

A conference was held in Prague, Czech Republic, in November 2002 that was entitled “Issues Confronting the Post-European World” and that was dedicated to Jan Patočka (1907-1977). The Organization of Phenomenological Organizations was founded on that occasion. The following essay is published in celebration of that event.

Essay 3

From Ideas II to Nature and Spirit



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Abstract

The long awaited manuscript, *Nature and Spirit* (1927), was published as the 32nd volume of *Husserliana* in 2001. This text should be understood as constructing a bridge between *Ideas II* and *Crisis*. Husserl offered several courses of lectures and seminars with a similar title since 1912, just after composing the manuscript of *Ideas II*. We have noticed that the theme “nature and spirit” originated in the problems of that work. Although *Ideas II* analyzed the concepts of “nature and spirit” that the natural sciences and the cultural sciences respectively presuppose and investigated “constitution” in each region, the problems of the distinction between the two kinds of science was left for *Ideas III*. This theme became the central problem in the lecture course, *Nature and Spirit*. There were controversies concerning the theory of sciences in the late 19th century, especially controversies about the relationship of natural sciences and cultural sciences in which the Vienna-school, the Neo-Kantians, Dilthey, etc. participated. Against the background of these controversies, it was Husserl's aim to develop a theory of sciences from the standpoint of phenomenology. He was aware that “we are now in a revolutionary period of development of physics,” pointed out nevertheless that “individual sciences based on unclear fundamental concepts make a true cognition of world impossible,” and gave birth to an idea of a criticism of the sciences that would lead to *Crisis*. Since that time he was conscious of living in a time of crisis and in just such a context he addressed the “dissociation of sciences and life” and the “rehabilitation of their relationship.” The theme treated in *Nature and Spirit* relates to the contemporary problems that have arisen in collaboration with several natural scientists, including as psychiatrists and bioscientists.

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Introduction

In my first article published twenty years ago in Japanese, I discussed the mind-body problem in Husserl, comparing Ideas II with Descartes. My first book, *Husserl's Phenomenology of Intersubjectivity* (Sobunsha, 1995, in Japanese), was based on my study in Germany for two years beginning with reading the three volumes of *Phenomenology of Intersubjectivity* (Husserliana Bd. XIII-XV). These volumes are indispensable to understand the background of *Cartesian Meditations*, a Japanese translation of which I published in 2001. From Husserl's unpublished manuscripts accessible only to those who could visit the Husserl Archive, many texts have been published one after another in the last decade. Two of these texts were published in 2001: one is the Bernauer Time Manuscripts and the other is a lecture course manuscript, *Nature and Spirit*, from 1927. The latter text has a deep relationship with Ideas II and also leads to *Crisis*, so it has interested me for quite some time. Here I would like to discuss this text and its context. The theme treated in *Nature and Spirit* is related to a problem to which I was led through collaboration with several natural scientists in my university. At the end of this paper I would like to address such a problem.

1. From Ideas II

Volume 32 of *Husserliana*, published last year with the title of *Nature and Spirit*, is composed of the main text of a lecture manuscript presented in 1927 and several relevant supplements. Husserl gave some lectures and seminars with a similar title repeatedly since 1912, and there are manuscripts for Ideas II and Ideas III that he began already to work on before the publication of Ideas I (1913). We note that the theme of "nature and spirit" originated in the problems of these works. Hence, I would like to address Ideas II at first briefly.

The attraction of Ideas II is well known. Compared with the programmatic Ideas I, Ideas II is intended as a concrete analysis. Although Husserl had repeatedly wrestled with the manuscript for Ideas II, he could not complete it. His assistant Edith Stein first edited it (1918), Ludwig Landgrebe continued her effort with a typewritten version (1924-25), but it was not until after Husserl's death that the work was finally published as the fourth volume of the *Husserliana* in 1952. Even though the history of Ideas II is very interesting, an unfinished text can be difficult to deal with, because the lack of coherence makes it possible to read it in a variety of ways. This would be also a reason why the influence of Ideas II was more extensive than that of Ideas I.

For example, Heidegger read the manuscript of Ideas II during the period of his lecture course, *Prolegomena for the History of the Time Conception* in Marburg (1925). On the 8th of April in the next year, at the party celebrating Husserl's 67th birthday, Heidegger's *Being and Time* was presented "with respect and friendship" to Husserl. This work implied intense criticism of Husserl without naming him directly.

In the preceding lecture, Prolegomena, Heidegger treated Husserl's phenomenology with courtesy, identified points of contention with his own developing position, and continued the stream of thought that would be developed in *Time and Being*. It is therefore a lecture where Heidegger declared his farewell to Husserlian phenomenology even while confessing that he had read manuscripts of *Ideas II*. Some researchers suspect that *Ideas II* influenced the description of "being-in-the-world" in *Time and Being*.

It is also well-known that in 1939, soon after the Husserl Archive in Leuven was established with rescued manuscripts, Maurice Merleau-Ponty visited the archive to read the manuscripts of *Ideas II* and got ideas from it for his *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945), e.g., concepts such as the "living body" and "nature." We notice in his lecture course, *The Idea of Nature* (written in the 1950s), that he had a great interest in the manuscripts of *Ideas II*. Similarly we could say about Immanuel Levinas (who studied with Husserl in his later years and introduced his phenomenology into France) that he was influenced by *Ideas II*. According to some researchers the idea in his main work *Totality and Infinity* (1971) that "the truth presupposes justice" was conceived from the concept in *Ideas II* that "the naturalistic attitude subordinates to the personalistic attitude."

The text of *Ideas II* is full of interesting themes, such as "nature," "spirit," "living body," "person," a sprout of "life-world," and so on. What is moreover interesting about the total structure of *Ideas II*, is that although the "constitution" of three regions is argued in the succession of "material nature," "animal nature," and "spiritual world," there suddenly appears a kind of conversion: namely the argument begun at first as if it would move with a one-sided foundation, but then we notice that the "personalistic" attitude coming after in the text is in truth fundamental. If we seek Husserl's goal in *Ideas II*, we could find that it contains another conversion. The conclusion of "relativity of nature and absoluteness of spirit" at the end of the third chapter (entitled "constitution of spiritual world") is one to which he was led by following both of the naturalistic attitude and the personalistic one, but this was not the proper conclusion of Husserl's transcendental phenomenology. Both attitudes stand on the natural attitude, the basis of which Husserl would inquire back into.

In relation to *Ideas II*, Husserl developed the theme "nature and spirit." But if we widen our view and trace his thinking, we should take into consideration his criticism in his article "Philosophy as Rigorous Science" (1911) against two opposing tendencies in the modern philosophy of those days, namely naturalism and historicism. Since Wilhelm Wundt established the course of experimental psychology at Leipzig University as the first in the world in 1879, more and more posts of philosophy in German universities were replaced by experimental psychologists. In those days, the establishment of a psychology different from natural-scientific psychology and the establishment of Husserlian phenomenology have common enemies, even if their

purposes are different. Therefore, it was necessary for Husserl to argue the subtle, but decisive nuance between phenomenology and psychology. This became one branch of the theme “nature and spirit” and led to the lecture course on Phenomenology and Psychology (1917) and the lecture course on Phenomenological Psychology (1925). And with these problems there is finally the connection with Crisis, the last work of Husserl (a part of which is entitled with “The Way from Psychology to Transcendental Phenomenology”).

2. To Nature and Spirit

Now I would like to focus my attention on the lecture course on Nature and Spirit. Although Ideas II analyzed the concepts of “nature and spirit” that the natural sciences and the cultural sciences respectively presuppose, and investigated the “constitution” in each region only by touching on the distinction between the natural and spiritual sciences, this work left the relationship of both kind of sciences to phenomenology to be dealt with in Ideas III. In the lecture course on Nature and Spirit this theme moved to the center of the theory of the natural and cultural sciences.

As is touched at the beginning of chapter three entitled “constitution of spiritual world” in Ideas II, there were controversies concerning the theory of sciences in those days, especially controversies against positivism and naturalism in the natural and cultural sciences in which Dilthey, Windelband, Rickert, Simmel and Münsterberg participated. Against the background of the controversies in the late 19th century (that were performed between the positivistic-naturalistic current centering in the Vienna-school, on one hand, and the hermeneutic-spiritual sciences of Dilthey and the Neo-Kantian current, which emphasizes the difference between “natural and spiritual/cultural sciences” on the other, it was Husserl's aim to develop a theory of sciences from the standpoint of phenomenology.

Since 1897, Husserl discussed philosophy from Kant to contemporary philosophers, namely the Neo-Kantians with whom he had also personal correspondence. In his seminar on The Philosophy of History (1905) he argued the positions of Rickert and Dilthey. On the occasion of the 200 year anniversary of Kant's birth (1924) he delivered a memorial speech “Kant and the Idea of Transcendental Phenomenology” at Freiburg University. In the seminar during the same semester as the lecture course on Nature and Spirit (1927), he discussed the philosophy of Kant. In such a context his relationship with Kant and the Neo-Kantians came to the forefront.

Relating to Kant I would like to add that in Crisis the “life-world” is introduced as “Kant's tacit presupposition.” This idea could be traced back to the first manuscript written in 1912 for Ideas II. The term “life-world” appeared in Kant speech (1924), in the lecture course Phenomenological Psychology (1925), and in a

supplement of the lecture course on Nature and Spirit (1927). At the end of this lecture he touches on “the method of transcendental logic” referring to Kant, and says that “thereby an a priori and inevitable structure will be obtained.” At the end of Formal and Transcendental Logic (which he began just after this lecture and was published in 1929 in the Yearbook), he mentioned the subject of “transcendental aesthetics” (reminiscent of Kant) treating the “world of pure experience,” and noted the term “life-world” on the margin of the same place. Seeing that, we notice that the term “life-world” appeared in problems surrounding Nature and Spirit and in the context of Kant-criticism.

The argument concerning the “life-world” in Crisis has another context in the criticism of the natural sciences since Galileo. Also in the lecture course on Nature and Spirit he is aware that “we are now in a revolutionary period of development of physics,” and points out that “individual sciences based on unclear fundamental concepts make a true cognition of world impossible.” This gives birth to an idea of criticism against the sciences that would lead to Crisis. From that time on he had a consciousness of living in a time of “crisis” and in just such a context he addressed the fact of the “dissociation of sciences and life” and the task of the “rehabilitation of their relationship.”

3. The lecture Nature and Spirit (1927)

Now I would like to enter into the lecture itself and begin by listing the important points:

At first Husserl touches again on the idea of “philosophy as rigorous science” from 1911 and argues for a criticism of the sciences. Beginning with a consideration of the relationship between philosophy and the individual sciences, he comes to the diagnosis that the development of individual sciences in the present age has arisen from a “unhealthy making of individual sciences independent” that yielded the “opposition of philosophy and sciences,” and the time of reaction against this. And this gives rise to the modern controversy over “inquiry into the foundations.” According to Husserl, “something enigmatic and not understandable” lies at the basis of not only physics but also biology. “In the astonishing results of the positive sciences” the truth is “hidden” and “covered with mystery.” The sciences are “certainly a construction of surprising techniques of architecture, but they neglect ascertaining their grounds and materials.” It is necessary to rely on the “method of inquiring after presuppositions” and to investigate the “inseparable unity of fundamental concepts,” which would be regarded as the subject of philosophy and as “the sole universal science with fundamental foundations.” Husserl talks about the relationship between sciences and philosophy by using the Cartesian metaphor of “a tree of philosophy,” wherein “each individual

science is a branch which grows from the one tree of *mathesis universalis*.”

Secondly, his idea of “philosophy” is nevertheless different from that of Descartes, who regarded *physica* as the trunk of the tree. It is different from naturalism, which “follows the model of natural sciences” by bringing the method of natural sciences into the cultural sciences, which “also regards the cultural sciences as natural sciences,” and intends to build a “unitary science.” At this point Husserl leaves Descartes and opposes not only Cartesian dualism, but also post-Cartesian naturalism. In “Philosophy as a rigorous science,” he had criticized the naturalism that was born from the rise of experimental psychology in that time. He was convinced early in this period that the psychology built on the model of natural sciences would fail to catch the proper essence of the psychic. In this respect, he was in sympathy with Heinrich Rickert. Husserl appreciated Rickert for declaring war against the naturalistic monism that was going around between the latter half of 19th century and the beginning of 20th century.

Third, stating that “all positive sciences are related to the always pre-given world,” Husserl calls the above-stated presupposition of positive sciences “the world of experience.” According to him, this world “is there before all sciences, far from that, before all arguments, namings and judgments of the everyday world,” and each individual thing is “no other than that which was caught out from the relating being-horizon, heard out and seen out,” and therefore “the world is not only the sum of things.”

Fourth, since about 1902 Husserl was interested in Avenarius’ “concept of the natural world,” and touches on it briefly here. What is stated in the previous paragraph is connected to this “concept of natural world.” His aim is, however, not only rehabilitation of this concept, but by going back to this world in order to elucidate “the natural ground of the pre-given world of experience” on which the positive sciences naturally and naively stand, and through it to found sciences related to this world. Therefore, he does not forget to add that such an inquiry leads to “the transcendental.”

Fifth, I have to add to his characterization of this “world of experience.” In this lecture course it is said that “for each who live in the modern scientific culture, much more for those who know nothing about such culture, ‘the’ world is there before all saying, naming and judging of the everyday world.” It is also said that “experience is in itself dumb” and that “in the unity of experience, before all saying, considerations and reasoning, there is one undivided world.” Therefore, it would be necessary for fundamental investigations to “start with the silent experience without concepts” and to “go back to the conceptually dumb experience and the world of experience.” Here the sciences and experience are distinctly opposed, and sciences and “the life before science” are too.

Thus far the introduction to the lecture course. Then the main subject begins. In the first chapter, on “the controversy concerning the meaning of nature and spirit that

continued for several decades between natural and spiritual sciences,” we are persuaded to go back to the fundamental theme of the classification of the sciences. Then, in the second chapter, he mentions “the formal classification of sciences” such as into “a priori and a posteriori,” “formal and material,” “concrete and abstract,” “independent and dependent,” etc. And in the third chapter, as a “material classification of sciences” he argues the classification of sciences based on the Cartesian dualism of “physics and psychics.” From there moreover, on “methodological classification,” he begins the paragraph by referring to Windelband and Rickert critically. Now I would like to move quickly to this paragraph.

As is well known and not necessary to explain, Windelband characterized the natural sciences as “nomothetic,” while the cultural sciences, represented by history, are “idiographic.” By following his idea fundamentally but with revision immediately, Rickert insisted that natural sciences are “generalizing,” while cultural sciences are “individualizing.” In any case, through an argument, against the “naturalism” that regards the natural sciences as a model of the cultural sciences, they insisted on the methodological property of the spiritual or cultural sciences, by saying that the difference between those sciences is no “difference in regions,” but “difference in method,” so that the same object is divided through method into objects for the natural or the cultural sciences. As said, Husserl thought that on this point he could have common the front with these Neo-Kantians.

Husserl's criticism against Rickert's methodology is directed exclusively to his purely formal method of “universalization” and “individualization.” In the fourth chapter, he examines “two ways of transcendental deduction,” and affirms Rickert's way as the way that “begins with mathesis universalis and descends formally to transcendental deduction,” i.e., as “the way from above.” On the contrary, Husserl proposes “the way that begins with the world of experience and ascends directly to transcendental deduction,” i.e., as “the way from below.” He declares Rickert's deduction “formalism” and tries to criticize it by calling on the aid of Kant, who “contrasted the idea of transcendental logic with traditional formal logic.” Husserl here criticizes the Neo-Kantianism with the aid of Kant, so we could say that he opposes Kant as phenomenology against Rickert as Neo-Kantian (Iso Kern).

What is here called “below,” is the “world of experience.” So in the fourth and fifth chapters the lecture course enters into the phenomenology of the world of experience. But we should notice that the experience-world is for Husserl by no means the world of “pure experience.” Because the world is made of “properly experienced fields and the open horizon of the properly unexperienced,” he states that “over the visible there is spread the open infinity.” Therefore, he says, “all perceptions are mixtures of intentions and fulfillments,” and “inductions as a kind of inference from the empirical given to the ungiven” are there “contained from the beginning.” “What one calls association already belongs to the structure of all simple perceptions.”

Consequently, “our present perceptions are a heritage of our preceding experiencing life,” and so “our life is thoroughly historical.” The “world of experience” is a “historical cultural world” rather than a “world of pure experience.” In this context, he begins to talk about the connection of this “world of experience” with “the sciences.” After stating that “sciences are a function of community life” (in the sixth chapter entitled “Scientific Inductions are Based on Experiences”), he says that “we must understand pre-scientific experience in its fundamental and always presupposed function of induction.” This means that scientific inductions have their origin in inductions functioning in pre-scientific experiences and are connected with them. But his main text in this lecture is interrupted suddenly on the way to the completion of these arguments.

Now I would like to supplement this discussion with the text from the lecture Phenomenological Psychology in which Husserl had developed similar arguments two years before. There he also talked about the “return to the pre-scientific world of experience.” But at the same time, he said that “this world has a highly variable face,” that “if we carefully look at the givens as seen, heard, or somehow experienced, they contain in themselves some sediments from preceding psychic activities,” and that “it is doubtful whether we can really find a pre-theoretical world, apart from preceding thinking acts, in pure experience.” Moreover, in the following year, during the lecture course on Introduction to Phenomenology, while analyzing the “world of experience,” he said: “For us in European culture there are sciences, they are parts of our many-sided cultural world, whatever their validity might be, they are coexisting matter of facts in the world of experience where we live.” Here he has already expressed the so-called “ambiguity of life-world” (Claesges) that would appear in Crisis. The experience that supports the sciences at the fundamental level is not silent, “conceptless” intuition any more, but instead experience of the concrete historical world, and therefore sciences have not only their basis in the life-world, but also they belong to the concrete life-world.

In the lecture course Nature and Spirit, his argument does not go so far, but in a supplement to the paragraph of criticism against Rickert (that was originally written but not adopted in the main text), we find an argument from a slightly different angle, to which I would finally like to give attention. There, Husserl considers “the philosophy of life (Lebensphilosophie)” as an assertion of the property of the spiritual sciences from a different point of view. This current that appeared “with a deep reason” “against rational sciences” is discussed. It is in this context that the above-mentioned term “life-world” appears in this volume.

Husserl asks the following question with a critical implication against the philosophy of life as a “reaction against the sciences in our times”: “Are the sciences themselves a function of our life? ... Are the sciences parts of the unitary life-world?” And he continues: “The sciences certainly became dangerous first in the higher stage,

came to suppress our life in spite of promoting it, and became sick in their one-sidedness, but this probably does not belong to the original meaning of science. Because the one-sidedness probably lies in the abstractness made absolute, hence in the estrangement of life, if the sciences would draw all abstractions from the source of intuition and not turn themselves away from this source, all would be well again.” It could be said that Husserl opposes, on one hand, the current that separates the sciences and life, opposes both, and insists on the mistaken rationality of the science, while, on the other hand and at the same time, he opposes also the other current of the “philosophy of life,” the one that intends to oppose irrational life against the rational sciences.

Nevertheless, the appearance of “the philosophy of life” has, according to Husserl, “a deep reason.” He says that phenomenology “would not call itself a philosophy of life, but is a philosophy of life as far as it would maintain the true ancient meaning of a universal science,” that “it would overcome the stupid tension between sciences and life,” and that “all possible sciences have meaning only in relationship with the reality of life.” Therefore, he thinks of phenomenology as a philosophy that would not oppose sciences and life, but rather connect both, and founds the sciences on the basis in life. Returning to the proper theme of the lecture course, only such a phenomenology makes it possible to connect the two worlds of “nature and spirit,” which seem in opposition with one another, and to understand from the bottom the relationship of “the natural sciences and the cultural sciences,” that seem to be like two snakes biting each other’s tail.

Closing Words

I was originally interested in the natural sciences, but studied philosophy, now I teach at the faculty of humanities and social sciences. As a result, I have continued to enjoy a number of collaborations with colleagues from faculties in the natural sciences.

As one aspect of this, I have continued collaboration with psychiatrists for several years. Although they work in the natural science of medicine, they have an interest in the psychic that is also related to the human sciences. In their field people discuss a similar problem. It is said that because of the prosperity of biological psychiatry and the pragmatic DSM-IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) developed in the United States, the phenomenological current in psychiatry or psychopathology, from Jaspers and Binswanger to Blankenburg, seems to be interrupted, or even that the study of psychopathology would disappear. There is the opportunity to ask anew about the relationship between the biological, natural-scientific understanding of human beings and its rival the phenomenological, anthropological understanding of them. In such a situation there should be something

to learn from Husserl's arguments about "nature and spirit" from Ideas II to Nature and Spirit.

As another application, we recently hear frequently that the 21st century is the century of the life sciences. But is it enough to stress only the bio-sciences? Although we find in the term "life science" the connection of "life" and "science," which was Husserl's purpose in the lecture course on Nature and Spirit, as I have presented, we could hardly say that the "life science" of today is what Husserl intended. Although the modern "life sciences" try to elucidate human life with bio-chemical investigations of genes and proteins, the human life as "being between man and man" (this is just the meaning which the Japanese word "Ningen" corresponding to "human being" has) seems to become more and more invisible. It is now necessary to renew a philosophy in Husserl's sense that would connect "life" and "science" that are now dissociated. This is just what Husserl sought in the name of "phenomenology."
