau-Ponty, this original and basic world-relation cannot be explained or analyzed further. All phenomenology can do is to call attention to it, and make us respect its irreducibility (1945: xiii, xv).

Phenomenology is a perpetual critical (self-)reflection. It should not take anything for granted, least of all itself. It is, to put it differently, a constant meditation. As Merleau-Ponty points out in closing, however, the fact that phenomenology remains unfinished, the fact that it is always under way, is not a defect or flaw that should be mended, but rather one of its essential features. As a wonder over the world, phenomenology is not a solid and inflexible system, but rather in constant movement (*ibid.*: xvi).

### The question of method

Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen* (*Logical Investigations*, 2001) in 1900/1 heralded the birth of a new method for studying consciousness, a method called *phenomenology* (Husserl 1962: 28, 302). The aim was to explore the intentional structures involved in our perception, thinking, judging, etc. This might seem like a simple continuation of the project commenced by Brentano in his *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt* of 1874 (*Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*). But although Brentano should be praised for his rediscovery of the concept of intentionality, his analysis of intentionality remained – as Husserl points out – naturalistic and psychological, whereas Husserl's own analysis was neither (Husserl 1962: 37, 310). Thus it is important to realize that the stated purpose of *Logische Untersuchungen* was not to establish a new foundation for psychology, but rather to provide a new foundation for epistemology. According to Husserl, this task would call for an “unnatural” change of interest. Although it had turned out to be impossible to reconcile scientific objectivity with a psychological foundation of logic (cf. Husserl's devastating criticism of psychologism) one was still confronted with the apparent paradox that objective truths are known in subjective acts of knowing. And, as Husserl points out, this relation between the object of knowledge and the subjective act of knowing must be investigated and clarified if we wish to attain a more substantial understanding of the possibility of knowledge. Thus, instead of merely paying attention to the objects, we need to reflect on, describe, and



analyze the intentional experiences (Husserl 1984b: 14). Although this was not yet fully realized in *Logische Untersuchungen*, such a task would ultimately necessitate a clear distinction between two quite different takes on consciousness, a psychological and a transcendental (Husserl 1962: 42).

But why introduce a new science entitled phenomenology when there is already a well-established explanatory science dealing with the psychic life of humans and animals, namely psychology? More specifically, psychology is a science of naturalized consciousness. And could it not be argued that a mere description of experience – which is supposedly all that phenomenology can offer – does not constitute a viable scientific alternative to psychology, but merely a – perhaps indispensable – descriptive preliminary to a truly scientific study of the mind (Husserl 1987: 102)? As Husserl remarks, this line of thought has been so convincing that the term “phenomenological” is being used in all kinds of philosophical and psychological writings to describe a direct description of consciousness based on introspection (1987: 103).

In many of his writings, Husserl contrasts his own phenomenological investigation of consciousness with a natural scientific account of consciousness, and argues that the attempt to naturalize consciousness has not only failed, but that it is fundamentally flawed (1987: 17, 41). Husserl’s criticism of naturalism can provide us with a clue to the difference between phenomenology and psychology, for according to Husserl, one of the main problems with naturalism is that it is blind to the constituting, transcendental, dimension of subjectivity. To refer to this dimension, to speak of transcendental subjectivity is not to introduce a new and additional subject next to the empirical subject. The empirical subject and the transcendental subject are not two different subjects, but rather two different takes on one and the same subject (1962: 294). It is a difference between conceiving of the subject as an object in the world, and conceiving of the subject as a subject for the world, i.e. as a meaning-bestowing and world-disclosing subject of intentionality. The whole thrust of the phenomenological analysis is to unearth the latter, thereby disclosing what phenomenology takes to be a *non-psychological* dimension of consciousness. This is also why phenomenologists have repeatedly denied that they should be engaged in some form of introspective psychology (see Merleau-Ponty 1945: 69–70; Gurwitsch 1966: 89–106; Husserl 1984a, 201–16; Heidegger 1993: 11–17). The argument is simple. Phenomenology must be appreciated as a form of transcendental philosophy; it is not a kind of empirical psychology. Phenomenology is not concerned with the psychological question of how a pre-existing reality (objectivity) is subjectively apprehended by psychical beings; rather it is concerned with the question of what it means for something to be real and objective in the first place and in particular with the transcendental questions concerning the very condition of possibility for manifestation. Its investigation of the essence of phenomenality is prior to any divide between psychical interiority and physical exteriority, since it is an investigation of the dimension in which any object – be it external or internal – manifests itself. Thus, phenomenologists would typically argue that it would be a metaphysical fallacy to locate the phenomenal realm within the mind, and to suggest that the way to access and describe it is by turning the gaze inwards (*introspectio*). As Husserl had already pointed out in the *Logische*

*Untersuchungen*, the entire facile divide between inside and outside has its origin in a naive commonsensical metaphysics and is phenomenologically suspect (Husserl 1984b: 673, 708),<sup>7</sup> but this divide is precisely something that the term “introspection” buys into and accepts.<sup>8</sup> To speak of introspection is (tacitly) to endorse the idea that consciousness is inside the head and the world outside. But as Merleau-Ponty put it, “Inside and outside are inseparable. The world is wholly inside and I am wholly outside myself” (1945: 467; 1962: 407), and as Heidegger wrote in *Being and Time* (*Sein und Zeit*, 1927):

In directing itself toward . . . and in grasping something, Dasein does not first go outside of the inner sphere in which it is initially encapsulated, but, rather, in its primary kind of being, it is always already “outside” together with some being encountered in the world already discovered. Nor is any inner sphere abandoned when Dasein dwells together with a being to be known and determines its character. Rather, even in this “being outside” together with its object, Dasein is “inside” correctly understood; that is, it itself exists as the being-in-the-world which knows. (1986: 62)

Husserl’s rejection of any straightforward identification of phenomenology with psychology was fully shared by Heidegger. Not only does Heidegger categorically reject that his own analysis of the existential structures of Dasein is a psychological analysis (Heidegger 1986 45–50), but he also writes that the attempt to interpret Husserl’s investigations as a kind of descriptive psychology completely fails to do justice to their transcendental character. In fact, as Heidegger adds, phenomenology will remain a book sealed with seven or more seals to any such psychological approach (1993: 15–16). For both Husserl and Heidegger, phenomenology differs from psychology by not simply accepting the ontological (or metaphysical) presuppositions of the natural attitude.

Naturalism has denied the existence of a particular philosophical method, and has claimed that philosophy should employ the same method that all strict sciences are using, the natural scientific method (see “Naturalism,” Chapter 6). But for Husserl this line of reasoning merely displays that one has failed to understand the true nature of philosophy. Philosophy has its own aims and methodological requirements; requirements that for Husserl are epitomized in his notion of *phenomenological reduction* (Husserl 1984a: 238–9). For Husserl, the reduction is meant to make us maintain the radical difference between philosophical reflection and all other modes of thinking. As he had already written in 1907: “Thus, the ‘phenomenological reduction’ is simply the requirement always to abide by the sense of the proper investigation, and not to confuse epistemology with a natural scientific (objectivistic) investigation” (1984a: 410, my translation). Every positive science rests upon a field of givenness or evidence that is presupposed but not investigated by the sciences themselves. In order to make this dimension accessible, a new type of inquiry is called for, a type of inquiry that “lies before all ordinary knowledge and science, and lies in a quite different direction than ordinary science” (1984a: 176; my translation).

According to Husserl, the positive sciences are so absorbed in their investigation of the natural (or social/cultural) world that they do not pause to reflect upon their own presuppositions and conditions of possibility. The positive sciences operate on the basis of a natural (and necessary) naivety. They operate on the basis of a tacit belief in the existence of a mind-, experience-, and theory-independent reality. This realistic assumption is so fundamental and deeply rooted that it is not only accepted by the positive sciences, it even permeates our daily pre-theoretical life, for which reason Husserl calls it the *natural attitude*. But this attitude must be philosophically investigated. That such an investigation is required should not, however, be taken as an endorsement of skepticism. That the world exists is, as Husserl writes, beyond any doubt. But the great task is to truly understand this indubitability (which sustains life and positive science) and to clarify its legitimacy (Husserl 1971: 152–3; 1954: 190–1).

How is this investigation to proceed if it is to avoid prejudicing the results beforehand? Husserl's answer is deceptively simple: our investigation should turn its attention towards the *givenness* or *appearance* of reality, i.e. it should focus on the way in which reality is given to us in experience. However, to turn towards the given is far easier said than done. It calls for a number of methodological preparations. In order to avoid presupposing commonsensical naivety (as well as a number of different speculative hypotheses concerning the metaphysical status of reality), it is necessary to suspend our acceptance of the natural attitude. We keep the attitude (in order to be able to investigate it), but we bracket its validity. This procedure, which entails a suspension of our natural realistic inclination, is known by the name of *epoché*. Strictly speaking, the *epoché* must be distinguished from what Husserl terms the *transcendental reduction*, which is his name for the analysis of the correlation between subjectivity and world. Both the *epoché* and the reduction can however be seen as closely linked elements of a transcendental reflection, the purpose of which – as Merleau-Ponty also pointed out in his preface – is to liberate us from a natural(istic) dogmatism and to make us aware of our own constitutive (i.e. cognitive, meaning-disclosing) contribution.

Are the *epoché* and the reduction something that phenomenology cannot do without, are they methodological tools that make phenomenology be what it is, or do they simply reveal Husserl's commitment to some form of methodological solipsism or Cartesian foundationalism?

Some have argued that Husserl takes a solipsistic, disembodied Cartesian ego as his starting point, and that he advocates a transcendental idealism which brackets all questions concerning external reality (e.g. Blackburn 1994: 181). But to claim that Husserl brackets all concern with the external world in order to focus on the internal structures of experience (Smith and McIntyre 1982: xiv, 87–8); to argue that the phenomenological reduction involves an exclusion of the world and that the world is henceforth ignored in favor of the mental representations that make intentionality possible (Dreyfus 1991: 50); to claim that questions concerning the being of reality are suspended, that existing reality is lost sight of, and that no attention is paid to the question of whether that which we are intentionally directed at does at all exist, are,

in my view, all misunderstandings. Generally speaking, they succumb to what might be called a mentalistic misinterpretation of the phenomenological dimension. Rather than seeing the field of givenness, the phenomena, as something that questions the very subject/object split, as something that stresses the co-emergence of self and world, the phenomena are interpreted phenomenally, as part of the mental inventory. Moreover, these criticisms slight all the places where Husserl explicitly denies that the true purpose of the *epoché* and the reduction is to doubt, neglect, abandon, or exclude reality from our research, but rather emphasizes that their aim is to suspend or neutralize a certain dogmatic *attitude* towards reality, thereby allowing us to focus more narrowly and directly on reality just as it is given. In short, the *epoché* entails a change of attitude towards reality, and not an exclusion of reality. As Husserl makes clear, the only thing that is excluded as a result of the *epoché* is a certain naivety, the naivety of simply taken the world for granted, thereby ignoring the contribution of consciousness (Husserl 1989: 173). To put it differently, the *epoché* and the reduction do not involve an exclusive turn toward inwardness. On the contrary, they permit us to investigate reality in a new way, namely in its significance and manifestation for consciousness. And as Husserl repeatedly insists, the turn from a naive exploration of the world to a reflective exploration of the field of consciousness does not entail a turning away from the world, rather, it is a turn that for the first time allows for a truly radical investigation and comprehension of the world (1989: 178). Although this reflective investigation differs from a straightforward exploration of the world, it remains an investigation of reality; it is not an investigation of some otherworldly, mental, realm. Only a mistaken view of the nature of meaning and appearance would lead to such a misunderstanding. To put it differently, to perform the *epoché* and the reduction makes a decisive discovery possible and should consequently be understood as an *expansion* of our field of research (Husserl 1950a: 66: 1954: 154). This is why Husserl in *Krisis (The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology)* can compare the performance of the *epoché* with the transition from a two-dimensional to a three-dimensional life (1954: 120). In fact, as he points out in *Erste Philosophie II*, it is actually better to avoid using the term *Ausschaltung* (“exclusion,” “disconnection,” see *Ideas I* §31) altogether, since the use of this term might easily lead to the mistaken view that the being of the world is no longer a phenomenological theme, whereas the truth is that transcendental research includes “the world itself, with all its true being” (1959: 432).

Husserl has repeatedly insisted that one will have no chance of comprehending what phenomenology is all about, if one considers the *epoché* and the transcendental reduction as irrelevant peculiarities (1971: 155: 1976: 200); but what about later phenomenologists? It is indisputable that neither Heidegger nor Merleau-Ponty made many references to the *epoché* and the reduction. But is this because they rejected Husserl’s methodology, or is it because they simply took it for granted? In §§ 27–33 of *Ideen I (Ideas I)*, Husserl describes the natural attitude in detail and argues that the fundamental structures of our relation to the world, as well as the special character of our own subjectivity will remain concealed as long as we simply continue to live naively in the natural pre-philosophical attitude. It is by suspending our natural

attitude that we discover that there is more to our subjectivity than merely being yet another object in the world. If we move from *Ideen I* to *Sein und Zeit*, we will find Heidegger arguing in a very similar manner. For Heidegger, human existence is characterized by a tendency to self-forgetfulness and self-objectification. It has a tendency to let its own self-understanding be guided by and therefore covered over by its habitual and commonsense understanding of worldly matters (Heidegger 1986: 21). Phenomenology can be described as a struggle against this leveling self-understanding. This is why Heidegger in *Sein und Zeit* writes that the phenomenological analysis is characterized by a certain violence, since its disclosure of the being of Dasein is only to be won in direct confrontation with Dasein's own tendency to cover things up. In fact, it must be wrested and captured from Dasein (1986: 311). As for Merleau-Ponty, we will find him arguing that we need to break with our familiar acceptance of the world if we are to understand the latter properly. In the preface to *Phénoménologie de la perception*, for instance, he explicitly writes that the phenomenological reduction, far from being a procedure of idealistic philosophy, belongs to existential philosophy, and that Heidegger's analysis of our being-in-the-world presupposes the work of the phenomenological reduction (Merleau-Ponty 1945: ix).

Furthermore, and this is even more important, all of the phenomenologists deny that the task of phenomenology is to describe objects or experiences as precisely and meticulously as possible, and they do not take it to be concerned with an investigation of the phenomena in all their factual diversity. No, for them its true task is to examine the very dimension of appearance or givenness, and to disclose its structure and condition of possibility. But this move from a straightforward metaphysical or empirical investigation of objects to an investigation of the very dimension of manifestation, i.e. to an exploration of the very framework of meaning and intelligibility that makes any such straightforward investigation possible in the first place, calls for a transcendental stance quite unlike the one needed in the positive sciences. The *epoché* and the reduction are precisely Husserl's terms for the reflective move that is needed in order to attain the stance of transcendental philosophy. Despite the disagreements they might have with the details of Husserl's program, both Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty are fully committed to this reflective move. As Heidegger writes in 1927 in the lecture course *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (*Basic Problems of Phenomenology*): "We call this basic component of phenomenological method – the leading back or re-duction of investigative vision from a naively apprehended being to being – *phenomenological reduction*" (1989: 29).<sup>9</sup> A few years earlier, in the lecture course *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* (*History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena*), Heidegger spends time accounting for Husserl's phenomenological methodology, and at one point, he delivers the following quite acute characterization:

This bracketing of the entity takes nothing away from the entity itself, nor does it purport to assume that the entity is not. This reversal of perspective has rather the sense of making the being of the entity present. This phenomenological suspension of the transcendent thesis has but the sole function of making the entity present in regard to its being. The term "suspension" is

thus always misunderstood when it is thought that in suspending the thesis of existence and by doing so, phenomenological reflection simply has nothing more to do with the entity. Quite the contrary: in an extreme and unique way, what really is at issue now is the determination of the being of the very entity. (1979: 136)

When Heidegger speaks of being, he is not referring to any commonsense metaphysics; he is referring to the transcendental conditions of possibility for manifestation and intelligibility. Thus it is no coincidence that Heidegger calls the science of being a transcendental science (1989: 23), and that he argues that the mode of being of Dasein is such that it permits transcendental constitution (cf. Husserl 1962: 601–2).

I am obviously not arguing that there is complete agreement between Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty. There are many differences, and some of these are quite crucial. One should never forget that we are dealing with three independent thinkers who were also influenced by quite different figures in the philosophical tradition.<sup>10</sup> However, the disagreement and the later phenomenologists' criticism of Husserl take place within a horizon of shared assumptions. It is an immanent criticism, a criticism internal to phenomenology, and not a break with or general rejection of it.<sup>11</sup> To put it differently, a comprehension of the Husserlian framework is indispensable if one is to understand and appreciate the *phenomenological* aspect of Heidegger's and Merleau-Ponty's thinking.

Heidegger famously accuses Husserl for remaining too focused on logical and epistemological issues, and thereby for operating with a too narrow concept of being. Givenness is reduced to object-givenness, and according to Heidegger, Husserl thereby fails to disclose not only the unique mode of being peculiar to intentional subjectivity as such, he also fails to address the truly transcendental question adequately, namely the question concerning the condition of possibility for givenness as such (Heidegger 1979: §§ 10–13). Whether this criticism is justified or not is not the main issue.<sup>12</sup> The main issue is that the character of the criticism makes it clear that Heidegger's own project remains within the framework of transcendental phenomenology. This is also acknowledged by Tugendhat, who observes that it is

through the *epoché* that Husserl enters the dimension of Heidegger's being-in-the-world. Heidegger does not need the *epoché* any more in order to gain entrance to the dimension of the modes of givenness, since he, after it was opened by Husserl, from the very start stands in it, and from now on can articulate it according to its own conditions – and not simply in exclusive orientation towards a world of objects. (Tugendhat 1970: 263; my translation)

And as the French philosopher Jean-Luc Marion has more recently put it, “Heidegger does not abandon Husserlian phenomenology any more than he refutes it – he revives its temporarily slackened impetus” (1998: 76).

To sum up, properly understood the *epoché* and the reduction are essential for phenomenology. They are elements in the transcendental reflection that makes



phenomenology a philosophical enterprise. Any attempt to downplay the significance of the phenomenological method runs the risk of confusing phenomenological analyses with psychological or anthropological descriptions.

Husserl has frequently been accused of being a foundationalist. To some extent this is correct. Husserl is a transcendental philosopher, and he would insist that transcendental phenomenology investigates the condition of the possibility for experience, meaning, and manifestation, and thereby also the very framework of intelligibility that conditions every scientific inquiry. However, Husserl also quite explicitly denies that transcendental subjectivity could ever serve as the starting point for a transcendental deduction (Husserl 1954: 193; 1950a: 63). Phenomenology is not a *deductive* discipline, but a *descriptive* discipline (Husserl 1976: 158). To put it differently, the truths that transcendental phenomenology might uncover does not make up a foundation which the contents of the positive sciences could be deduced from. Moreover, Husserl did not conceive of his own transcendental analysis as a conclusive, final analysis. It is an exploration of a field, which in an absolute sense, is unavoidable (*unhintergebar*). It is an analysis of the processes by and in which everything is constituted. It is an investigation into the conditions in virtue of which anything is given to us. But the analysis of this domain can always be refined, deepened, and improved. Thus, for Husserl the full and conclusive truth about the transcendental dimension remains a regulative ideal. Philosophy as a science based on ultimate justification is an idea which can only be realized in an infinite historical process (Husserl 1959: 186; 1954: 439).

One way to understand Husserl's foundationalism might consequently be to see it as a way of emphasizing and maintaining the difference between the empirical and the philosophical stance, between the mundane and the transcendental attitude. It is by insisting upon this difference that Husserl can maintain that philosophy has something cognitively distinctive to offer the scientific enterprise. This is a vision not unlike the one to be found (with different emphasis to be sure) in Merleau-Ponty and (the early) Heidegger as well.

### Subjectivity and metaphysics

All the phenomenologists have emphasized the importance of analyzing the first-person perspective. All of them have been occupied with the problem of subjectivity. This is also true of Heidegger. Although he has occasionally been interpreted as a radical critic of the philosophy of subjectivity, it is undeniable that he in *Sein und Zeit* attributes a decisive role to Dasein. Not only architectonically, insofar as the analysis of Dasein constitutes the larger part of the book, but also systematically, which is evident from passages where Heidegger writes that without Dasein there would be neither being, truth nor world (Heidegger 1986: 212, 226, 365). As he declares, a clarification of the fundamental ontological questions must proceed via an investigation of Dasein's understanding of being, since this is what defines the horizon within which worldly beings can be. Being is investigated "in so far as it stands within the intelligibility of Dasein" (1986: 152, cf. 207). It could of course be objected that this is quite irrelevant, since Heidegger's concept of Dasein should not be confused with

the traditional concept of subjectivity. To some extent this is true, namely if one has an isolated, self-contained, worldless substance in mind. Heidegger rejects this notion of subjectivity, and that is why he argues that one would misunderstand Dasein if one interpreted it as an ego or a subject (1986: 46, 322–3). However, the pertinent question is whether Dasein has something to do with a phenomenologically clarified concept of subjectivity. Heidegger provides the answer himself, when he in works such as *Sein und Zeit*, *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie, Einleitung in die Philosophie* (*Introduction to Philosophy*), and *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* (1929) (*Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*) argues that it is necessary to commence a phenomenological investigation of the subjectivity of the finite subject. He also writes that his own thematization of the ontology of Dasein equals an analysis of the subjectivity of the subject, and that an ontological comprehension of the subject will lead us to the existing Dasein (1986: 24, 366, 382; 1991: 87, 219; 1989: 207, 220; 1996: 72, 115; cf. Marion 1998; Overgaard 2004).

But why have phenomenologists been so preoccupied with this examination of subjectivity and selfhood? Had it been a goal in itself, phenomenology would have remained a form of philosophical psychology or anthropology. But the phenomenological interest in subjectivity is not motivated by the relatively trivial insight that we need to include the first-person perspective if we wish to understand mental phenomena. Rather the analysis is transcendental philosophical in nature. We cannot look at our experiences from sideways on to see whether they match with reality, nor can we consider our experiences and structures of understanding as mere elements within the world that we experience and understand. The relation between mind and world is an internal one, a relation constitutive of its relata, and not an external one of causality. The reason why the phenomenologists have been so preoccupied with describing and analyzing the fundamental features of subjectivity, be it its structures of intentionality, of embodiment, of temporality, of historicity, of intersubjective embeddedness, is that they have been convinced that a thorough philosophical understanding of the structures of knowledge, truth, meaning, reference must include an investigation of the first-person perspective. If we wish to understand how physical objects, mathematical models, chemical processes, social relations, cultural products, can appear as they do and with the meaning they have, then we will also have to examine the subject to whom they appear. If we wish to understand the world that we experience and live in, we also have to investigate subjectivity. Truth, meaning, reality are always a truth, meaning, and reality for somebody. As Heidegger writes in the lecture course *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* from 1927:

World exists – that is, it is – only if Dasein exists, only if there is Dasein. Only if world is there, if Dasein exists as being-in-the-world, is there understanding of being, and only if this understanding exists are intraworldly beings unveiled as extant and handy. World-understanding as Dasein-understanding is self-understanding. Self and world belong together in the single entity, the Dasein. Self and world are not two beings, like subject and object, or like I and thou, but self and world are the basic determination of the Dasein itself in the unity of the structure of being-in-the-world. (Heidegger 1989: 422)



One can find similar statements in both Husserl and Merleau-Ponty. As the latter writes, the world is inseparable from the subject, and the subject inseparable from the world (Merleau-Ponty 1945: 491–2). Thus phenomenologists would not only deny that the mind is self-contained, they would say the same *vis-à-vis* the world. The mind is tied to the world, but the world is also tied to the mind.

By adopting the phenomenological attitude we become aware of the givenness of objects. But we do not simply focus on the objects precisely as they are given; we also focus on the subjective side of consciousness, thereby becoming aware of our subjective accomplishments and of the intentionality that is at play in order for the objects to appear as they do. When we investigate appearing objects, we also disclose ourselves as datives of manifestation, as those to whom objects appear. The topic of the phenomenological analyses is consequently not a worldless subject, and phenomenology does not ignore the world in favor of consciousness. On the contrary, phenomenology is interested in consciousness because it is world-disclosing.

Phenomenology is supposed to be concerned with phenomena and appearances and their conditions of possibility, but what precisely is a phenomenon? For many philosophers, the phenomenon is understood as the immediate givenness of the object, it is how it appears to us, it is how it *apparently* is. If one wishes to discover what the object is really like, however, one has to transcend the merely phenomenal. Had it been this concept of phenomenon that phenomenology was employing, phenomenology would have been nothing but a science of the merely subjective, apparent, or superficial. But this is obviously not the case. As Heidegger argues in §7 of *Sein und Zeit*, the phenomenon is to be understood as that which shows itself, as beings' own manifestation. Phenomenology should therefore be understood as a philosophical analysis of the different modes of givenness, and in connection with this as a reflective investigation of those structures of understanding that permits different types of beings to show themselves as what they are. In contrast to the objective or positive sciences, phenomenology is not particularly interested in the substantial nature of the objects, such as their weight, rarity, or chemical composition, but in the way in which they show themselves, i.e. in their modes of givenness. There are essential differences between the ways in which a physical thing, a utensil, a work of art, a melody, a state of affairs, a number, an animal, a social relation, etc., manifest itself. Moreover, it is also possible for one and the same object to appear in a variety of different ways: From this or that perspective, in strong or faint illumination, as perceived, imagined, wished for, feared, anticipated, or recollected. Rather than regarding questions concerning the manifestation or givenness of objects as something insignificant or merely subjective, phenomenologists insist that such an investigation is of crucial philosophical importance.

Although the distinction between appearance and reality must be maintained (some appearances are misleading), it is according to transcendental phenomenology not a distinction between two separate realms (falling in the province of phenomenology and metaphysics, respectively), but a distinction internal to the world we are living in. It is a distinction between how the objects might appear at a superficial glance, and how they might appear in the best of circumstances, be it in practical use

or in the light of extensive scientific investigations. Thus, the reality of the object is not to be located behind its appearance, as if the appearance in some way or another hid the real object. As Heidegger points out, it is phenomenologically absurd to argue that the phenomenon hides something more fundamental which it merely represents (1979: 118). Whereas metaphysical realists might claim that the phenomena are something merely subjective, a veil or smoke screen that conceals the objectively existing reality, phenomenologists insist that one is in contact with the thing in itself when and insofar as it is a phenomenon. This is not to say that phenomena cannot be deceptive, but even when deceived we remain in contact with the world. It is after all the world that we are deceived about. Moreover, one cannot expose such deceptive phenomena by appealing to some mysterious view from nowhere, rather the only justification obtainable and the only justification required is one that is internal to the world of experience and to its intersubjective practices. In this sense, Davidson is entirely right when he writes: “A community of minds is the basis of knowledge; it provides the measure of all things. It makes no sense to question the adequacy of this measure, or to seek a more ultimate standard” (2001: 218).

In order not to misunderstand this position, it is however, as already mentioned, vital not to commit the mistake of interpreting the phenomena mentalistically. For the phenomenologists, the phenomenon is not a psychological item. On the contrary, one of the decisive merits of phenomenology has been its introduction of a new non-mentalistic notion of phenomenon (Benoist 1997: 228). As Husserl himself writes in *Einleitung in die Logik und Erkenntnistheorie (Introduction to Logic and Epistemology)* from 1906–7,

If consciousness ceases to be a human or some other empirical consciousness, then the word loses all psychological meaning, and ultimately one is *led back to something absolute that is neither physical nor psychical being in a natural scientific sense*. However, in the phenomenological perspective this is the case throughout the field of givenness. It is precisely the apparently so obvious thought, that everything given is either physical or psychical that must be abandoned. (1984a: 242; my translation)

It cannot be emphasized too much how important it is to keep this admonition in mind.

Given the strong emphasis on the interdependency of subjectivity and world and given the phenomenological definition of phenomena, what are the metaphysical implications? Is transcendental phenomenology a kind of idealism?

Some have argued that transcendental phenomenology must be viewed as a meta-philosophical or methodological endeavor rather than as a straightforwardly metaphysical doctrine about the nature and status of worldly objects (see Crowell 2001). As already mentioned, Husserl’s *epoché* and reduction are methodological tools permitting us to overcome the naivety of the naturalistic attitude, which simply presupposes the world as a pre-given source of validities. One encounters objects as given, but does not reflect upon what givenness means, nor how it is possible. Transcendental

phenomenology, however, thematizes objects in terms of their givenness, validity, and intelligibility, and such an investigation calls for a reflective stance unlike the one needed in the positive sciences. From this point of view, a metaphysical interpretation of transcendental phenomenology would entail a dramatic misunderstanding of what phenomenology is all about. It would misunderstand the notion of reduction, and it would overlook the decisive difference between the natural attitude and the phenomenological attitude. From the perspective of phenomenology, metaphysics remains a pre-critical or naive enterprise. In its attempt to map out the building blocks of reality, it never leaves the natural attitude. It doesn't partake in the reflective move that is the defining moment of transcendental thought.

It is true that transcendental phenomenology is not engaged in straightforward metaphysics, and it is important to emphasize the difference between the object-oriented nature of metaphysics and the reflective orientation of transcendental phenomenology. But to interpret phenomenology as non-metaphysical,<sup>13</sup> to argue that it has no metaphysical implications or impact, and that it therefore remains compatible with a variety of different metaphysical views, including metaphysical or scientific realism is to make it sound as if phenomenology operates with a two-world theory. On the one hand, we would have the world as it is for us, the world of significance and appearance, the world phenomenology is supposed to investigate. On the other hand, we would have the world as it is in itself, the real world, the world metaphysics and positive science are supposed to investigate. But this way of cutting the cake would be unacceptable to phenomenologists. Transcendental phenomenology is not merely a theory about the structure of subjectivity, nor is it merely a theory about how we understand and perceive the world. It is not even a theory about how the world appears to us, *if*, that is, such a theory is supposed to be complemented by a further investigation (left to metaphysics) of what the world itself is like. To construe phenomenology in such a way would make it vulnerable to the objection that it engages in an unphenomenological abstraction: Something crucial would be missing from its repertoire; being and reality would be topics left for other disciplines. But this interpretation does not respect nor reflect Husserl's, Heidegger's, or Merleau-Ponty's own assertions on the matter. As Eugen Fink (1905–75), Husserl's last assistant, for instance pointed out back in 1939, only a fundamental misunderstanding of the aim of phenomenology would lead to the mistaken but often repeated claim that Husserl's phenomenology is not interested in reality or the question of being, but only in subjective meaning-formations in intentional consciousness (Fink 1939: 257).

Phenomenology investigates the intelligibility, significance, and appearance of the world. To engage in a reflective exploration of the structures and conditions of worldly significance and appearance differs from any direct metaphysical investigation of the real world. But what needs to be stressed is that the significance and appearance being investigated is the significance and appearance of the real world, not of some other-worldly realm. Phenomenology has insisted upon this, and rightly so, but by doing that, it can no longer claim metaphysical neutrality. Transcendental phenomenology cannot permit itself to remain neutral or indifferent to the question concerning the relationship between the phenomena and reality. But by having to take a stand on

this relationship, by having to elucidate what it means for a given object to exist and be real, phenomenology by necessity has metaphysical implications.

Of course, metaphysics can mean a lot of different things, and given certain understandings of the term phenomenology is indeed non-metaphysical, or even better anti-metaphysical. Thus if metaphysics is, for instance, seen as being wedded inseparably to an objectivistic framework, phenomenology is not metaphysical and has no dealing with it, except of course in so far as it criticizes it, and does not simply leave it untouched and unquestioned. To argue that transcendental phenomenology is metaphysically neutral, to argue that it is concerned with meaning rather than being, and that it lacks the resources to tackle metaphysical issues, is not only to make transcendental phenomenology tamer and lamer than it really is. The true paradox is that such a view is exactly giving in to a certain kind of traditional metaphysics, accepting as it does the classical distinction between meaning and being, and between appearance and reality.

Continuing this line of thought some might want to argue that the term “metaphysics” is so loaded that it might be prudent to simply avoid using it. If one really wants to insist that phenomenology has metaphysical implications, it might be better to specify that the kind of metaphysics at play is a *post-critical* metaphysics. I have no quarrel with this suggestion. In fact, there is no reason to quarrel over terminology. All that is important is to recognize the scope of transcendental phenomenology (transcendental phenomenology does have something to say about existing reality, about being and objectivity) and not to misconstrue it in such a way that it becomes indistinguishable from some kind of descriptive psychology.<sup>14</sup> Such a misconstrual would be particularly harmful these days, given the widespread but misleading use of the term “phenomenology” in analytical philosophy. Phenomenology is not another name for a kind of psychological self-observation, nor is it simply to be identified with a first-person description of what the “what it is like” of experience is really like.

For phenomenology the world that appears to us, be it in perception, in our daily concerns, or in our scientific analyses, is the only real world. To claim that there in addition to this world exists a hidden world, which transcends every appearance, and every experiential and theoretical evidence, and to identify this world with true reality is according to the phenomenologists an empty and countersensical proposition. But to repeat the question, does this mean that phenomenology is committed to idealism? It all depends on what we mean by “idealism.” Since the term is notoriously ambiguous, it might be more informative to say that phenomenology is committed to a criticism of metaphysical realism. Phenomenologists share this criticism with leading figures in analytical philosophy, e.g. Wittgenstein, Davidson, Dummett, Putnam, and Rorty.

According to metaphysical realism, there is a clear distinction to be drawn between the properties things have “in themselves” and the properties which are “projected by us.” Whereas the world of appearance, the world as it is for us in daily life, combines subjective and objective features, the world that science describes is the world as it is in itself, and science gains access to this world by transcending all subjective perspectives, structures, and categories. Knowledge is consequently taken to consist in a

faithful mirroring of a mind-independent reality; a reality independent of subjectivity, interpretation, and historical community. But to think that science has access to a non-perspectival reality, and that science can provide us with an *absolute* description of reality, that is, a description from a view from nowhere; to think that science is the only road to metaphysical truth, and that science simply mirrors the way in which Nature classifies itself, is illusory. In truth, one of the things that pre-scientific experience and scientific exploration have in common is that both are concerned with the world of appearance. The latter simply enlarges it.

For phenomenology, science is not simply a collection of systematic interrelated justified propositions. Science is performed by somebody; it is a specific theoretical stance towards the world. This stance did not fall down from the sky; it has its own presuppositions and origin. Science is, as Merleau-Ponty remarks in the Preface to *Phénoménologie de la perception*, rooted in the life-world, it draws on insights from the pre-scientific sphere, and it is performed by embodied and embedded subjects. In its urge towards idealization, in its search for exact and objective knowledge, science has made a virtue out of its decisive showdown with subject-relative evidence, but it has thereby had a tendency to overlook that its own more refined measurements inevitably continue to draw on the contribution of intuition, as when one looks in the microscope, reads the measuring instruments, or interprets, compares, and discusses the results with other scientists.

The contribution of phenomenology does not consist in providing a scientific explanation of human existence. Rather it is an attempt to make science, i.e. scientific rationality and practice, comprehensible through a detailed analysis of the forms of intentionality that are employed by the cognizing subject. One of the central tasks is to account for the way in which the theoretical attitude which we employ when doing science originates from, influences, and transforms our basic being-in-the-world.

The phenomenological criticism of metaphysical realism is fully compatible with an endorsement of what has occasionally been called empirical realism. Whether something is real or not does not depend upon whether it can be fitted into the procrustean bed of reductionism. Our common world of experience, our life-world, has its own (pragmatic) criteria for truth and validity, and does not have to await the warrant of science. In contrast, metaphysical realists have frequently made the idealist move of making a certain restricted theoretical outlook the measure of what counts as real. As a result, the existence of such everyday objects such as tables, chairs, nations, economic crises, and wars have been denied with the argument that none of these entities can be adequately accounted for by natural science (Putnam 1987:2). Although metaphysical realism was once heralded as a strong antidote against idealism and skepticism, we are consequently confronted with one of those cases where the medicine has turned out to be part of the sickness it was supposed to cure and in the end just as deadly.

### Intersubjectivity and embodiment

As Husserl admits in *Erste Philosophie I* (*First Philosophy*, vol. 1) when he decided to designate his own phenomenology as transcendental, he was employing a Kantian

concept (1956: 230). But although a reference to Kant is appropriate, and although such a reference can certainly be helpful in the attempt to explain why phenomenology is not simply a form of introspective psychology, one should also be careful in not overlooking some rather decisive differences between Kantianism and phenomenology. To put it differently, it would be a mistake to think that transcendental philosophy is all one thing, and to ignore the difference between a Kantian transcendental philosophy, and the form of transcendental philosophy we find in phenomenology.

If we look closer at some of Husserl's scattered remarks about Kant, we will find Husserl faulting Kant for not having had a proper concept of the a priori, for operating with a too strong distinction between sensation and understanding, for remaining too metaphysical, for having overlooked a number of foundational issues in his critique of knowledge, for being too oriented towards the natural sciences, for confusing noetic and noematic analyses, and for lacking methodological rigor (Husserl 1956: 198–9, 235, 282; 1954: 420–1; 1984a: 729, 732; 1976: 246; 1950b: 48). In one of his longest texts on Kant, a talk written and presented in commemoration of Kant's bicentennial in 1924, entitled *Kant und die Idee der Transzendentalphilosophie* ("Kant and the idea of transcendental philosophy," 1974), reprinted in *Husserliana VII*, Husserl writes that transcendental philosophy should be based upon a systematic description and analysis of consciousness in all of its modalities (1956: 234–5). And he then criticizes Kant's method for being regressive-constructive. It lacks an intuitive basis and is unable to provide us with a proper account of consciousness. In fact, as Husserl points out in the conclusion, phenomenology insists upon an in-depth investigation of consciousness, and this demand necessitates an *extension* of Kant's concept of the transcendental. It proves necessary to include the humanities and the manifold of human sociality and culture in the transcendental analysis (1956: 282). This remark is amplified a few years later when Husserl writes that the possibility of a transcendental elucidation of subjectivity and world is lost if one follows the Kantian tradition in interpreting transcendental subjectivity as an isolated ego and thereby ignores the problem of transcendental intersubjectivity (1993: 120). Thus it is no coincidence that Husserl at times describes his own project as a *sociological* transcendental philosophy (1962: 539) and even writes that the development of phenomenology necessarily implies the step from an " 'egological' ... phenomenology into a transcendental sociological phenomenology having reference to a manifest multiplicity of conscious subjects communicating with one another" (1981: 68). Ultimately, and this is something that only recently has been properly appreciated, Husserl's phenomenology must be seen as entailing an intersubjective transformation of transcendental philosophy (see Zahavi 2001 and 2005).

Already in *Ideen II* (*Ideas II*, posthumously published in 1952 as *Husserliana* vol. 4) Husserl argued that I, we, and world belong together (1952: 288). From the start, Husserl stressed the constitutive relationship between subjectivity and world. But he eventually came to the realization that (1) the subject does not remain untouched by its constitutive performance, but is, on the contrary, drawn into it, just as (2) constitution is not simply a relation between a single subject and the world, but an



intersubjective process. The problem he then faced was to clarify the precise interrelation between subjectivity, world, and other. This is most explicit in his last writings, where the three are seen as being increasingly intertwined. It does not matter which of the three one takes as a starting point, for one will still inevitably be led to the other two: the subjectivity that is related to the world only gains its full relation to itself, and to the world, in relation to the other, i.e. in inter-subjectivity; intersubjectivity only exists and develops in the mutual interrelationship between subjects that are related to the world; and the world is only brought to articulation in the relation between subjects (see Husserl 1959: 505; 1973a: 480; 1973b: 373). This core insight is shared by later phenomenologists. Merleau-Ponty insists that a phenomenological description, rather than disclosing subjectivities that are inaccessible and self-sufficient, reveals continuity between intersubjective life and the world. The subject realizes itself in its presence to the world and to others – not in spite of, but precisely *by way of* its corporeality and historicity (Merleau-Ponty 1945: 515). The subject must be seen as a worldly incarnate existence, and the world as a common field of experience, if intersubjectivity is at all to be possible (Merleau-Ponty 1964: 322). As for Heidegger, he describes the life-world as an interpenetration of the three domains: “surrounding world” (*Umwelt*), “with-world” (*Mitwelt*), and “self-world” (*Selbstwelt*) (1993: 33, 39, 62), and argues that Dasein as world-experiencing is always already being-with. As he writes in the lecture course *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* from 1927,

just as the Dasein is originally being with others, so it is originally being with the handy and the extant. Similarly, the Dasein is just as little at first merely a dwelling among things so as then occasionally to discover among these things beings with its own kind of being; instead, as the being which is occupied with itself, the Dasein is with equal originality being-with others *and* being-among intraworldly beings. (1989: 421)

Self, world, and others belong together; they reciprocally illuminate one another, and can only be understood in their interconnection. This idea is not unique to phenomenology. As Davidson wrote in his *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective*:

There are three basic problems: how a mind can know the world of nature, how it is possible for one mind to know another, and how it is possible to know the contents of our own minds without resort to observation or evidence. It is a mistake, I shall urge, to suppose that these questions can be collapsed into two, or taken in isolation. (2001: 208)

It is important to recognize that a transcendental philosophy that takes intersubjectivity seriously must also take embodiment and thereby facticity seriously. Intersubjectivity is a relation between embodied creatures. And our bodies are present in every project and in every perception. They are our *point de vue* and *point de départ* (Sartre 1976: 373–4; 1956: 326). There is no pure point of view and there is no view from nowhere, there is only an embodied (and contextually embedded) point of view.

As Sartre points out, an object cannot appear perspectival unless the perceiver is situated in the perceptual field as well:

[T]he perceptive field refers to a center objectively defined by that reference and located *in the very field* which is oriented around it. Only we do not see this center as the structure of the perceptive field considered; *we are the center*. . . . Thus my being-in-the-world, by the sole fact that it *realizes* a world, causes itself to be indicated to itself as a being-in-the-midst-of-the-world by the world which it realizes. The case could not be otherwise, for my being has no other way of entering into contact with the world except to *be in the world*. It would be impossible for me to realize a world in which I was not and which would be for me a pure object of a surveying contemplation. But on the contrary it is necessary that I lose myself in the world in order for the world to exist and for me to be able to transcend it. Thus to say that I have entered into the world, “come to the world,” or that there is a world, or that I have a body is one and the same thing. (1943: 365–6; 1956: 317–18)<sup>15</sup>

The phenomenological emphasis on the body obviously entails a rejection of Cartesian mind/body dualism. The notion of embodiment, the notion of an embodied mind or a minded body, is supposed to replace the ordinary notions of mind and body, both of which are considered to be derivations and abstractions. But it also entails a rejection of the Cartesian mind/world dualism. The body is not to be understood as a medium between me and the world. Rather, our primary being-in-the-world has the form of an embodied existence. Thus, we cannot first study the body, and next investigate it in its relation to the world. The world is given to us as bodily explored, and the body is revealed to us in its exploration of the world (Husserl 1971: 128; 1973b: 287). This is also why both Husserl and Merleau-Ponty emphasize the constitutive importance of sensuous affectivity and passivity. For both of them, a theory of intentionality must necessarily include a discussion of pre-predicative bodily and sensuous experience (thereby countering a certain type of linguistic constructivism). As Merleau-Ponty would say, language presupposes our pre-linguistic, perceptual contact with the world, and language retains a reference to pre-linguistic reality (1945: ix–x).

Husserl’s and Merleau-Ponty’s focus on embodiment eventually made them enter fields that had traditionally been reserved psychopathology, sociology, anthropology, and ethnology; it made them consider the philosophical relevance of such issues as generativity, historicity, and normality. Whereas a traditional Kantian type of transcendental philosophy would have considered such empirical and mundane domains as without any transcendental relevance, owing to their interest in both intersubjectivity and embodiment, Husserl and Merleau-Ponty were forced to reconsider the traditional divide between the empirical and the transcendental (Zahavi 2001). Thus, already in his first major work, *La Structure de Comportement* (*The Structure of Behavior*) Merleau-Ponty discusses such diverse authors as Pavlov, Freud, Koffka, Piaget, Watson, and Wallon. The last sub-chapter of the book carries the heading “Is there not a truth in naturalism?”; it contains a criticism of Kantian transcendental philosophy, and on the



very final page of the book, Merleau-Ponty calls for a redefinition of transcendental philosophy that makes it pay heed to the real world (1942: 241). Rather than making us choose between either an external scientific explanation or an internal phenomenological reflection, a choice which would rip asunder the living relation between consciousness and nature, Merleau-Ponty consequently asks us to reconsider the very opposition, and to search for a dimension that is beyond both objectivism and subjectivism. What is particularly significant, however, is that he didn't conceive of the relation between transcendental phenomenology and positive science as a question of how to apply already established phenomenological insights on empirical issues. It wasn't simply a question of how phenomenology might constrain positive science. On the contrary, Merleau-Ponty's idea is that phenomenology itself can be changed and modified through its dialogue with the empirical disciplines. In fact, it needs this confrontation if it is to develop in the right way. And Merleau-Ponty holds this view without thereby reducing phenomenology merely to yet another positive science, without thereby dismissing its transcendental philosophical nature.

In *Les Mots et les choses* (translated into English as *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*) Foucault argues that phenomenology exemplifies a type of modern discourse that in its investigation of experience seeks to separate as well as integrate the empirical and the transcendental. It is an investigation of experience that in the face of positivism has tried to restore the lost dimension of the transcendental, but which at the same time has made experience concrete enough to include both body and culture. To Foucault it is quite clear that this modern type of transcendental reflection differs from the Kantian type by taking its point of departure in the paradox of human existence rather than in the existence of natural science. Although Husserl had apparently succeeded in unifying the Cartesian theme of the *cogito* with the transcendental motif of Kant, the truth is that Husserl was only able to accomplish this union insofar as he changed the very nature of transcendental analysis. It is this transformation that in Foucault's view has resulted in phenomenology's simultaneously promising and threatening proximity to empirical analyses of man (Foucault 1966: 331–6).

I think Foucault's diagnosis is basically correct,<sup>16</sup> and I think it holds true not only in the case of Husserl, but also for many of the post-Husserlian phenomenologists. As Merleau-Ponty would write in *Signes (Signs)*:

Now if the transcendental is intersubjectivity, how can the borders of the transcendental and the empirical help becoming indistinct? For along with the other person, all the other person sees of me – all my facticity – is reintegrated into subjectivity, or at least posited as an indispensable element of its definition. Thus the transcendental descends into history. (1960: 134; 1964: 107 )

The fact that transcendental phenomenology operates with an enlarged notion of the transcendental gives it an advantage in comparison with a more traditional Kantian type of transcendental philosophy. But of course it would also be fair to say that this enlargement and transformation generate new problems and challenges as well.

### Phenomenology in the twenty-first century

Obviously, phenomenology did not come to an end with the passing of Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger. Much has happened since then, particularly in French phenomenology. Thinkers such as Paul Ricoeur, Michel Henry, Jacques Derrida, Emmanuel Lévinas, and Jean-Luc Marion have all questioned the adequacy of the classical phenomenological investigations of intentionality, time-consciousness, intersubjectivity, language, etc. In their attempt to radicalize phenomenology they have disclosed new types and structures of manifestation, and thereby made decisive contributions to the development of phenomenology.

Steven Crowell has argued that the future prospects of phenomenology will depend on the talent of those who take it up (2002: 442). However, it will also depend upon their ability to articulate and strengthen what is common to the phenomenological enterprise instead of getting involved in the sectarian trench warfare that has regrettably plagued the history of phenomenology.

In my view, phenomenology should adopt a two-pronged strategy. On the one hand, it needs to “look inward,” and to continue developing the kind of philosophical analyses that are unique to this tradition. On the other hand, it also needs to “look outward”; it should not fail to realize that it shares topics and interests with other philosophical traditions.<sup>17</sup> Let me by way of conclusion say a few words about this second task.

Many scientists have until recently considered consciousness to be unsuitable for scientific research. As Damasio remarks, “studying consciousness was simply not the thing to do before you made tenure, and even after you did it was looked upon with suspicion” (1999: 7). Prompted by technological developments as well as conceptual changes, this attitude has changed since the early 1990s, and an explanation of consciousness is currently seen by many as one of the few remaining major unsolved problems of modern science. It has become customary to describe this change in terms of an ongoing “consciousness boom.”<sup>18</sup>

Much empirical research aims at locating and identifying particular neural correlates of consciousness. But one should not forget that we will not get very far in giving an account of the relationship between consciousness and the brain if we do not have a clear conception of what it is that we are trying to relate. Any assessment of the possibility of reducing consciousness to more fundamental neuronal structures, any appraisal of whether a naturalization of consciousness is possible, will not only involve metaphysical and epistemological clarifications, it will also call for a detailed analysis and description of consciousness. To put it differently, although much current research focuses on questions concerned with the precise relation between brain and consciousness, questions of this kind do by no means exhaust the challenges currently facing the study of consciousness. To mention just a few quite different urgent questions: What is the relation between intentionality and self-consciousness?; What is the temporal structure of the stream of consciousness?; What is it like to think abstract thoughts?; How does social interaction influence the structures of experience?; Is it possible to conceptualize experiential life?; What is the cognitive

function of affective experiences?; “Is self-experience always embedded and embodied?; What does it at all mean to be a subject, to be a self? But questions like these are not new. They have been analyzed extensively by phenomenologists.

To put it bluntly, given some of the developments in cognitive science and analytical philosophy of mind taking place at the turn of the twenty-first century, given the upsurge of theoretical and empirical interest in the subjective or phenomenal dimension of consciousness, given that an increasing number of analytical philosophers argue that an important and non-negligible feature of consciousness is the way in which it is experienced by the subject, it would simply be counterproductive to continue to ignore the analyses of consciousness that phenomenology can provide. The fact that subjectivity has always been of central concern for phenomenologists, and that they have devoted much time to a scrutiny of the first-person perspective, the structures of experience, time-consciousness, body-awareness, self-awareness, intentionality, and so forth, makes them into obvious interlocutors. Phenomenology addresses issues and provides analyses that are crucial for an understanding of the true complexity of consciousness – but which are nevertheless frequently absent from the current debate. It offers a conceptual framework for understanding subjectivity that might be of considerably more value than some of the models currently in vogue in cognitive science. By ignoring the tradition and the resources it contains, analytical philosophy of mind might miss out on important insights that in the best of circumstances end up being rediscovered decades or centuries later (see Zahavi 2002a). Conversely, were phenomenology to engage in discussions with cognitive science and analytical philosophy, it could make a major contribution to the burgeoning field of consciousness research. It would be a pity to miss such a unique opportunity. In fact, phenomenology needs to engage more in critical dialogue with other philosophical and empirical positions than is currently the case. It is precisely by confronting, discussing, and criticizing alternative approaches that phenomenology can demonstrate its vitality and contemporary relevance. Of course this is not to deny that phenomenology has its own quite legitimate agenda, but the very attempt to engage in such a dialogue with analytical philosophy of mind, developmental psychology, or psychopathology (to mention just a few possible partners) might force phenomenology to become more problem-oriented and thereby counteract what is currently one of its greatest weaknesses: its preoccupation with exegesis.

Although it is important to encourage the exchange between phenomenology and empirical science, the possibility of a fruitful cooperation between the two should not make us overlook their difference. To paraphrase Putnam, it is entirely possible to insist that philosophy needs to be informed by the best available scientific knowledge, while at the same time insisting that philosophical and scientific questions differ fundamentally (see Putnam 1992: 34). Husserl for his part would insist that although there might be a considerable overlap when it comes to the content of transcendental and empirical science – he even speaks of a parallelism between the two – their difference is precisely not a difference in content, but in attitude. Phenomenology and, say, psychology might both investigate consciousness, but they do so with quite different agendas in mind, and it would make just as little sense to identify the phenomenolo-

gists' transcendental analysis of consciousness with a psychological investigation as it would be to identify, say, the discussions of linguistic frameworks or conceptual schemes found in analytical philosophy with phonetic or syntactical analyses. It is this fact that makes the recent interest in the study of consciousness a mixed blessing. With few exceptions this interest has gone hand in hand with a strong commitment to naturalism. Whereas classical analytical philosophy (of language) might have been less interested in consciousness, its basic conception of language as a framework of intelligibility could easily be given a transcendental philosophical twist. Rather than engaging in first-order claims about the nature of things (which it left to various scientific disciplines) it concerned itself with the conceptual preconditions for any such empirical inquiries. The situation is now more or less reversed by philosophers who subscribe to the slogan "reduce or eliminate," and who consider their own work to be directly continuous with the natural sciences. For phenomenology, however, it is important to retain both aspects: the interest in subjectivity and the transcendental perspective.

Let me anticipate a critical objection: Couldn't (and shouldn't) one simply discard the (outdated) transcendental philosophical aspect of phenomenological philosophy and simply preserve what is of lasting value, namely those concrete phenomenological analyses that remain pertinent for, e.g., social philosophy, philosophical anthropology, and philosophy of mind? The reply should at this stage be obvious. Were one to do so, one would also abandon the properly philosophical aspect of phenomenology. One might retain a form of psychological or sociological phenomenology, but one would no longer be dealing with phenomenology in the sense of a philosophical discipline, tradition, and method.<sup>19</sup>

## Notes

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- 1 Edmund Husserl studied physics, mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy in Leipzig, Berlin, and Vienna. He obtained his doctoral dissertation in mathematics in 1882, and in the following years he attended lectures by the psychologist and philosopher Franz Brentano in Vienna. His first major work, *Logische Untersuchungen* was published in 1900-1, and it was on the basis of this work, that Husserl received a call to Göttingen, where he taught from 1901 to 1916. His next major work, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie I* was published in 1913. In 1916, Husserl moved to Freiburg, where he took over the chair in philosophy from the neo-Kantian Heinrich Rickert. In the following years, both Edith Stein and Martin Heidegger worked as his assistants. When Husserl retired in 1928, he was succeeded by Heidegger. Shortly after his retirement, Husserl published *Formale und Transzendente Logik* (1929) and *Méditations cartésiennes* (1931). After the Nazi assumption of power, Husserl became increasingly isolated from German academic life, but in 1935, he was invited to give lectures in Vienna and Prague, and these lectures constituted the foundation for his last work, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie* (1936). Shortly after Husserl's death on April 27, 1938, the young Franciscan Van Breda succeeded in smuggling Husserl's many research manuscripts out of Germany and into safety in a monastery in Belgium. Before the start of the Second World War, the Husserl archive was already established in Leuven, where the original manuscripts are still to be found.
  - 2 Heidegger started out studying Catholic theology and medieval philosophy in Freiburg, but decided to concentrate on philosophy in 1911. In 1913 he defended his dissertation *Die Lehre vom Urteil im Psychologismus*, and two years later his habilitation *Die Kategorien- und Bedeutungslehre des Duns Scotus*. The later work was submitted to Rickert, the philosopher whose successor was Husserl. Heidegger

worked as Husserl's assistant from 1918 until 1923, when he became extraordinary professor at the university in Marburg. In 1927 Heidegger's main opus *Sein and Zeit* was published, and in 1928 he took over Husserl's chair in Freiburg. In 1929, Heidegger gave his famous inaugural lecture *Was ist Metaphysik?* After the Nazi assumption of power, he was elected rector of Freiburg University, and became member of the Nazi Party. Less than a year later, however, he stepped down from his rectorship and slowly withdrew from university politics. Until 1944 Heidegger gave regular lectures, but after the end of the war he was prohibited from teaching because of his Nazi sympathies, and in 1946 he was deprived of his professorship. Heidegger was reinstated as professor emeritus in 1949, and from then and until shortly before his death, he lectured extensively, and it was in this context that central pieces such as *Die Kehre* (1949), *Die Frage nach der Technik* (1953), and *Die onto-theo-logische Verfassung der Metaphysik* (1957) were written.

- 3 Merleau-Ponty studied philosophy at the prestigious École Normale Supérieure. He published his first book, *La Structure du comportement* in 1942, and what is arguable his main work *Phénoménologie de la perception* in 1945. In 1949 he obtained the chair of child psychology at the Sorbonne, and in 1952 he was elected to the chair of philosophy at the Collège de France, the youngest ever appointed to the position, which he held until his death in May 1961. After the Second World War, Merleau-Ponty became increasingly engaged in politics, and he published a number of books with political essays, including *Humanisme et terreur* (1947), *Sens et non-sens* (1948), and *Les Aventures de la dialectique* (1955). In parallel with his political interest, Merleau-Ponty continued teaching, and many of his lectures from Sorbonne and Collège de France bear witness to his extensive interest in empirical work, including in child psychology, structural linguistics, ethnology, and psychoanalysis. In 1960 *Signes*, another volume consisting of essays, was published, and in 1964 the fragmentary *Le Visible et l'invisible*, which many consider to be Merleau-Ponty's second main work, was published posthumously.
- 4 The complexity in question also makes it close to impossible to reconcile all of his claims into one coherent theory; for one thing, although it would be an exaggeration to speak of veritable ruptures between his early and later works, there are certainly developments and differences to be reckoned with. For a concise introduction to Husserl's phenomenology that takes recent research results into consideration, see Zahavi 2003b.
- 5 My reason for only including some passing references to an otherwise central figure like Sartre in the following is due to the fact that I don't think Sartre's most important and influential phenomenological contributions are to be found in his more overarching meta-philosophical and methodological reflections on the status of phenomenology. Rather, Sartre's decisive contributions are to be found in his many concrete analyses, be it of imagination, embodiment, selfhood, self-awareness, intersubjectivity, intentionality, etc.
- 6 See E. Husserl, *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis: Lectures on Transcendental Logic*, trans. A. J. Steinbock, Husserl Collected Works vol. IX (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2001). For an in-depth discussion of this aspect of Husserl's philosophy, see for instance Montavont 1999.
- 7 This is one of the many reasons why it is problematic simply to classify Husserl as a traditional internalist (see Zahavi 2004).
- 8 Let me anticipate a critical objection. Doesn't Husserl make frequent use of the terms "immanence" and "transcendence," terms used to designate consciousness and worldly objects respectively? Doesn't the repeated use of these concepts show the unmistakably Cartesian tenor of Husserl's thinking? Doesn't it reveal to what extent Husserl's theory of intentionality, his conception of the mind/world relation, remains committed to a form of representationalism, where any experience and cognition of the external world requires the presence of some inner representation in the mind? Doesn't the use of the terms unequivocally demonstrate how far removed Husserl ultimately is from Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger's understanding of our being-in-the-world? In fact, the answer to all of these questions is no. Throughout his philosophical career Husserl is unequivocal in his rejection of representationalism. He considers the suggestion that my access to external objects is mediated by representations internal to my mind to be not only false, but completely nonsensical (see Husserl 1950a: 118; 1976: 207-8; 1979: 305; 1984b: 436—7; 2003: 106). Moreover, Husserl's use of the concepts of immanence and transcendence (unfortunate as it might be, given the kind of misunderstandings it has occasioned) is meant to capture a certain phenomenological difference in the mode of givenness pertaining to consciousness and worldly entities respectively (Husserl 1976: 88). To put it even more simply,

- according to Husserl, experiences are not given in the same manner as chairs and symphonies, nor are we aware of our own experiences in the same way we are aware of worldly objects. Thus the distinction between immanence and transcendence is one internal to the phenomenological realm and is not meant to demarcate what belongs to phenomenology from what does not. For a classical exposé of Husserl's use of the concepts transcendence and immanence, see Boehm 1968: 141–85. For a discussion of similarities between the Husserlian overcoming of the inner/outer dichotomy and central ideas in Buddhist philosophy, see Fasching 2003.
- 9 In the lecture course “Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs” Heidegger explicitly rejects Husserl's phenomenological reduction (Heidegger 1979: 150), but the interpretation he there offers of it is quite problematic. For more extensive reflections on Heidegger's use of *epoché* and reduction, see Tugendhat 1970: 262—80; Courtine 1990: 207–47; Caputo 1992; Marion 1998; Crowell 2001: 182—202; Overgaard 2004.
  - 10 Whereas Husserl at different stages of his thinking was influenced in turn by Brentano, Lotze, Bolzano, Hume, Locke, Descartes, Kant, Leibniz, and Fichte, Heidegger's sources of inspiration include, for instance, Aristotle, Luther, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and the pre-Socratics.
  - 11 This is not to deny that Heidegger occasionally presented his own work as constituting a radical break with Husserl's phenomenology, but then again, Heidegger was always anxious to emphasize his own originality *vis-à-vis* the old teacher (see Zahavi 2003a). To put it differently, if one wishes to understand the relation between Heidegger and Husserl, Heidegger's own account might not be the most reliable source. At the same time, however, it should certainly also be conceded that Husserl failed to understand the basic thrust of Heidegger's (early) work, failed to realize to what extent this work remained committed to a form of transcendental phenomenology. Husserl's characterization of *Sein und Zeit* as a piece of anthropology is a case in point (cf. Breeur 1994).
  - 12 I have elsewhere questioned the adequacy of the criticism, see Zahavi 1999; 2003c.
  - 13 It should be emphasized that to be non-metaphysical is not the same as to be anti-metaphysical.
  - 14 For more on the relationship between phenomenology and metaphysics, cf. Zahavi 2002c; 2003d.
  - 15 For an illuminating discussion of Sartre's analysis of the body see Cabestan 1996.
  - 16 However, I would not concur with Foucault's subsequent criticism of phenomenology.
  - 17 Recently, the habitual stance of analytical philosophy towards phenomenology, which has ranged from complete disregard to outright hostility, also seems to be slowly changing. This may be because prominent philosophers from the analytical tradition have started to rediscover the common roots of both traditions (see Dummett 1996) – Husserl and Frege were both anti-psychologists – or because analytical philosophy since the mid-1990s has regained an interest in some of the topics that for many years have remained on the phenomenological agenda.
  - 18 For further discussion of the concept of consciousness, see “Philosophy of mind,” Chapter 12.
  - 19 This study has been funded by the Danish National Research Foundation.

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- \_\_\_\_\_. (2005) "Husserl's intersubjective transformation of transcendental philosophy." In R. Bernet, D. Welton, and G. Zavota (eds.) *Edmund Husserl: Critical Assessments of Leading Philosophers IV*. London: Routledge, pp. 359–380.

### Further reading and translations of cited works

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#### General introductions to phenomenology

- Hammond, M., J. Howarth, and R. Keat, *Understanding Phenomenology*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1991. (A good introduction that is especially helpful for those coming from an analytic perspective).
- Moran, D., *Introduction to Phenomenology*. London: Routledge, 2000. (A comprehensive introduction to the different figures in the phenomenological tradition).
- Sokolowski, R., *Introduction to Phenomenology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. (A thematic introduction to a number of phenomenological (mainly Husserlian) concepts).

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- Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis: Lectures on Transcendental Logic*, trans. A. J. Steinbock. Husserl Collected Works, vol. IX. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2001.
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### Works on Husserl

Bernet, R., I. Kern, and E. Marbach, *An Introduction to Husserlian Phenomenology*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1993. (A comprehensive and technical introduction by three leading experts).

Moran, D., *Edmund Husserl: Founder of Phenomenology*. Cambridge: Polity, 2005. (Readable introduction to Husserl that discusses his early descriptive phenomenology as well as his later commitment to transcendental idealism).

Sokolowski, R., *Husserlian Meditations*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1974. (A classical analysis of a number of central themes in Husserl's phenomenology).

Welton, D. (ed.) *The New Husserl: A Critical Reader*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003. (An excellent collection of articles by major interpreters of Husserl).

Zahavi, D., *Husserl's Phenomenology*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003. (A very accessible and up-to-date introduction).

### Works by Heidegger

*Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and J. Robinson. Oxford: Blackwell, 1978.

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*History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena*, trans. T. Kisiel. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985 (includes the pagination of the 1979 German edn.).

*Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. J. S. Churchill. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962.

*The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. A. Hofstadter. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982 (includes the pagination of the 1989 German edition).

### Works on Heidegger

Crowell, S. G., *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2001. (A good discussion of the relation between Husserl and Heidegger).

Dreyfus, H., *Being in the World: Commentary on Heidegger's "Being and Time": Division I*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991. (A clear and helpful commentary).

Kisiel, T., *The Genesis of Heidegger's "Being and Time."* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. (A scholarly masterpiece).

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### Works by Merleau-Ponty

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**Works on Merleau-Ponty**

Madison, G. B., *Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1981. (A well-organized and clearly written general introduction).

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