

Joaquim Siles i Borràs

# **The Ethics of Husserl's Phenomenology**

Responsibility and Ethical Life

Continuum Studies in Continental Philosophy



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*Continuum Studies in Continental Philosophy*

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Joaquim Siles i Borràs



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## List of Abbreviated Titles

Works by Edmund Husserl:

- CM      *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, translated by Dorion Cairns, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960; *Husserliana I. Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge*. Ed. Stephane Strasser. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950, repr. 1973. All the citations from *Cartesian Meditations* will be referenced by the abbreviation CM followed by the section and page numbers of the English translation as well as by *Husserliana* pagination.
- IP      *The Idea of Phenomenology*, translated by William P. Alston and George Nakhnikian, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964; *Husserliana II. Die Idee der Phänomenologie. Fünf Vorlesungen*. Ed. Walter Biemel. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950, repr. 1973. All the citations from *The Idea of Phenomenology* will be referenced by the abbreviation IP followed by the section and page numbers of the English translation as well as by *Husserliana* pagination.
- I      *Ideas. General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology. First Book*, translated by W. R. Boyce Gibson, New York: George Allen & Unwin Ltd: London and Humanities Press Inc., 1969; *Husserliana III/1. Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie. Erster Teil*. Ed. Karl Schumann. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976. *Husserliana III/2. Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie. Zweiter Teil, Ergänzende Texte*. Ed. Karl Schumann. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976. All the citations from *Ideas I* will be referenced by the abbreviation I followed by the section and page numbers of the English translation as well as by *Husserliana* pagination.
- I 2<sup>nd</sup>      *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. Second Book*, translated by Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer, Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989; *Husserliana IV. Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie*

*und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Zweites Buch. Phänomenologische Untersuchungen zur Konstitution.* Ed. Marly Biemel. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1952. All the citations from *Ideas II* will be referenced by the abbreviation I2 followed by the section and page numbers of the English translation as well as by *Husserliana* pagination.

- C *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, translated by David Carr, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1970; *Husserliana VI. Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie.* Ed. Walter Biemel. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1954, repr. 1962. All the citations from *Crisis* will be referenced by the abbreviation C followed by the section and page numbers of the English translation as well as by *Husserliana* pagination.
- EJ *Experience and Judgment: Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic*, translated by James Churchill and Karl Ameriks, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1973; *Erfahrung und Urteil: Untersuchungen zur Genealogie der Logik.* Ed. L. Landgrebe. Prague: Academia-Verlag, 1938; Hamburg: Claasen, 1954. All the citations from *Experience and Judgment* will be referenced only by the abbreviation EJ followed by the section and page numbers of the English translation.
- PCIT *On the Phenomenology of Consciousness of Internal Time (1893–1917)*, translated by John Barnett Brough, Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991; *Husserliana X. Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins (1893–1917).* Ed. Rudolf Boehm. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966. All the citations from *Phenomenology of Consciousness of Internal Time* will be referenced by the abbreviation PCIT followed by the section and page numbers of the English translation as well as by *Husserliana* pagination.
- APAS *Analysis Concerning Active and Passive Synthesis: Lectures on Transcendental Logic*, translated by Anthony Steinbock, Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001; *Husserliana XI. Analysen zur passiven Synthesis. Aus Vorlesungs- und Forschungsmanuskripten 1918–1926.* Ed. Margot Fleischer. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966; *Husserliana XIV. Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlass. Erster Teil: 1921–1928.* Ed. Iso Kern. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973. All the citations from *Analysis Concerning Active and Passive Synthesis* will be referenced by the abbreviation APAS followed by the section and page numbers of the English translation as well as by *Husserliana* pagination.

- FTL     *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, translated by Dorion Cairns, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969; *Husserliana XVII. Formale und transzendente Logik. Versuch einer Kritik der logischen Vernunft*. Ed. Paul Jansen. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974. All the citations from *Formal and Transcendental Logic* will be referenced by the abbreviation FTL followed by the section and page numbers of the English translation as well as by *Husserliana* pagination.
- LI       *Logical Investigations*, translated by J. N. Findlay and edited by Dermot Moran, London and New York: Routledge, 2001; *Husserliana XVIII. Logische Untersuchungen. Erster Band. Prolegomena zur reinen Logik*. Ed. Elmar Holstein. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975. *Husserliana XIX/1–2. Logische Untersuchungen. Zweiter Band. Untersuchungen zur Phänomenologie und Theorie der Erkenntnis*. Ed. Ursula Panzer. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1984. All the citations from *Logical Investigations* will be referenced by the abbreviation LI followed by the section and page numbers of the English translation as well as by *Husserliana* pagination.

# Introduction

Husserl's phenomenology has been explored and interpreted from different philosophical angles: from the field of cognitive science to Levinas' ethical-religious approach, and from Derrida's deconstructive analyses to analytic philosophy. By helping to clarify many of its difficulties and obscurities, by making new questions and topics emerge, and even by pointing out critical problems and seemingly unsurpassable limitations, all these readings have contributed to a deeper understanding of Husserl's phenomenological project.

There is, however, one central question in Husserl's phenomenology that has been systematically neglected or, even when acknowledged, has been pushed to the margins. This is the question of ethics. The deployment of a notion of ethics within Husserl's phenomenology is, however, not free from complexity. When in the *Prolegomena to Logical Investigations* Husserl argues that 'every normative and likewise every practical discipline rests on one or more theoretical disciplines, inasmuch as its rules must have a theoretical content separable from the notion of normativity (of the "shall" or "should")', whose scientific investigation is the duty of these theoretical disciplines', Husserl is clearly indicating that his phenomenological inquiry is a theoretical description of the meaning-structures of consciousness and that, as such, cannot be normative.<sup>1</sup> This study will still suggest, however, that this does not entail that Husserl's phenomenological inquiry must be devoid of an ethical character. For while in the *Prolegomena* to the second edition of *Logical Investigations* Husserl does clearly say that phenomenology cannot be normative, in the *First Investigation* he introduces what appears to be a first principle of phenomenology. Husserl speaks here of the 'freedom from presuppositions' as a 'principle of an epistemological investigation' that is to regulate the inquiry and make of it a properly theoretical and scientific inquiry worthy of its name.<sup>2</sup> He writes:

In our view, theory of knowledge, properly described, is no theory. It is not science in the pointed sense of an explanatorily unified theoretical whole. *Theoretical explanation* means an ever increased rendering intelligible of singular facts through general laws, and an ever increased rendering intelligible of general laws through some *fundamental law*.<sup>3</sup>

But what is this fundamental law that is to regulate the elucidation of all general laws of knowledge of singular facts? Husserl invokes for the first time here the

principle of intuition as the only source of evidence and, therefore, of meaningfulness. He writes with regard to this *theoretical explanation*, otherwise called *phenomenology*:

Its aim is not to *explain* knowledge in the psychological or physiological sense as a *factual* occurrence in objective nature, but to *shed light* on the *Idea* of knowledge in its constitutive elements and laws. [. . .] ***It endeavours to raise to clearness the pure forms and laws of knowledge by tracing knowledge back to an adequate fulfilment in intuition.*** This 'clearing up' takes place in the framework of a phenomenology of knowledge, a phenomenology oriented, as we saw, to the essential structures of pure experiences and to the structures of sense [*Sinnbestände*].<sup>4</sup>

He then finishes the introduction by adding that

The real premises of our putative results must lie in propositions satisfying the requirement that what they assert permits of an *adequate phenomenological justification*, a fulfilment through *evidence* in the strict sense. Such propositions must not, further, ever be adduced in some other sense than that in which they have been intuitively established.<sup>5</sup>

Husserl's argument suggests here that phenomenology is to be regulated by a fundamental law, by means of which all general laws structuring meaning and experience can be made clear. This fundamental law, which he describes as the adequate intuitive givenness, is what frames the phenomenological inquiry and what, therefore, guarantees the validity of its discoveries. Furthermore, it could even be said that the principle of presuppositionlessness, of intuitive evidence, is what justifies the very phenomenological inquiry as an inquiry that is free from prejudices and assumptions. The introduction of this principle is then reformulated and refined in *Ideas I* as the 'principle of all principles'.<sup>6</sup> There Husserl insists, now even more assertively, that intuition is the only source of evidence and, therefore, the first principle of phenomenology.

The introduction of this principle brings an obvious tension to Husserl's formulation of phenomenology. For how can Husserl argue that phenomenology is not normative and at the same time introduce a regulative principle? Is not Husserl here simply re-introducing the same normativity that he had dismissed in the *Prolegomena*? Is not this tension a fatal mistake that, unwittingly, makes phenomenology normative and, therefore, a psychologistic inquiry? The present study will give reasons to think otherwise. For although the principle of presuppositionlessness might well be considered a fundamental law of evidence that takes the shape of a regulative principle, this regulative principle is not reducible to being of a normative character.<sup>7</sup> The principle of presuppositionlessness is a 'fundamental law' that is rather intrinsic to the very

structure of the object of the inquiry, i.e., the structure of meaning and, therefore, the structure of the phenomenologico-theoretical activity, instead of just being an external presupposed condition.<sup>8</sup> I am suggesting that the principle of evidence, the principle of all principles, is not a moral value dependent on an empirical-historical context but rather the very inner rule boundedness of meaning. It is for this reason that Husserl can assign to the question of intuitive evidence the title of principle of presuppositionlessness, the principle of all principles of phenomenology, without falling back into normativity. For what he is arguing is that intuitive evidence signifies the limits of meaning. Namely, that whatever is not evidently given cannot be accepted, for it is not meaningful. This is important for phenomenology as inquiry, given that it applies not only to 'transcendent' objects of consciousness, but to consciousness itself as object of reflective thought. *The principle of presuppositionlessness describes the intrinsic regulative limits of the inquiry, guaranteeing the presuppositionlessness of the inquiry.*

Paradoxically, however, by saying that Husserl's phenomenology cannot be confused with a mere normative discipline, I would like to open the door to a notion of ethics by means of which Husserl's phenomenology can be defined. Ethics is here neither identifiable with nor reducible to moral normativity. The problem with this identification is that it ignores the importance that Husserl gives all throughout the development of his inquiry to the necessity of having to justify itself according to evidence in order to guarantee that the inquiry be *free from prejudice*. To say that the inquiry itself demands justification signifies that every step of the inquiry must be free from presuppositions and, therefore, can only be justified if it is intuitively given and, thus, meaningful according to the fundamental law of evidence. This already intimates a demand for freedom from prejudice, from dogmatism, a demand for meaningfulness that only the principle of intuitive evidence can satisfy. This is however not a straightforward issue. For if intuition is the source of evidence and meaningfulness, and, therefore, only that which is given within the limits of intuition is phenomenologically acceptable, how can phenomenology have grasped those very limits in the first place in order to accept them as the principle of principles? If these intuitive limits, if this fundamental law as Husserl has also called it above, are given non-intuitively, then the principle of principles is not so, which means that there must be a more original principle or law that allows intuition to be grasped and accepted. If, on the other hand, one simply accepts that intuition is the principle of principles but, that in order for it to be so, it must simply be presupposed as if it was a normative value, then we would be falling back into a position of prejudice and presupposition, which the very principle denies.

The development of Husserl's phenomenology is driven precisely by this very problem concerning the issue of presuppositionlessness, rather than by epistemological concerns alone. That which defines Husserl's phenomenology and fuels its development is neither the accuracy of the method alone nor the



themes Husserl tackles in order to offer a fuller and more precise description of consciousness and constitution, as Donn Welton and John Drummond have argued respectively.<sup>9</sup> Instead, the discussion that follows will suggest that Husserl's phenomenology, and its development, can be defined instead by this demand for freedom from presuppositions and meaningfulness that pervades the inquiry from its very beginning. In his later writings, Husserl will come to qualify this demand as an 'ethical demand' that rests on an absolute or universal 'self-responsibility' [*Allgemeine Selbstverantwortlichkeit*], or reflective responsibility, towards the foundation of the inquiry, its methodology and its very principles.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, Husserl ends up assigning to this notion of reflective responsibility the degree of genesis or of the spiritual origin in which the inquiry is rooted. The origin or the foundations of the very limits of meaning is, thus, the very reflective responsibility that aims to justify every step of the inquiry, every limit and every principle. As we shall see, *the principle of presuppositionlessness introduced in Logical Investigations is a self-responsible demand for evidence that is, however, not exhausted in intuition and that, therefore, has an infinite dimension that allows it to stop at nothing*. This infinite reflective responsibility is precisely what reveals the *ethical attitude* that lies at the heart of Husserl's phenomenology. *Ethics is here the ethics of reflection*.

Continental phenomenology in particular has traditionally acknowledged this ethics of reflective responsibility. Nonetheless, the question of ethics in Husserl's phenomenology has generally been understood as an added factor, as one more dimension of the inquiry. Although in this case Husserl's phenomenology is not simply devoid of its ethical character, ethics is subordinated to the epistemological core that has been taken to truly define the inquiry. In her recent book *Husserl on Ethics and Intersubjectivity*, Janet Donohoe has re-located the question of ethics within Husserl's phenomenology, granting it the centrality that other Husserl's scholars have denied it.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, the centrality that Donohoe grants to the question of ethics is still relative to epistemological concerns. According to Donohoe, it is the development from static to genetic phenomenology that allows Husserl to re-define the notions of time and intersubjectivity within which, then, he is able to re-configure his early notion of ethics and develop it into a notion of ethics that is open to the Other and their temporality. Ethics, thus, is the result of genetic phenomenology. However, since such a development from static to genetic phenomenology seems to be simply guided by an attempt to provide us with a more complete and deeper understanding of the question of constitution, Donohoe's notion of ethics remains secondary to epistemology. Even though Donohoe explicitly links the question of ethics with issues such as responsibility, renewal and rigorous science, the fact that the phenomenological inquiry is primordially epistemological makes these key issues become also secondary within Husserl's phenomenology; they are simply the result of a methodological development guided by the question of constitution. Or more concretely, responsibility,

renewal and rigorous science only make sense within the sphere of genetic phenomenology. This implies not only that static phenomenology would not be concerned with such questions but, furthermore, that static and genetic phenomenology would only be linked by a notion of development that emerges as a result of a will to know and, therefore, would lack any essential unity.

The present study will show that the question of ethics is neither marginal nor secondary in Husserl's inquiry and that, although phenomenology is indeed an epistemological inquiry concerned with the re-foundation of Science, the inquiry is fundamentally ethical insofar as it is pervaded by this reflective responsibility preoccupied with the very principles that regulate the inquiry and with the origins from which they emerge. In Husserl's phenomenology, epistemology and ethics are intrinsically linked from the very outset. Thus, rather than arguing that ethics is the result of genetic phenomenology, the discussion carried out in the next five chapters will show that *the development from static to genetic phenomenology is ultimately motivated by an ethical self-responsibility, by an Ideal of renewal, that guides the inquiry from the very beginning. Phenomenology as a philosophical inquiry is a responsible attitude motivated by an ethical demand, by means of which Husserl attempts to tackle critical problems such as naturalism, psychologism and historicism with the ultimate aim of re-founding Science in a rigorous philosophy that can guarantee the becoming of an authentic humanity that is free from dogmatism.* The questions of rigorousness, renewal and self-responsibility that Husserl deploys gradually between 1911 and the 1930s are not, however, exclusive to the genetic period but already appear in earlier texts like *Logical Investigations* and *Ideas I* through the questions of presuppositionlessness, regulativity and the principle of principles. The importance of this claim is that it restores the question of ethics within the very core of Husserl's inquiry, making it possible to argue that phenomenology is an ethical project. Furthermore, by tracing reflective responsibility, rigorousness and the ethical demand to Husserl's notions of presuppositionlessness, intuition and regulativity in his earlier texts, the discussion also shows that the notion of ethics here deployed is intrinsic to the inquiry and is what endows it with its essential unity, rather than simply appearing as an aftermath to solve particular problems within the inquiry or as a response to the monstrous events that desolated Europe from 1914 till the end of Husserl's life.

But by referring to a phenomenological ethics in the sense of responsibility I do not simply mean to speak of the question of the Other. This has been Levinas', and to some extent also Derrida's, approach to phenomenology. Levinas presents us with a notion of ethics that aims to overcome the alleged immanentism and solipsism of Husserl's phenomenology. This ethical phenomenology is based upon the notion of the Other and on the relationship of awakening and responsibility that the Other maintains with me.<sup>12</sup> In the case of Derrida, he has charged Husserl's phenomenology with being trapped in the metaphysics of presence and has attempted to explode the question of

identity by putting it in 'dialectical' relationship with the notion of alterity.<sup>13</sup> Derrida's implicit claim is that by compounding identity with alterity, Husserl's epistemological phenomenology can open up to ethics. These two readings of Husserl have provoked several responses from the community of Husserl scholars. The problem with most of the responses addressed to Levinas, however, is that they seem to simply take for granted the notion of ethics that Levinas imposes on the discussion. This has led the Husserlian responses to Levinas to be mostly based on demonstrating that Husserl's phenomenology is also an ethical phenomenology because it also places the Other in a fundamental position in relation to questions such as the *ego* of subjectivity, passive synthesis, intentionality, time and constitution.<sup>14</sup> Unlike the Husserlian counter-readings of Levinas' approach to Husserl, which have generally taken a more friendly tone, the responses addressed to Derrida's reading of Husserl vary notably. Rudolf Bernet acknowledges the importance of Derrida's critique of Husserl at the same time that he argues that the destabilization of presence and, therefore, of traditional metaphysics is already occurring in Husserl's texts.<sup>15</sup> These critical readings of Husserl's phenomenology and the responses they have received have contributed to bring to the fore the importance that the questions of intersubjectivity, time-consciousness and presence have in the development from static to genetic phenomenology. Nonetheless, and despite the fact that the writings of both Levinas and Derrida have contributed to the making of this study in different ways, the question of ethics that I wish to address is not simply reducible to the question of the Other.

The fact that when I speak of ethics I mean neither the question of the Other nor a moral philosophy of values in a traditional sense should not be taken to imply that these questions are simply to be disregarded and that, therefore, the quest for the origins of the inquiry are closed to the questions of the Other and of moral values.<sup>16</sup> Although these two questions play indeed an important role in the development of the inquiry itself, this does not mean that such development towards the unveiling of the genesis of phenomenology and philosophy reside in these questions. Far from it, this study will show that the development of these two questions concerning the Other and moral values are the result of the ethical demand that guides the inquiry.

Husserl's own focus on the question of ethics is not always clear and varies from the so-called pre-war Göttingen ethics to the post-war Friburg ethics.<sup>17</sup> In his early ethics Husserl maintains an axiological conception of ethics that is based on values and, therefore, reduces ethics to a notion of morality that would simply allow us to find, choose and realize the highest possible objective value that is attainable for us in each practical situation. This would help to explain why Husserl himself in *Logical Investigations* reduced all talk of ethics to a sub-discipline within the boundaries of a phenomenological method and made little effort to explicitly clarify the status of the principle of presuppositionlessness. The latter view on ethics, however, signifies a

development insofar as it separates the terms of ethics and morality. In the *Kaizo* articles, Husserl disassociates ethics from morality because he no longer conceives of the ethical task in terms of the realization of the highest possible objective value. On the one hand he thinks of morality as the discipline that regulates the 'good' and 'rational' practical conduct of the human being with regard to the Other according to the ideas of love for the other. On the other hand he defines ethics in terms of a rational self-determination of one's life according to an inherent idea that operates regulatively as its condition of possibility, namely, a *telos*.<sup>18</sup> The importance of this distinction resides in another distinction mentioned earlier in this introduction between normativity and regulativity which, if only tacitly, does nonetheless pervade Husserl's discussions on normativity and presuppositionlessness from the *Logical Investigations* onwards. Thus, for Husserl, morality would have to be considered as normative, insofar as it prescribes how good and evil are to be understood according to norms belonging to different empirical cultural contexts that one simply accepts or takes for granted. In contradistinction, ethics would be regulative, for it is based on a demand of self-responsibility and renewal that is taken up from within and that aims to fulfil a radical transformation of the human subject into a human being that is free from prejudice and presuppositions. The taking up of this demand, as we shall see in detail in the development of this study, is the taking up of phenomenology as the medium by which the subject wills to live an *ethical life* that is not reducible to the mere embracing of moral values. Ethical life, phenomenology, is concerned with the process of becoming ethical individuals by means of becoming responsible, not only for our social acts but, more importantly, for the origins of our theoretical life.<sup>19</sup> *To practise phenomenology is to live an ethical life.*

This study will concentrate on the role that the demand for presuppositionlessness plays, in its different reformulations, at different stages of the development of Husserl's phenomenology. The discussion will touch on four central questions. First, I will discuss the early identification between the principle of presuppositionlessness with the questions of *Evidenz* and intuition, by means of which Husserl locates in the Idea of intuition the principle of all principles that is to regulate the inquiry. In the second place I will undertake a detailed analysis of the questions of intentionality and inner time-consciousness, insofar as they represent an explicit attempt to account for the origins and condition of possibility of intuitive givenness itself. This will lead me to suggest that the phenomenology of intentionality and time-consciousness manifests the ethical demand for presuppositionlessness, by means of which Husserl offers a description of the very act of self-reflection that characterizes the phenomenological inquiry. At the same time, however, they also make evident that phenomenology is limited to what Husserl calls a static field of consciousness and experience. The problem with this limitation is that although the inquiry can provide us with a description of the self-reflective act of consciousness, it cannot

reach that which motivates the inquiry itself. The relevance of this point is that it leaves phenomenology incapable of giving an account of its motivational genesis and, therefore, grounds it on a root that it can only presuppose. It is for this reason that phenomenology, driven by this ethical demand for presuppositionlessness, takes a further step, engaging now in what is known as the genetic dimension of phenomenology. In the third place, then, I will touch on questions of affection, awakening and the unconscious, insofar as they signal a re-definition of intentionality and time-consciousness, however without the latter being dissolved within the formal limits of the act of consciousness. But while at this point Husserl has managed to reach a domain of life-experience that exceeds the form of consciousness, phenomenology has also reached its own limits, as they were formulated in *Logical Investigations* and *Ideas I*, insofar as this dimension of life-experience cannot be grasped by means of intuition. Lastly, it is at this point, following Husserl, that I will concentrate on the question of reflective responsibility [*Selbstverantwortlichkeit*] and on to what extent it re-defines the principle of presuppositionlessness beyond the limits of intuition.

## Chapter I

# Ethical Life or the Ethical Exercise of Husserl's Phenomenology *Epoché*, Reduction and Intentional Explication

### A. The Uncovering of Transcendental Subjectivity

#### §1. The crisis of modern science and the Forgetfulness of life

*We make our beginning with a change which set in at the turn of the past century in the general evaluation of the sciences. It concerns not the scientific character of the sciences but rather what they, or what science in general, had meant and could mean for human existence. The exclusiveness with which the total world-view of modern man, in the second half of the nineteenth century, let itself be determined by the positive sciences and be blinded by the 'prosperity' they produced, meant an indifferent turning-away from the questions which are decisive for a genuine humanity.<sup>1</sup>*

From the early stages of *Crisis of European Sciences*, Husserl re-positing the core of the problem that instigated and guided the whole of the phenomenological inquiry right from the publication of *Logical Investigations*. However reformulated and discussed in different ways, in his later writings Husserl characterizes this problem as the 'crisis' or the 'sickness' underpinning European humanity.<sup>2</sup> This 'crisis' or 'sickness' can be articulated in the double problem of: (a) the factualization of life [*Leben*] or life-experience [*Erlebnis*] and the covering up of its genuine meaningfulness, and (b) the loss of the self-reflective character that has uprooted modern science and philosophy from their spiritual origin. It is to this double problem that Husserl offers phenomenology as a means to respectively (a) uncover and describe the original domain of life, but (b) do it in a manner such that the inquiry justifies its own proceedings. The overall aim of the double task of phenomenology is the re-formulation of philosophy according to the Greek model, that is according to its original self-reflective and self-justifying spirit, and, secondly, the re-grounding of the sciences in their original philosophical spirit.

It is worth noting that, from *Logical Investigations* to *Crisis of European Sciences*, Husserl opens by tracing and elucidating the origin of the 'naivety', the 'illness' or the 'crisis' of European humanity. In *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* Husserl finds that the alienation of original human life-experience that leads European humanity to a crisis of overwhelming magnitude originates in the scientific revolution that gave birth to the modern sciences. Husserl's argument shows how the positivist spirit of modern science impregnates Western humankind to the extent of reducing the latter's view of the world to the practical effectiveness with which science equips society. The practical effectiveness of science on the one hand brings 'prosperity' to the European or Western world, yet also brings on the other hand a new conceptualization of the question of human life and of humanity in general.<sup>3</sup> The forgetting is, thus, not a mere annihilation of the concept of experience or of life, but a covering up of the original domain of human experience with a new conceptualization of human life. Husserl understands this modern scientific conceptualization of life that guides the very aims and methodology underpinning the practical inventions and discoveries that organize modern Western society, from our practical everyday life to our commerce and wars, as the factualization of life. As Husserl puts it, 'scientific, objective truth is exclusively a matter of establishing what the world, the physical as well as the spiritual world, is *in fact*'.<sup>4</sup> In order to show what the factualization of human life in the hands of modern science entails here, Husserl undertakes a detailed discussion of the very origin of modern science. He writes:

After all, the crisis of science indicates nothing less than that its genuine scientific character, the whole manner in which it has set its task and developed a methodology for it, has become questionable.<sup>5</sup>

Husserl finds the origin of the reductionism of human life to factuality in the scientific revolution itself, and, more particularly, in the loss of the genuine scientific or philosophical character that originally characterizes the birth of European humanity. According to Husserl, the loss of such a character can be traced back to the inauguration of modern physics with which Galileo guided the Renaissance. In the first part of *Crisis of European Sciences* Husserl characterizes the ideal of the *Re-naissance* as the attempt to overcome medieval science and philosophy, which had become a 'prejudice' themselves, in order to recover and *give-birth-again* to the ancient model through which Europe could regain its original philosophical spirit. This recovery or re-vitalization was to be undertaken by means of regaining 'nothing less than the philosophical form of existence: freely giving oneself, one's whole life, its rule through pure reason or through philosophy'.<sup>6</sup> To put it another way, Galileo's scientific revolution that shaped, according to Husserl, the whole epoch of the Renaissance is the attempt to bring philosophy or the genuine scientific character to the