

Universality in the Making – On Edmund Husserl's Conception of the One World

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The idea of philosophy as a rational science that emerges in Greece, and which, according to Husserl, coincides with the idea of Europe, is that of a truly universal science – a science concerned with what is universal and carried out in a universally reconstructable way. In the wake of the rediscovery of the Greek heritage at the beginning of the modern age, this idea found a powerful expression in “natural-scientific world-universality” (246) which, basing itself on the spatio-temporal shapes of bodily things, made the objective world universally transparent.¹ Yet, as Husserl points out, such objectifying accomplishment is also “limited to the mere spatiotemporal shapes or to the structure of space-time belonging universally to the world.” He adds: “It can be seen that such an accomplishment was possible only through the essence of this structure and that, accordingly, exact objectification could have significance for the world, at least at first, only as a world of bodies, whereby everything about the things that was itself non-corporeal was abstracted” (349). The question then is, how truly universal is a science whose “natural-scientific world-universality” does not apply to the realm of the souls? As Husserl argues in the *Crisis*, the repeated attempts to establish a scientific psychology modeled after the natural sciences have not only failed, the project itself is an absurdity. Even though “there is an immense difference between the essence of psychic subjectivity and the essence of a thing” (327), it is, indeed, the attempt to objectify, that is, to treat what is of the order of subjectivity – acts of consciousness *and* phenomena – like corporeal things. According to Husserl, all “analogizing ... does violence [to this difference]” (327). Even the indirect mathematization applicable to objective qualities is bound to fail in the case of the psychic life. Husserl concludes that for a “world as the world which also contains spiritual beings ... the idea of an ontology of the world, the idea of an objective, universal science of the world, having behind it a universal a priori according to which every possible factual world is knowable *more geometrico* – this idea which led even Leibniz astray – is *nonsense*. For the realm of souls there is in principle no such ontology, no science corresponding to the physicalistic-mathematical ideal” (265). Yet the impossibility of the sciences to objectify the

¹ All page references in the text are to Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, trans. D. Carr, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970.

realm of the souls, and thus to account for what is universal about it, not only demonstrates that the universal project of the sciences misses out on one essential aspect of the world, but, primarily, that it is not universal to begin with. Husserl writes: "Philosophy as universal *objective* science — and this is what all philosophy of the ancient tradition was — together with all the objective sciences is not universal science at all. It brings into its sphere of inquiry only the constituted object-poles and remains blind to the full concrete being and life that constitutes them transcendently" (176). Now, for Husserl, who claims that "psychic being is investigatable in transcendental universality, in a fully systematic way, and in principle in essential generality in the form of an a priori science" (265), in a way, in other words, that meets the demand of universality, the issue is not simply one of compensating for what the natural sciences cannot achieve by developing a rigorous science that would do justice to what is specific to the realm of souls. It is not merely a question of juxtaposing subjective universality to the natural-scientific world-universality. Indeed, what is stake in the phenomenological turn to the subjective is the renewal of the task and the promise constitutive of the Greek idea of an all-embracing rational science — a truly universal science, one, incidentally, in which universal objectivity would be reinscribed, and hence transformed. The realm of the subjective, Husserl holds, is one "which is completely closed off within itself, existing in its own way, functioning in all experiencing, all thinking, all life, thus everywhere inseparably involved" (112). Yet, notwithstanding its existence in its own right, and subtending all other domains, including that of the objective sciences and the philosophies building upon them, the realm of the subjective is thematic neither in everyday life, nor in the sciences. But if philosophy is to be an all-encompassing science, how can it "fulfill the sense of its primal establishment as a universal and ultimately grounding science if it leaves this realm to its 'anonymity'" (112)? Not only that, as Husserl will argue, the "anonymous subjectivity" (113) is the "one single ground" (113) on which all the objective sciences, the historical philosophies, and everyday thinking rest. It follows from this that only by taking this "constant substratum" (113) into account, can philosophy become the universal science that it promised to seek in its primal establishment.

Given that the universality of the natural sciences was predicated on the spatio-temporal shapes of corporeal things, it follows necessarily that the more encompassing universality sought through a turn to the sphere of the subjective can no longer be of the order of identifiable and identically iterable idealized shapes. Even though the mathematical and geometrical idealities are clearly universal in that they are free with respect to empirical subjectivity, they are only relative, or bound idealities, compared to those of the transcendental subjectivity that transcendental phenomenology explores in both of its approaches to the latter,

whether inquiring back from the pregiven life-world, or from psychology.² The free idealities characteristic of transcendental subjectivity must necessarily be distinct in nature from those predicated on spatial and temporal shapes. Furthermore, philosophy as rigorous science, or transcendental phenomenology, rather than rendering the domain of the subjective accessible through indirect symbolic and mathematical methods, moves "in spheres of direct intuition" of the things themselves.³ These things are, as we will see, the "essential forms" (*Wesensformen*) of both individual and collective consciousness. Whether inquiring back from the life-world, or from psychology, transcendental phenomenology seeks to exhibit the genuinely free universal idealities in the realm of the subjective as the "essential forms" that universally shape the subjective and its world-constituting accomplishments, thus establishing phenomenology as the true realization of the Greek idea of a universal science. For the present purpose it will not be necessary to elaborate these forms in full detail, (or, what Husserl, elsewhere, terms the noetic-noematic structures of the sense-constituting accomplishments of subjectivity). It must suffice to establish the soundness of such a concept of subjective form, and, furthermore, to show that, effectively, a universal science of the essential forms of consciousness is possible in a fully systematic way – in principle, in essential generality in the form of an a priori science. It is for this reason, therefore, that I turn to the discussion of the life-world in Part III, A of *The Crisis* where Husserl sketches out the rudiments of transcendental phenomenology in programmatic fashion.

As is well known, Husserl's concern with the life-world in his last, and unfinished work, has drawn special attention from his interpreters. Notwithstanding the fact that he had already made sporadic use of the term (especially in his writings from the twenties concerned with attempts to overcome the Cartesian dualism of body and soul), they have declared it to be something of a turn in his work.⁴ It is certainly true that the life-world becomes an explicit theme only in *The Crisis*. However, its analysis is not conducted there for the sake of the life-world itself; its analysis is only staged to provide one, however new, way into transcendental phenomenology. As Paul Ricoeur has noted, "the return to the *life-*

² Husserl distinguishes between free and bound idealities in *Experience and Judgment*, trans. J. S. Churchill and K. Ameriks, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973, p. 267. See also Françoise Dastur, *Husserl. Des mathématiques à l'histoire*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1995, p. 111.

³ Edmund Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," in *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, trans. Q. Lauer, New York: Harper & Row, 1965, p. 147.

⁴ Iso Kern, "Die Lebenswelt als Grundlagenproblem der objektiven Wissenschaften und als universales Wahrheits- und Seinsproblem," in *Lebenswelt und Wissenschaft in der Philosophie Edmund Husserls*, ed. E. Ströker, Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 1979, p. 69.

world is only a moment, an intermediary degree of a more fundamental 'return': the return to science as such, to reason as such, beyond its limitation in objective thought."⁵

If Husserl opens his investigation of the life-world by claiming that objective knowledge rests on "an unquestioned ground of presuppositions" (104), and that this ground is that of the self-evidences characteristic of the life-world – such as the presupposition that the everyday surrounding world of life exists, that it is a world that constantly undergoes change, even though it is also the one and same world for all, and that in this world we are objects among objects, etc. – his objective is clear: to thematize, and to explain "these manifold validities-in-advance, i.e., 'presuppositions'," (111) that permeate both pre-scientific and scientific life.⁶ "Taken for granted, prior to all scientific thought and all philosophizing questioning," these ontic validities are, as Husserl puts it, "the most obvious of the obvious" (110). But precisely because they are the "*constant presuppositions* of scientific and, at the highest level philosophical thinking" (110), it becomes incumbent upon philosophy – in particular in the wake of the crisis of the European sciences – to radically and systematically investigate the obvious that the sciences have never deigned worthy of exploring. The single most prominent presupposition of prescientific, as well as scientific thought, is "that the world is – always in advance – and that every correction of an opinion, whether an experiential or other opinion, presupposes the already existing world, namely, as a horizon of what in the given case is indubitably valid as existing" (110). It is above all this one presupposition that motivates Husserl's interest in the life-world. If the aim of the sciences is to transform prescientific knowledge in and of the world into exact knowledge of the world, as a world "which in itself is fixed and determined," and which is to be achieved through an infinite process, the origin of the presupposition in question requires elucidation.⁷

As I have said already, the life-world is not as such the theme of Husserl's

⁵ Paul Ricoeur, *A l'école de la phénoménologie*, Paris: Vrin, 1993, p. 292. Not unlike the analytic of *Dasein* which Heidegger in *Being and Time* develops only as far as is required by the leading question of the inquiry – the question of Being – Husserl does not aim at unfolding a full fledged exposition of the life-world. As is quite clear from Chapter 51, no "ontology of the life-world" is intended.

⁶ Husserl writes that all scientific judgments "are judgments based on the ground of the life-world, that is to say, on the ground of a universal validity concerning what is. This universal validity is produced through a life of validity of subjects (which is constantly in motion), together with the certitude that comes with it, and which validates through all experiences and validation of experience." (Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*, *Husserliana*, Vol. VI, Haag: Nijhoff, 1962, p. 465).

⁷ Let me also point out that the life-world remains "constantly in the validity of being." It is "the permanent foundation of knowledge (*Gewusstheitsgrund*)." and is known as such. It is, therefore, "as far as its being is concerned not the object of an *epoche*." (Husserl, *Die Krisis*, pp. 398-340).

late work, but only a new way into transcendental phenomenology. What is more, the life-world is not something simply given (there for everyone to see and experience), and which could be investigated without further ado. As we will see, the life-world as the hidden ground of both prescientific and scientific life and thought, requires a disclosure in order for it to come into view in the first place.⁸ Indeed, without the suspension, or *epoche*, of the objective sciences, the life-world cannot become thematic at all.⁹ Furthermore, the phenomenological investigation of the life-world in light of the latter's ground-function for all prescientific and scientific life, in which the sense-constructs (*Sinngebilde*) and the subjective achievements peculiar to the life-world become manifest, requires an additional *epoche*, a transcendental *epoche* of the natural attitude characteristic of both prescientific and scientific life. Keeping these injunctions in mind, let us nonetheless attempt to describe in broad strokes what the life-world amounts to. As Husserl writes, the life-world is "the only real world, the one that is actually given through perception, that is ever experienced and experiencable – our everyday life-world" (49). It is the world we all have in common – the world common to us all (*allgemeinsam*). Pregiven, in both everyday and scientific life, it is a world whose basic structures are fixed at all times, and for all time. Husserl writes: "the life-world was always there for mankind before science, then, just as it continues its manner of being in the epoch of science" (123).¹⁰ This world is "the obviously existing, ever intuitively pre-given world" (111). The attitude which pervades it is

⁸ Elisabeth Ströker, "Geschichte und Lebenswelt als Sinnesfundament der Wissenschaften in Husserls Spätwerk," in *Lebenswelt und Wissenschaft in der Philosophie Edmund Husserls*, ed. E. Ströker, Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 1979, p. 117.

⁹ In the appendices to *The Crisis* devoted to Descartes, Husserl clearly demarcates his conception of *epoche* from Descartes' universal doubt, and remarks that the *epoche* "is not universal doubt, which no one is capable or powerful enough to enact in any serious way." "A truly universal doubt concerning the world is out of question," Husserl remarks. Compared to Descartes' method of doubt, the method of the *epoche* is "a purified Cartesian method" (Husserl, *Die Krisis*, pp. 407, 408, 409). Rather than deciding on being or non being, "the incomparable significance" of the *epoche* consists in a disregard (*Absehen*), or abstention (*Enthaltung*), "from the total validity of the world with all the values that this includes, whether experiential or cognitive; from all interests, and all acts that relate to something in the world, or are to be related to the world, and that therefore belong themselves as such to the world." In other words, taking no account of, or holding off, the naive and straightforward positioning of the world, the *epoche* permits shifting one's attention to the acts of consciousness by which the world is constituted, and to discover something that is not of the order of the world itself, namely, "the pure ego." (*Die Krisis*, p. 410, 469, 410).

¹⁰ Yet, as Husserl also remarks, the theories that the sciences produce through a "continued building-up of activities," acquire "the character of validities for the life-world, adding themselves as such to its own composition and belonging to it even before that as a horizon of possible accomplishments for developing science" (131). On how science becomes incorporated into the life-world, see Ströker, "Geschichte und Lebenswelt als Sinnesfundament der Wissenschaften in Husserls Spätwerk," in: *Lebenswelt und Wissenschaft in der Philosophie Edmund Husserls*, ed. E. Ströker, Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 1979, p. 121. As this interacting between the concrete life-world as "the grounding soil" (131) of the sciences and the sciences themselves suggest, the concept "life-world" is multifaceted.

the natural attitude, namely, the unquestioned assumption that things exist, and that in their perception things present themselves as being there in person.

Husserl readily admits that inquiring into the life-world as the unthematized presupposition of the idea of objectivity that dominates the *universitas* of the positive sciences, is to take on "the most obvious of the obvious" (110). But according to the *Crisis*, the investigation of what is taken for granted by both prescientific and scientific life, opens up "a realm, indeed an infinite realm, of always ready and available but never questioned ontic validities," namely, "that the world is — always is in advance — and that every correction of an opinion, whether an experiential or other opinion, presupposes the already existing world" (110). Theoretical praxis, Husserl observes, "is the art of theories, of discovering and securing truths with a certain new ideal sense which is foreign to prescientific life, the sense of a certain 'final validity,' 'universal validity'" (111). As is obvious from Part II of *the Crisis*, the universal objective a priori of the natural sciences is a truth that, initially at least, was experienced as odd and detached from everyday life and its opinions. As Husserl repeatedly remarks, the new science that inquires into the "validities-in-advance" characteristic of the life-world is not only a very strange science because of the new type of questioning that it addresses to the sciences, but also because it belongs to "a new and immediately highly enigmatic dimension" (111). As we will see, the strangeness of this new science and the truths that it exhibits is distinct in nature from the one characteristic of the exact sciences. Precisely because this new science's truths concern the subjective dimension, the strangeness of these truths must differ from those that relate to bodily things, and which alienate the life of the soul. Given that the new science of the life-world (or, rather, the science that takes its starting point in the life-world) seeks to renew the Greek conception of a universal and all-embracing science, it is to be expected that its oddity is closer to the constitutive foreignness of the universal in general peculiar to the emerging philosophy in Greece.

However, as I have indicated, the life-world as the soil of both prescientific and scientific life is not readily accessible. In order to bring it explicitly into view as an object of investigation in its own right, or in Husserlian parlance, to make it thematic, the new science field has to be secured through a method of access that "is articulated into a multiplicity of steps, each of which has, in a new way, the character of an *epoche*, a withholding of natural, naive validities and in general of validities already in effect" (135). The first *epoche* suspends all the objective sciences, more precisely, the objective theoretical interests, aims, and activities of that kind of knowledge. Indeed, how could the life-world as constituted by the unquestioned presuppositions and naivetes on which the knowledge in prescientific life and in the objective sciences rests, be rendered accessible without such an *epoche*? Only by suspending the objective sciences is it possible to face these

presuppositions to begin with, and to reflect upon them in a thinking mode. Obviously, the fact that the world exists is not something that one could cease assuming, yet in suspending the natural attitude with its belief in the existence of the world, this assumption reveals itself as a subjective presupposition. Without putting the naturalizing perspective of the objective sciences out of play, this subjective dimension peculiar to the world (and the things within it), that is, precisely its subjective character, remains hidden. But through this bracketing of the natural sciences (as a result of which the life-world becomes thematic as a realm of subjective presuppositions, in-advance-validities, or preformed meaning formations) the life-world is only brought to light in its manifold relativities and conflicting subjective truths. Indeed, from the standpoint of the objective sciences the life-world qualifies as “the ‘merely subjective-relative,’” or mere opinion (*doxa*) (125).

Obviously, not everything is relative in this “merely subjective-relative” realm. In order to bring the non-relative nature of this realm into focus, let me point out immediately that the characterization of the presuppositions and validities-in-advance unearthed by the first *epoche* as subjective, and as belonging to a subjective realm, is anything but a pejorative provision. As Husserl remarks, the questions concerning the manifold validities-in-advance taken for granted in everyday and scientific life, are “questions, too, [that] concern the obviously existing, ever intuitively pregiven world; but they are not questions belonging to that professional praxis and *techne* which is called objective science ... rather, they are questions of how the object, the prescientifically and then the scientifically true object, stands in relation to all the subjective elements which everywhere have a voice in what is taken for granted in advance” (111). If the exploration of the life-world is called an inquiry into “the *enigma of subjectivity*” (5) – an inquiry that will prove to be rich in unsettling and strange insights precisely because it devotes to the life-world a “universal and theoretical interest” (112) – it is because subjectivity is understood here from its active, productive, or, as Husserl sometimes says, creative, involvement in these presuppositions and validities, and, hence, in the very constitution of the world as a form of meaning. Subjectivity is conceived here primarily from its act character – as an accomplishing, performative, and even “historical” activity. The “realm of subjective phenomena which have remained ‘anonymous’” within prescientific and scientific life, thematized by the new science is a realm of “purely subjective phenomena throughout [and] not merely facts involving psychological processes of sense data; rather, they are mental [*geistige*] processes which, as such exercise with essential necessity the function of constituting forms of meaning [*Sinnesgestalten*]. But they constitute them in each case out of mental ‘material’ which [itself] proves in turn, with essential necessity, to be mental form [*geistige Gestalt*], i.e., to be constituted; just

as any newly developed form [of meaning] is destined to become material, namely to function in the constitution of [some new] form" (112). The new dimension of phenomena – the purely subjective phenomena – of the life-world that emerge once one begins to question the meaning- and validity-implications of the presuppositions of extra-scientific and intra-scientific life, are subjective phenomena insofar as they are the result of mental processes through which they have come into existence. Now, the processes at the origin of the forms of meaning, or mental forms, are said to engender these forms according to "essential necessity," that is, in conformity with universal laws of essence. Therefore it is the establishment of the essential laws that govern the realm of the seemingly subjective-relative that will yield a subjective a priori, a universal dimension peculiar to this realm. As a consequence, another, and "a much greater task" (142) than that of just mapping the life-world, and developing a science of how things are experienced in the life-world, awaits the phenomenologist. It is also a much greater task because the subjective a priori that is sought, cannot be of the order of a truth in-itself, which is the prerogative, and ideal of all objective approach. According to Husserl, even to conceive of it "in analogy with the truth-in-itself of nature, is nonsense."¹¹ The great task in question is that "of a pure theory of the essence (*reinen Wesenslehre*) of the life-world" (141).

At this juncture, a further clarification of Husserl's understanding of the life-world becomes necessary. On numerous occasions, Husserl defines the life-world as the world of objects that in everyday life surround us. For example, the life-world is said to be "the spatio-temporal world of things as we experience them in our pre- and extra-scientific life and as we know them to be experientiable beyond what is [actually] experienced. We have a world-horizon as a horizon of possible thing-experience. Things: that is, stones, animals, plants, even human beings and human products; but everything here is subjective and relative..." (138). All inquiry into what is "formal and general, what remains invariant in the life-world throughout all alterations of the relative," that is, into the life-world a priori, takes its starting point from "what alone determines for us in life the sense of talking about the world," namely, that it is "the universe of things, which are distributed within the world-form of space and time and are 'positional' in two senses (according to spatial position and temporal position) – the spatio-temporal *onta*" (142). What is at stake in the task faced by the new science about the life-world a priori, becomes tangible at this point. The formal and general structures that this

¹¹ Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der Europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie. Ergänzungsband: Texte aus dem Nachlass 1934-1937*, Husserliana, Vol. 29, Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1993, p. 183.

science investigates concerns nothing less than *world itself* (that is, first, the world of spatio-temporal things) as it is subjectively lived, that is, as the world that is valid and meaningful in the life-world. It is an inquiry into the essential subjective structures of the world not as an objective whole but as a meaning-construct (*Sinngebilde*), that is, in Husserl's parlance, of the world as a phenomenon. Conversely, qua meaning-construct, the world's — the one world's — universal or essential structures have their correlate in a "universal accomplishment (*Leistung*)" (113), that is, the equally essential acts of consciousness. Husserl writes: "We shall come to understand that the world which constantly exists for us through the flowing alterations of manners of givenness is a universal mental acquisition, having developed as such and at the same time continuing to develop as the unity of a mental configuration, as a meaning-construct [*Sinngebilde*] — as the constant of a universal, ultimately functioning subjectivity" (113). The passage through the life-world as a way toward the new science that is to renew the Greek project of a universal all-encompassing science serves to show how the hitherto anonymous sphere of subjectivity is made up of processes through which the universal sense of the one world presupposed by all the spiritual accomplishments of mankind is constituted according to essential laws. The one world, of which we are aware in the life-world, despite, or precisely because we live in particular worlds, is to be shown to be a spiritual, mental universal achievement, the product of intentional acts of consciousness — hence, a historical accomplishment, one that continues to develop, and whose unity is constantly in the making. The one world, the total horizon of the world, as that which is shared by all, is thus not something to be taken for granted, or something positively given, and that exists once and for all independently of mankind. Rather, its universality is something that is secured, and is to be secured, by mankind in an infinite process.

As we have seen, what is invariant and general in the subjective-relative realm of the life-world is to be approached first by way of the world of spatio-temporal objects, because in the life-world, as "a world of sense intuition, [and] a sensible world of appearances," "everything that exhibits itself ... as a concrete thing obviously has a bodily character, even if it is not a mere body, as for example, an animal or a cultural object, i.e., even if it also has psychic or otherwise spiritual properties" (106). Notwithstanding the fact that in the life-world one is aware of the world only in relation to objects and their content alterations and the changes in their perception, as well as through their relations to other objects, that is, as the horizon of existing objects, "the' world, as existing in a unified way, persists throughout, being corrected only in its content" (105). But as Husserl is quick to observe, the life-world is not only our everyday spatio-temporal world of bodily things; it is also the world of "straightforward [*schlichten*]

intersubjective experiences" (133). After having shown that in all sense-perception of objects my living-body (*Leib*) plays a constant role — in the sense that all the aspects of bodies appearing in perception are intimately linked to the kinesthetically functioning living body — he notes that as "full ego-subjects," we are not merely "ego[s] through the living body [*die leibliche Ichlichkeit*]," each of us is as well a "full-fledged 'I-the-man'" (108). I am an ego not only by virtue of a living body, but also insofar as I am an individual human being, one together with others in the world. Husserl writes: "Thus in whatever way we may be conscious of the world as universal horizon, as coherent universe of existing objects, we, each 'I-the-man' and all of us together, belong to the world as living with one another in the world; and the world is our world, valid for our consciousness as existing precisely through this 'living together'" (108). As a human subject, the ego is not only a living body which is constantly active "on the basis of [its] passive having-of-the-world [*passive Welthabe*]" (108) of objects, this world, as the coherent universe of existing objects pre-given to the ego, is also the world of the others, the one world that the human beings share with one another. The world thus is not merely my world, but always already *our* world, a world that is a function of living together. Now, in the life-world, all our affections by and actions on objects, as well as all our dealings with others in the world, take place against the background of this passive having-of-the-world. In all one's preoccupations one is aware of the world, but one is conscious of it always only "in terms of some object-content or other, in the alteration of the different ways of being conscious ... and also in the alteration of affection and action ... and such that the affecting objects are now thematic, now unthematic" (109). The consciousness of the world in the life-world is thus a consciousness in constant motion. This is not only the case for me as an individual ego faced with the sensibly intuitable world of bodily things, but also for me as a human being in the world with others. Although "we, in living together, have the world pre-given in this 'together,' as the world valid as existing for us and to which we, together, belong, the world as world for all, pre-given with this ontic meaning," this awareness of togetherness, and hence, of *the* world as *our* world, comes in the life-world always only "with a residuum which remains unthematic — remains, so to speak, anonymous" (109). To elucidate this unthematic and anonymous residuum is the prime objective of phenomenology.

As we have seen, the *epoché* of the objective sciences makes the life-world explicitly thematic. But this suspension of the objectifying attitude and the accompanying awareness of the pre-given world is something that happens already in some form in what Husserl terms, "waking life." "Waking life is always a directedness toward this or that, being directed toward it as an end or as a means, as relevant or irrelevant, toward the interesting or the indifferent, toward the private or public, toward what is daily required or intrusively new" (281). In

“normal, unbroken, coherent life,” one wakenly lives in the life-world, that is, one is conscious of the fact that the life-world “is always already there, existing in advance for us, the ‘ground’ of all praxis whether theoretical or extratheoretical” (142). One lives in the awareness of the fact that we always “live-in-certainty-of-the-world.” Such waking life amounts to “be[ing] awake to the world, being constantly and directly ‘conscious’ of the world and of one self as living *in* the world, actually experiencing and actually effecting the ontic certainty of the world. The world is pregiven thereby, in every case, in such a way that individual things are given” (142-3). But, according to Husserl, one must distinguish the consistently reflective attitude from this still “naive and natural straightforward attitude (*Geradehineinstellung*)” in which one consciously experiences things or objects “*within the world-horizon,*” that is, as “something of the world.”¹² The different attitudes of being conscious of the world rest on the “fundamental difference” between things within the world, and the world itself, which is not a thing. The world-horizon is irreducible to the things that appear within it, and therefore we must assume that the ways in which the being of an object within the world and the world itself are experienced, “prescribe fundamentally different correlative types of consciousness for them” (145). Now, rather than simply taking a conscious stand in the pregiven life-world, the reflective attitude makes the life-world thematic by reflecting on *how* it and the objects within it are given. Such inquiry into “the ‘how’ of the subjective manner of givenness of life-world and life-world-objects” (143), no longer takes the givenness of the life-world that the first *epoche* explicitly brought to light, for granted, and straightforwardly takes a stand within it, but inquires into the pre-giving of the world. Indeed, to be given, Husserl explains, means, “to be valid in a conscious fashion (*bewusstseinsmässig geltend*), and to be for us certain in its being with this or that content.”¹³ Whereas in normal, straightforwardly waking life, one lives toward the world-horizon (*in den Welthorizont Hineinleben*) – an attitude in which “all our interests have their goal in objects” (144) and in which we “live in ‘infatuation’ (*lebt ... verschossen auf die Einheitspole hin*)” (176) with the things in the world – there is, Husserl ascertains, “a completely different [*ganz andere*] sort of waking life involved in the consciousness of having of the world” (144). It “consists in a transformation of the thematic consciousness of the world which breaks through [*durchbrechende Wandlung*] the normality of straightforward living” (144). This wholly other kind of

¹² The reflective attitude is made possible by waking life in the life-world, but it is also one that implies a complete reorientation of interest – one which makes the world-horizon thematic as such.

¹³ Husserl, *Die Krisis ... Ergänzungsband*, p. 93.

thematization of the world, which violently shatters and transforms ordinary consciousness of the pregivenness of the world, arises with the realization that rather than simply having objects "as the substrates of their properties ... we become conscious of them (and of everything ontically meant) through subjective manners of appearance, or manners of givenness" (144). The violence and oddity of this completely different kind of waking life regarding the world rests with the subjective dimension of the world that takes us away from the infatuation with the objects themselves. With the awareness of the subjective modes in which objects — and hence the world — are pre-given to us, a "new universal direction of interest" emerges, an "interest exclusively and consistently directed toward *how — the world* — comes into being for us; how, that is, there arises in us the constant consciousness of the existence, of the universal horizon, of real, actually existing objects, each of which we are conscious of only through the alterations of our relative conceptions of it, of its manners of appearing, its mode of validity, even when we are conscious of it in particularity as something simply being there" (144-145). The "new universal interest" in the manifold ways in which the world and its objects appears to us in the life-world thus opens up the possibility of establishing how, subjectively speaking, *the world*, "the coherent, universal validity world," comes into being for us. In the subsequent analyses into the correlation of consciousness and world, "a great horizon of remarkable [*merkwürdige*] truths" comes into light, Husserl ascertains, which never before had been investigated, and which do not fail to "evoke philosophical wonder" (165). As we have seen, the reflective attitude which opens up this new interest arises in waking life from the life-world itself. The very oddity of these truths is not only owed to the recognition of a correlation between world and world-consciousness, but results from the fact that this correlation reveals itself to have "an essential necessity," and that it allows for translation "into essential generalities, into an immense system of novel and highly astounding a priori truths" (166). The strangeness of the truths in question only glimpsed in waking life in the life-world — a strangeness which evokes philosophical wonder, in other words, which causes philosophy to violently make a breakthrough in everyday life — stems from the recognition of the universality of the subjective a priori. The very universality of the subjective structures exhibited in the analyses of how things and the world appear to us, shatters straightforward living toward things within the world in everyday waking life, and opens up the task of the philosophical.

However, in spite of the fact that this new direction of interest is borne in the life-world itself, to be carried out genuinely, it requires securing the new realm of inquiry, and the development of a method of investigation cut to the size of this new field. Although the first *epoché* of objectifying knowledge has made the pre-given life-world manifest as one of manifold relativities, the investigation of the

correlation of world and world-consciousness in light of the subjective universal a priori, requires that the pregivenness of the life-world become manifest as such. A second *epoche*, in Husserl's parlance, a transcendental *epoche*, that is, a freeing of the inquiring gaze from the natural attitude, and its general thesis of the existence of the world, thus becomes necessary in order for the pre-giving structures of subjectivity to surface. Needless to say, that the world is pre-given is not something one could cease assuming, but by suspending the belief in the existence of the world, one can come to see *how we produce* this (necessary) assumption, how subjectivity is involved in its assumed existence. Through the transcendental *epoche*, the world-constituting subjectivity, the transcendental primordially of constituting life anterior to all constituted formations, becomes thematic as such. Finally, this second *epoche* also makes possible the "transcendental reduction," which itself opens up the dimension of the transcendental correlation between world and world-consciousness.

For our purposes, a very summary description of the findings of the correlation analyses must suffice. Once one begins to inquire into the modes in which objects are subjectively given within the life-world, that is, "into *how* an object ... exhibits itself as being and being-such, we enter a realm of more and more involved and very remarkable exposition (*sich immer mehr verwickelnder und sehr merkwürdiger Aufweisungen*).... [I]n reflection we recognize with astonishment (*Staunen*) that essential correlations obtain here which are the component parts of a farther-reaching, universal a priori" (159). The first discovery made in scrutinizing the *how* of the appearance of things is that of "a fixed typology ... [that] applies not only to perceiving, to bodies, and to the penetrable depths of immediate sensibility but to any and every entity within the spatio-temporal world, and to its subjective manners of givenness" (166). While having, at first, the looks of a "confusingly manifold typology of correlations, comprising further differentiations at every turn," this typology proves itself to be a "total multiplicity," that is, a multiplicity that possesses ideality and essential generality (166). Husserl observes that in centering on the subjective acts in which world and things appear to us, "a number of never thematically investigated types, not only of individual things but also of syntheses, in an inseparable synthetic totality which is constantly produced by intentionally overlapping horizon-validities" come into view (145). This "synthetic totality," or "universe of synthetically connected accomplishments" (145) of consciousness, is the totality of the world-constituting acts of subjectivity, or, as Husserl also calls it, the "world-nucleus (*Weltkern*)" (133), i.e., the subjective correlate of the world as the world that has ontic meaning and ontic validity for us. The subjective universe of "universal accomplishing life in which the world comes to be as existing for us constantly in flowing particularity, constantly 'pregiven' to us" (145), thus reveals itself as the constitutive correlate of the world

and its own universal structures. That which in the natural attitude characteristic of both the prescientific life in the life-world and scientific life was taken for granted — the spatio-temporal existence of things in the world, their universal causal style, etc. — all this now appears to be a function of subjective accomplishments, whose universal structures are therefore more fundamental.

An additional implication of the discovery of the synthetic totality of the subjective accomplishments regarding things in the world needs mentioning here. As we have seen, the analyses of the correlation between things and the subjective modes of their givenness, yield a multiplicity of acts that form a synthetic totality. As far as an individual entity is concerned, this is “an ideal set of actual and possible experiential manners of givenness, each of which is an appearance of this one entity.” Consequently, any actual concrete experience of an object is merely a realization of one of the manners of givenness that make up the total multiplicity of the intentional acts in question. According to Husserl, the latter represents “a horizon of possible realizable processes, as opposed to the actual process, and as such it belongs to each experience, or rather to the intention which is operative within it” (167). The horizon of the possible ways in which things can be given — a horizon that is necessarily implied in any actual concrete way in which an entity is given — thus relativizes the originality of any singular experience of a thing, and links it to the ideal and synthetic multiplicity of the manners of givenness that form the total horizon within which that experience occurs. Differently worded, the life-world *a priori* shows that any singular experience occurs against the background of a universal world-horizon implicit within any such experience. Husserl leaves no doubt regarding the “fact” that “no conceivable human being, no matter how different we imagine him to be, could ever experience a world in manners of givenness which differ from the incessantly mobile relativity” of the world *pregiven* to him, and the “great horizon of remarkable truths” about this *pregiven* world that the correlation analyses have brought to light (165).

From these analyses of the modes in which things are perceived in the life-world, and from which it becomes clear that “anything that is — what ever its meaning and to whatever region it belongs — is an index of a subjective system of correlations” (165), it follows that the total intentional accomplishment of subjectivity involved in the constitution of the world as a formation of meaning, cannot be that of the “isolated subject.” Husserl advances that “we are dealing, rather, with the entirety of the accomplishment of communalized intersubjectivity” (167; translation modified). As we have already shown, the life-world is not only that of everyday surrounding spatio-temporal things, within the life-world we are also with others. Apart from the phenomena which affect the ways in which things are subjectively perceived in the individual ego’s perception of things —

kinesthetics, alteration of validity, horizon-consciousness, and so forth – there is also “the fact that in our continuously flowing world-perceiving we are not isolated but rather have, within it, contact with other human beings” (163). Since in “*living with one another*” each one [has not only his or her perceptions, presentifications, devaluations of his or her certainties, etc., but] can take part in the life of others”; straightforward, or individual perception is, from the outset, communalized from within. In a way analogous to what happens in individual perception and experiences where the individual series of experiences within my own experiential life enter into contact, and mutually correct each other, my experiential acquisitions also enter into contact with those of others, with the effect that, “for the most part, intersubjective harmony of validity occurs, [establishing what is] ‘normal’ in respect to particular details, and thus an intersubjective unity also comes about in the multiplicity of validities and of what is valid through them” (163). By way of this reciprocal correction, or, as Husserl also describes it, “critique” (163), of individual validity claims, the world as one and the same world is engendered in a communalized subjectivity which “continuously maintains constant validity as the world which is in part already experienced and in part the open horizon of possible experiences for all; it is the world as the universal horizon, common to all man, of actually existing things” (164).¹⁴ Even though each one has his or her experienced things, “each individual ‘knows’ himself [then] to be living within the horizon of his fellow human beings He knows that he and his fellows, in their actual contact, are related to the same experienced things in such a way that each individual has different aspects, different sides, perspectives, etc., of them but that in each case these are taken from the same total system of multiplicities of which each individual is constantly conscious (in the actual experience of the same thing) as the horizon of possible experience of this thing” (164).

The unifying multiplicities exhibited in the investigation of individual object-perception are themselves relativized by the deeper-lying multiplicities of communalized life within which individual object-perception is inscribed. What all of this proves is not only that the total synthesis of intentional subjectivity has multiple levels, but that this synthetic accomplishment is that of a communalized intersubjectivity (*vergemeinschafteten Intersubjektivität*). As Husserl points out, “all the levels and strata through which the syntheses, intentionally overlapping as

¹⁴ Let us also mention that critique is involved in the formation of the ego's identity. Pointing to the essential role that temporalization occupies for the ego's identity, Husserl writes, that as “now actually present,” the ego is temporalized in that it “has contact with its past ego, even though the latter is precisely no longer present: it can have a dialogue with it and critique it, as it can others” (172).

they are from subject to subject, are *intervoven*, form a universal unity of synthesis; through it the objective [*gegenständliche*] universe comes to be – the world which is and as it is concretely and vividly given (and *pregiven* for all possible praxis) (168). The “obscure horizon” (167) of the formation of the world as objective universe is none other than that of the syntheses of communalized intersubjectivity. It is in “intersubjective constitution” that “the world, meaning by this the total system of manners of givenness, however hidden, also of modes of validity for egos” (168), comes into being. The world thus formed through intersubjective constitution is the world as a “structure of meaning (*Sinngebilde*).” Husserl writes: “Through this constitution, if we systematically uncover it, the world as it is for us becomes understandable as the structure of meaning formed out of elementary intentionalities” (168). The *one* world shared by all, is a product of elementary subjective accomplishments, not something objectively given, but something whose unity is constantly generated through critical acts of correction by which individual validity claims become relativized. In uncovering and opening up the “obscure horizon” of its constitution “through methodical regressive inquiry” (167), the world as a structure of meaning reveals itself as the correlate of the world-constituting transcendental ego. For the accomplishment of this task, the transcendental *epoche* is instrumental.

From everything we have seen so far, it should be clear that the transcendental ego is not the individual ego, but the ego of communalized intersubjectivity. However, as Husserl also notes, by suspending the natural attitude with respect to the world in the transcendental *epoche*, not only the world is reduced to a phenomenon, mankind is reduced as well “to the phenomenon ‘mankind.’” While the reduction of world to the transcendental phenomenon ‘world’ permits one to understand it as a meaning-formation, the reduction of mankind to the phenomenon ‘mankind’, “makes it possible to recognize mankind as a self-objectivation of transcendental subjectivity which is always functioning ultimately and is thus ‘absolute’” (153). Before discussing the phenomenon ‘mankind’ any further let us remind ourselves that bracketing the natural attitude, the radical, or transcendental, *epoche* reduces everything objective to the unitary multiplicity of its subjective modes of givenness, that is, to the status of something intended or meant (*Gemeintes*). However, in this inquiry into the subjective, the objective is not transformed into “a psychic occurrence in men through which they gain experience of the world, everyday or scientific opinion about the world” (179). Qua *epoche* of everything objective, the subjective in the sense of psychic process has been put out of play as well, precisely because the subjective in this sense presupposes the givenness of the world. Undoubtedly, in “the pure attitude focused upon correlations, created by the *epoche*, the world, the objective, becomes itself something subjective,” but since “even the ‘subjective’ is relativized” (179) by the

epoche, subjective refers here to something other than the psychological subjectivity of the 'I'. Husserl explains: "The world (called 'transcendental phenomenon' in the transformed attitude) is from the start taken only as a correlate of subjective appearances, views, subjective acts and capacities through which it constantly has, and ever attains anew, its changeable [but] unitary sense" (179). These appearances of the world reduced to its phenomenal essence, are construed as its subjective manners of givenness. If, consequently, "the ego-poles and everything about them of a specifically ego-character become the subject of essential inquiry, they ... become, in a new and still higher sense, the subjective aspect of the world and also of its manners of appearing." In contrast to the psychological concept of subjectivity which presupposes the over-againstness of the objective world, as well as its pregivenness and unquestioned existence independent from it, the concept of subjectivity in the *epoche* "encompass[es] everything: ego-poles and the universe of ego-poles, multiplicities of appearance or object-poles and the universe of object-poles" (179). As Husserl avers, for the sense constituting transcendental ego the assumption of a being exterior to it makes no sense.¹⁵ Indeed, it is not to be thought as an inside opposed to something outside. It follows already from this unheard of concept of subjectivity that the transcendental ego constitutive of the world is not human subjectivity, nor the collective subject of mankind insofar as the latter remain part of the world that it is supposed to constitute. As a real entity, the 'we' in the sense of "we human beings" has become a phenomenon in the *epoche*, that is, an "object-pole and [hence] subject-matter for inquiry back into the correlative intentionalities" of which it is the pole, and through whose function the 'we' has attained its ontic meaning. Husserl, therefore, can ask: "are the transcendental subjects, i.e. those *functioning* in the constitution of the world, human beings? After all, the *epoche* has made them into 'phenomena,' so that the philosopher within the *epoche* has neither himself nor others naively and straightforwardly valid as *human beings* but precisely only as 'phenomena,' as poles for transcendental regressive inquiries" (183). As a consequence, the transcendental subject is not human if human is to refer to "real psychophysical beings" whether individual or collective (183). The world-constituting ego is the ego not of mankind as a socio-historical reality, but of its phenomenon in the shape of communalized intersubjectivity. The transcendently accomplishing subjectivity highlighted by the radical *epoche* and whose total essential form becomes available through eidetic reduction is an a-human subjectivity. But what becomes clear at this point as well is that the

¹⁵ Husserl, *Die Krisis*, p. 415.

subject-pole constitutive of the *one* world, is like the *one* world itself, not a static idea, but an idea in the Kantian sense, ever unfinished, and thus the object of an infinite task. This, then, is the new universal truth unearthed by the new science that renews the Greek project of a rational and all-encompassing science. It is, indeed, a very odd universality that binds all humans, precisely because it is a-human, but its a-humanity, that is, its aloofness with respect to all particular humanities, is also what secures its universally binding value for human beings. Anything human, would be too human, in order to be truly binding. But the a-humanity of this new universal truth is not, unlike the objective a priori, an alienating form. Husserl argues that "each human being 'bears within himself a transcendental 'I' — not as a real part or a stratum of his soul (which would be absurd) but rather insofar as he is the self-objectification, as exhibited through phenomenological self-reflection, of the corresponding transcendental 'I'" (186). Furthermore, as is obvious from the elaborations on the transcendental ego in Part III, B of *The Crisis*, in which Husserl pursues a way into phenomenological philosophy from psychology, the transcendental ego, although in one sense radically different from the empirical psychological ego, is, in a different sense, still the same. It is, therefore, that the intrinsic alterity of the subjective a priori's universality is distinctly different from the alienness of the objective universal.

Before further elaborating on this new, more all-embracing, universal, it is necessary to recall Husserl's contention that his conclusion that the world-constituting intersubjective ego is nothing human was a bit premature given that it is always "I" "who performs the epoche, and even if there are others, and even if they practice the epoche in direct community with me, [they and] all other human beings with their entire act-life are included, for me, within my epoche, in the world-phenomenon which, in my epoche, is exclusively mine" (184). The point Husserl wishes to bring home here is that the discovery of transcendental subjectivity always rests on what he calls "the primal 'I' (*Ur-Ich*), the ego of my epoche, which can never lose its uniqueness and personal indeclinability" (185). But there is no mistaking this primal "I" which performs the radical *epoche* in "a unique sort of philosophical solitude" (184), for one "I," that is, in the sense of an "I" that would have cut itself off from all the others, and to which it thus continues to belong. As Husserl avers, the "I" that performs the epoche is "actually called 'I' only by equivocation though it is an essential equivocation since, when I name it in reflection, I can say nothing other than: it is I who practice the epoche, I who interrogate, as phenomenon, the world which is now valid for me according to its being and being-such, with all its human beings, of whom I am so fully conscious" (184). Because the "I" who focuses on transcendental intersubjectivity is not the "I" of the single, concrete individual, the role that Husserl attributes to the "primal 'I'" does not contradict the preceding claim "of a

transcendental intersubjectivity constituting the world as 'world for all,' in which I again appear, this time as 'one' transcendental 'I' among others, whereby 'we all' are taken as functioning transcendently" (184).¹⁶ Yet, this emphasis on the primal "I" as one which "starting from itself and in itself ... constitutes transcendental intersubjectivity, to which it then adds itself as a merely privileged member, namely, as 'I' among the transcendental others (*als Ich der transzendentalen Andern*)" (185), has frequently been denounced as indicative of an essential Husserlian solipsism. Taking its starting point in this primal 'I', however transcendental, is certainly further evidence of Husserlian phenomenology's continuing indebtedness to the metaphysics of subjectivity. Be that as it may, the central position attributed to the "I" in the constitution of intersubjectivity is paradoxically what endows Husserl's concept of universality with a set of features that radically distinguish it from the objective conception of universality, whether in the natural sciences or in philosophies modeled after the latter. Indeed, by insisting on the fact that transcendental intersubjectivity is constituted, first and foremost, by the 'I' who practices the *epoche* (which then makes itself declinable, for itself, transcendently), Husserl highlights his understanding of universal intersubjectivity and its correlate, the world-horizon as products of intentional acts. He also shows that rather than being preformed ideas in some *topos ouraneos*, intersubjectivity and world-horizontality are dependent on subjective acts of consciousness. Transcendental community is not a given, rather, it is something that is being produced, that, therefore, is also historical, in the sense that one has never finished bringing it to life by a communalized subject which itself needs constant work.¹⁷ Both communalized intersubjectivity and the world-for-all are tasks precisely insofar as they are sense-formations constituted by an ego. They are Ideas in the Kantian sense. Finally, by highlighting the primordially of the "primal 'I,'" Husserl may also suggest that in the face of communalized intersubjectivity, the singularity of the 'I' who constitutes this very same intersubjectivity, is not a given either. It itself is something that can only be achieved in a radical act, that is, in the act in which "I" perform the *epoche*. Husserl's insistence on the "primal 'I'" is thus also an attempt to secure the

¹⁶ See also Husserl, *Die Krisis*, pp. 416-17.

¹⁷ Husserl's claim that the primal 'I' of the *epoche* constitutes intersubjectivity, adding itself to it merely as a privileged member, "namely as the I of the transcendental Others (*als Ich der transzendentalen Andern*)," that is, as the 'I' which constitutes the transcendental Others, implies that each "I" itself must, freely one could say, constitute "in itself an other as other" (185). This constitution of the other, which, as various analyses in *Crisis* suggest, takes place in analogy to the ways in which an actual "I" constitutes "itself in self-temporalization as enduring through 'its' pasts" (185), rather than encroaching on the other, throws the recognition of the other onto the self, and turns it into a task, an infinite task at that if the other is to be recognized in its otherness.

singularity and uniqueness of an "I" which at the same time appears as one transcendental 'I' among others in constituted intersubjectivity, by turning it into the objective of an infinite task. Undoubtedly, as Husserl acknowledges, as products of an a-human subjectivity, these Ideas appear strange, and contrary to everyday opinions. But insofar as these Ideas are products of a consciousness practicing the *epoche*, they are, unlike objective universality, absolutely binding.

The universals that have made the natural sciences so successful in mathematizing nature are as, we have seen, a function of the spatio-temporal shape of bodily things. Universality for the sciences, and the philosophies that have taken their lead, is predicated on geometric form. According to Husserl, all attempts to map the realm of the psyche in a way similar to the explication of nature by the sciences must therefore fail. Now, the life-world as the ground to which the objective sciences must be traced back is the spatio-temporal world of things experienced in pre- and extrascientific life. The science of the life-world — a science inquiring into transcendental subjectivity — is one that shows that "natural, objective world-life is only a particular mode of the transcendental life which forever constitutes the world, [though] in such a way that transcendental subjectivity, while living on in this mode, has not become conscious of the constituting horizons and never can be aware of them" (175-6). However, once transcendental subjectivity reflects on its infatuation with the objects in the world, "the full and true ontic meaning of objective being, and thus of all objective truth, is set forth" (176). It thus becomes clear that objective science and its universal truths are not truly universal, but are inscribed, as it were, in the universal structures exhibited by the inquiry into the life-world. The science of transcendental subjectivity is the only science that can claim the title of a universal science. What makes it universal are thus not the spatio-temporal forms of the bodily things in the world, but the structures of the elementary intentionalities that form the structures of meaning, including those of the spatio-temporal form. Rather than being predicated on shape, the universality of the new science of the accomplishing life of transcendental subjectivity is predicated on what Husserl calls, "the essential form (*Wesensform*) of the transcendental accomplishments in all their types of individual and intersubjective accomplishments, that is, the total essential form (*die gesamte Wesensform*) of transcendently accomplishing subjectivity in all its social forms" (178). What is universal in the endless flow of subjective constituting life are the essential forms, or forms of essence, as well as the totality of these forms disclosed through the method of eidetic reduction. If these forms, which are forms in a new sense, in that they constitute subjectivity in its innermost elementary acts and intentionalities, are universal, it is also because every "I" can practice the radical *epoche* of the natural attitude, perform the eidetic reduction, and reconstruct the

procedures by which the universals in question have been laid bare.¹⁸ In short, they can be established intersubjectively in the strictest way, and made apodictically evident.

At one point, while evoking "the endless array" of problems and discoveries made in the wake of the reoriented interest of the *epoche*, and the subsequent recognition of "the purely subjective in its own self-enclosed pure context as intentionality," one is led to wonder whether the correlation-analyses will ever hit rock bottom. But Husserl remarks that, although, "indeed, every 'ground' that is reached points to further grounds, every horizon opened up awakens new horizons, and yet the endless whole, in its infinity of flowing movement, is oriented toward the unity of one meaning; not, of course, in such a way that we could ever simply grasp and understand the whole; rather, as soon as one has fairly well mastered the universal form of meaning formation, the breadths and depths of this total meaning, in its infinite totality, take on valiative [*axiotische*] dimensions: there arise problems of the totality as that of a universal reason" (170). In spite of the daunting complexity of the analyses of the world-constituting processes of subjectivity, each newly disclosed level of sense-formation reveals itself also to be interwoven with deeper lying syntheses, thus suggesting a universal unity of synthesis. If the one, infinite totality of meaning intimated by the universal form of meaning-formation, cannot simply be grasped and understood as a whole, is it not precisely because rather than simply a hidden ground, this ground is a ground still to be constituted in an infinite process, or progress? The infinite totality in question here is the horizon with respect to which a particular meaning-formation acquires meaning to begin with, but this horizon also temporalizes it, defining it as one moment in the infinite task of accomplishing the total meaning. The infinite totality presupposed and aimed at by all subjective and intersubjective acts of consciousness, takes on valiative dimensions, Husserl holds. Indeed, the one total meaning toward which point the universal forms structuring all the acts of intentional meaning-formation, particularly to the extent that they are acts of a communalized intersubjectivity, has the status of a value, a norm, or principle of axiology. With this valiative quality, that is, the idea (in a Kantian sense) of a totality of meaning of all acts of consciousness, Husserl, as we have seen, invokes the question of a universal reason.

This question which had been broached in the first part of the *Crisis* (and

¹⁸ As Derrida has pointed out, Husserl's renewed concept of universal form remains caught within metaphysics because this new concept is attained through an analysis of the ego. (See Jacques Derrida, "Form and meaning: A Note on the Phenomenology of Language", *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. A. Bass, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982, pp. 158, 169, 172.)

the "Vienna Lecture"), is not further developed in the remaining part of the existing body of the work. Yet in the manuscript appended as Chapter 73 by Walter Biemel to the unfinished manuscript in the first complete edition of the Crisis as Volume VI of the *Husserliana*, this question is taken up at some length. To conclude, I turn to a commentary of some of these pages whose unquestionable ponderousness should not distract from their indisputable significance regarding that with which we have been concerned, and which the English translation features as Appendix IV. The idea of a truth in itself, and its correlate, being itself, on which the project of a universal science of the world rests, that is, the project of philosophy as it emerges in ancient Greece, may well be "a philosophical invention [*Erfindung*]," Husserl admits. But he is also quick to note that it is "not a dispensable invention without significance, but one which raises — or is called to raise — man to a new level in a new historical development of human life [*in einer neuen Historizität menschheitlichen Lebens*], a historical development whose entelechy is the new idea and the philosophical or scientific praxis belonging to it, the method of a new sort of scientific thinking" (336). Even though as a thinking being, "the man of everyday life ... has the *katalon*," i.e., the notion of the general, or universal, in everyday life he achieves only relative truths. Yet, the very "invention," or discovery, of the idea of a truth in itself — a universal truth — submits everyday life to the very strange demand of an altogether different kind of life and historicity — a life in view of the non-relative, and its universally binding truths. Although from the Renaissance on, this new standard for shaping human life has taken root in Europe under the form of the objective sciences, the Greek idea of a life refashioned in light of universal truths is now conceived of, by way of Husserl's elaborations on the intersubjective constitution of the world, in more fundamental terms than those of the natural sciences and its type of universally binding truth. Explaining that his use of the term "transcendental" to characterize phenomenological philosophy as the new science that renews the Greek idea of an all-embracing rational science, and, hence, the idea that animates "Europe," pays tribute to idealism as the only philosophy that has provided something of a bulwark against the objectifying thrust of the natural sciences, Husserl invokes Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, and ascertains that "*reason* is the specific characteristic of man," and that, therefore, his life "is a constant becoming through a constant intentionality of development" (338). Indeed, reason induces man to seize "in consciousness ... the idea of autonomy, the idea of a resolve of the will to shape one's whole personal life into the synthetic unity of a life of universal self-responsibility." For man, to possess reason, amounts to having a telos, a goal toward which to develop, and thus to be able, in such development, "to be true to himself ... to remain identical with himself." Needless to say, to have reason in no way means to be reasonable. It only means to have an innate goal, and with it a

task to accomplish, one which, as Husserl emphasizes, is inextricably linked to the will of the community of humans as a whole to shape its life according to principles of reason as well.

Philosophy as a rational and universal science is the highest means towards attaining the goal inherent in man of becoming an autonomous and self-responsible being. Philosophy as rigorous science not only articulates this goal, but does so in a manner congruent with the goal itself, in other words, in an apodictically grounding way, one which thus can be understood or reconstructed by anyone. Husserl writes: "The universally, apodictically grounded and grounding science arises now as the necessarily highest function of mankind ... namely, as making possible mankind's development into a personal autonomy and into an all-encompassing autonomy for mankind – the idea which represents the driving force of life for the highest stage of mankind" (338). Philosophy consequently has an imminently practical or ethical purpose. But that is not all! Qua rational science it is an intrinsically historical science in the sense that at no stage of its development, its apodictically grounded articulation of reason as the telos of humanity is completed. "Philosophy is nothing other than [rationalism], through and through, but it is rationalism differentiated within itself according to the different stages of the movement of intention and fulfillment; it is *ratio in the constant movement of self-elucidation [Selbsterhellung]*, begun with the first breakthrough of philosophy into mankind, whose innate reason was previously in a state of concealment, of nocturnal obscurity" (339). Rather than the definite and polished presentation of what is universal, the idea of a universal science that irrupts for the first time in Greece, and that constitutes the idea of "Europe," is a rational science in that in setting reason as a goal, this very goal impels it to critically overcome each one of its historical elaborations by seeking greater and greater clarity about itself. Philosophy as rational and universal science is intrinsically historical not merely because it develops differentially in response to the various stages in which its goal is intended and finds fulfillment, but precisely because it is driven by the rational task of achieving increasing self-elucidation. This defining quality of critical self-elucidation – one that sets it apart from religion and mythical constructs – is what makes philosophy rational, and causes it to be in constant movement since its dawn in Greece. Although from the outside, philosophy may appear as just one cultural – or, I add, ethnic – formation among others, and its history merely "a causal process occurring in the world, in the world's space and time," "seen from the inside" it is "the constant struggle of 'awakened' reason to come to itself, to an understanding of itself, to a reason which concretely understands itself in understanding the existing world, existing in its whole universal truth" (339). According to Husserl's poignant expression, "rationality" means to be "on the way to a higher rationality." It is not a title one

— Europe, for instance — can claim to effectively possess, for rationality is equivalent to the awareness “again and again [of] its unsatisfying relativity ... [and] is driven on in its toils, in its will to attain the true and full rationality.” It is neither a title that Greece can simply be credited with since the struggle of reason to come to itself has led to the discovery that reason, or rationality, is “an idea residing in the infinite.” As Husserl observes, with this discovery that reason is an Idea in the Kantian sense, a “final form [*Endgestalt*] is discovered which itself becomes “the beginning form [*Anfangsgestalt*] of a new sort of infinity and relativity” (339). Distinct from the infinity (and relativity) of the objective, or spatio-temporal, universal world, this new form of infinity characterizes the infinite tasks of critically and intersubjectively working toward a rational mankind.

The demand of apodicticity, together with universality and absolute self-responsibility — the founding ideas of “Europe” — is the first of these new infinite tasks. Although this discovery is, as we have seen before, made for the first time by Descartes, thereby opening up the period of modernity, and thus precedes Husserl’s own attempt to radically renew its genuine sense, Descartes’ discovery is a discovery of “what, in the transcendental understanding, outlines the primal ground and the primal method of all philosophy” (340), namely the demand of absolute self-responsibility and universal reconstructibility. By foregrounding the idea of apodicticity, not only a new beginning is made — one of newly infinite tasks — but also a new beginning in philosophizing and of what philosophy means. For, indeed, by making apodicticity into the fundamental problem of philosophy, to philosophize is to implicate not only all other philosophers, it is to implicate mankind as a whole. Rediscovering apodicticity, that is, the demand to think responsibly and in respect of others, that is, in conformity with the goal of making any claim one makes universally reconstructable, is to acknowledge that as a bearer of reason one is intersubjectively tied up with all others. If apodicticity is the ultimate meaning of philosophy, then philosophy is necessarily about intersubjectivity, and the infinite process and progress of self-elucidation without which there can be no such thing. As Husserl remarks, with the rediscovery within phenomenology of apodicticity as the ultimate meaning and task of philosophy, “there begins a philosophy with the deepest and most universal self-understanding of the philosophizing ego as the bearer of absolute reason coming to itself, of the same ego as implicating, in his apodictic being-for-himself, his fellow subjects and all possible fellow philosophers; [this is] the discovery of absolute intersubjectivity (objectified in the world as the whole of mankind), as that in which reason, in obscurity, in elucidation, in the movement of lucid self-understanding, is in infinite progress” (340).

The new sense of philosophy accruing from apodicticity as its fundamental problem, entails a new sense as well of what it means to be human. The new

meaning given to human existence in the wake of the philosophical discovery, or rediscovery, of apodicticity, is that of “the ultimate self-understanding of man as being responsible for his own human being: his *self-understanding as being in being called to a life of apodicticity*, not only in abstractly practicing apodictic science in the usual sense but [as being mankind] which realizes its whole concrete being in apodictic freedom by becoming apodictic mankind in the whole active life of its reason – through which it is human” (340). This is the infinite task of a humanity striving to live a life according to the idea of reason, a task that Husserl has identified as the essential meaning of “Europe” as an idea. The realization of this idea is not only an infinite task, it is also a realization that, rather than fulfilling a pre-given and programmatic notion of what rationality means, consists in the will to be rational, and hence also in the call to intersubjectively establish what is universal, and this in a process that itself is infinite. Husserl remarks: “mankind understanding itself as rational, understanding that it is rational in seeking to be rational ... this signifies an infinity of living and striving toward reason; ... reason is precisely that which man *qua* man, in his innermost being, is aiming for” (340-41). In what is clearly a critical reference to Kant, Husserl concludes that such understanding of reason as the will to be rational, and thus to be true to oneself insofar as the human is capable of the odd demands that come with having reason, “allows for no differentiation into ‘theoretical,’ ‘practical,’ ‘aesthetics,’ or whatever.” Being human, that is, living according to the goal set by the idea of something universal – an idea that violently irrupts in Greece, and has shaped what “Europe” as an idea means – “is teleological being and an ought-to-be, and ... this teleology holds sway in each and every activity and project of an ego.” It is meant to hold sway, as Husserl concludes, because the human being “through self-understanding ... can know the apodictic *telos*; and ... this knowing, the ultimate self-understanding, has no other form than self-understanding according to a priori principles as self-understanding in the form of philosophy” (341).

