"Even the Papuan is a Man and not a Beast": Husserl on Universalism and the Relativity of Cultures

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"[A]nd in this broad sense even the Papuan is a man and not a beast." (*[U]nd in diesem weiten Sinne ist auch der Papua Mensch und nicht Tier*, Husserl, *Crisis*, 290/Hua. VI.337–38)[1]

"*Reason* is the specific characteristic of man, as a being living in personal activities and habitualities." (*Vernunft ist das Spezifische des Menschen, als in personalen Aktivitäten und Habitualitäten lebenden Wesens*, Husserl, *Crisis*, 338/Hua. VI.272)

1. PARTICULAR HISTORICITIES AND UNIVERSAL REASON

IN THIS PAPER[2] I SHALL EXPLORE—and suggest a way of resolving—the evident tensions to be found in Husserl's *Crisis of European Sciences* (and associated texts)

[1]E. Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie*, ed. W. Biemel, Husserliana VI (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1954), partially trans. by David Carr, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970). Hereafter '*Crisis*' followed by the English translation pagination (where it exists) and the Husserliana volume and page number. 'Husserliana' will be abbreviated as 'Hua.' Other Husserliana volumes will be referenced by volume number in Roman numerals followed by the page number.

[2]Earlier versions of this paper were presented at Pennsylvania State University (21 Oct. 2008); University of Tasmania, Hobart (8 Dec. 2008); Murdoch University, Australia (12 Dec. 2008); The Chinese University of Hong Kong (18 Dec. 2008); and the University of Helsinki (21 May 2009). My thanks to Len Lawlor, Denny Schmidt, Vincent Colopietro, Emily Grosholtz, Jeff Malpas, Ingo Farin, Lubica Učnik, Paul McDonald, David Carr, Tom Nenon, Lau Kwok-Ying, Yu Chung-Chi, Timo Miettinen, and Sara Heinämaa, for their helpful comments. I also thank especially Mr. David Florcyzk Jones, MLitt., for providing me with a great deal of material, including translations, relating to the National Socialist reception of Husserl; Robert Bernasconi for discussions; and Yu Chung-Chi (National Sun Yat-sen University, Kaohsiung, Taiwan) for providing me with a copy of his paper "An In/comprehensible Alien Culture: Husserl on China."

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between his commitment to the universality of reason as the goal or *telos* of European humanity (founded on the ancient Greek "breakthrough" to philosophy and science) and his recognition of the empirical plurality and "relativity" (*Relativität*) of individual peoples and nations (e.g. Indian, Chinese, Papuan, Bantu) locked into their own particular "socialities" (*Sozialitäten*), communal worlds, and historical trajectories (what Husserl broadly calls "historicities," *Geschichtlichkeiten*, *Historizitäten*).[3] I shall examine the complex relations and tensions between Husserl's conception of *universality,* whereby the *same* reason functions in every human as *animal rationale*, "no matter how primitive he is" ("Origin of Geometry," *Crisis*, 378/Hua. VI.385), and his concept of the *self-enclosed particularity* of individual peoples with their own cultural forms. Indeed, Husserl often emphasizes that the most prominent feature of cultural plurality is precisely its *relativity*: "relativity belongs to the normal course of life."[4] I shall evaluate Husserl's response, which defends the project of realizing the ideal of a critical universal rationality, by situating his discussion in terms of the cultural conflict of the time with the rising National Socialist commitment to racial particularism, and by showing Husserl's commitment to the inherent universality of the one shared life-world.

In his research manuscripts of the 1920s and 1930s Husserl frequently discusses the complex relationships that exist between different cultures and traditions; different cultures have their specific *historicities* (*Crisis*, 274/Hua. VI.320), dialects, norms, ways of life, and so on. This is simply a matter of fact. There are, furthermore, some well-known and controversial passages in Husserl's "Vienna Lecture" of May 1935 and also in his *Crisis* texts (both in the main 1936 published text, Part One [§6] and in the then unpublished *Crisis* Part Three A §36[5]) where Husserl speaks of the *universality* inherent in European philosophical culture of the *logos* and contrasts it with various other communal forms, which are, in his view, merely "empirical-anthropological" *types*, enclosed in their particular historicities and relativities. Indeed, in this context, Husserl regularly invokes the idea of the "relativity of everything historical" (*die Relativität alles Historischen*, *Crisis*, 373/Hua. VI.382). In addition, there are a number of related texts, collected in the *Crisis* supplementary volume (Hua. XXIX),[6] in the *Intersubjectivity* volumes (especially Hua. XV),[7] as well as in the recent volume on the life-world

[3]Husserl uses both terms interchangeably (e.g. *Geschichtlichkeit* [*Crisis*, Hua. VI.154, VI.191, VI.196, etc.] and *Historizität*, which David Carr translates as "historical development"; see *Crisis*, 336/Hua. VI.271, VI.310, VI.323, VI.326, etc.). Husserl speaks of nations having their own "living historicity" (*lebendige Geschichtlichkeit*, Hua. XXVII.187) and of different "levels of historicity" (*Stufen der Geschichtlichkeit*, Hua.VI.502). Husserl probably adopted the term 'historicity' from Dilthey and, of course, Heidegger. He uses the term especially in the late twenties and thirties.

[4]Husserl, *Die Relativität bleibt unauffällig im normalen Gang des Lebens* (Hua. XXVII.231).

[5]Parts 1 and 2 of the *Crisis* were published in *Philosophia* 1 (1936—the issue actually appeared in early 1937). Part 3 was prepared by Husserl for publication in *Philosophia* but was withdrawn by the author for further emendation. A typescript made by Eugen Fink is the basis of Walter Biemel's Husserliana edition of 1954.

[6]See E. Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie. Ergänzungsband. Texte aus dem Nachlaß 1934–1937*, ed. Reinhold N. Smid, Hua. XXIX (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1992).

[7]E. Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlass. Dritter Teil. 1929–1935*, ed. Iso Kern, Hua. XV (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973).

(Hua. XXXIX),[8] which discuss the empirical differences between peoples and also the layers and strata of social groups, nations, and even the idea of larger international collectivities or "supernations" (*Übernationen*), such as Europe, or the League of Nations. Furthermore, there are—as Husserl indicates in his 1935 letter to the prominent French anthropologist Lucien Lévy-Bruhl—even cultures that are completely "self-enclosed" (*abgeschlossene*) unities, cut off, some of which know no history. According to Husserl, into this classical world of closed cultures, the ancient Greeks bring a new form of universality, one that leads them, through the grasp of *idealization* to *infinite* tasks, to break through the finite horizons of their environing world (*Umwelt*), which presents itself to them as a "near-world" (*Nahwelt, Crisis,* 324/Hua. VI.303; Hua. XXVII.228), and to arrive at the highly refined concept of the "true world" or the "scientific world [which] is a purposeful structure (*Zweckgebilde*) extending to infinity" (*Crisis*, 382/Hua. VI.461).

It has become commonplace to accuse Husserl of a certain "Eurocentrism," even racism.[9] Clearly he defends the particular achievement of Western culture, i.e. philosophy that itself gave birth to the idea of science. Husserl maintains, furthermore, that there is a specific *entelechy* of universal rationality inbuilt in European human existence since the Greeks, which is characterized by the "rule of an absolute meaning" (*das Walten eines absolutes Sinnes*) or "absolute idea" (*Crisis*, 16/Hua. VI.14). This European absolute idea, according to Husserl, is one of *theoria*, the adoption of the purely theoretical attitude, involving the discovery of ideality and "the idealizing accomplishment" (*die idealisierende Leistung, Crisis*, 346/Hua. VI.359),[10] the recognition of the universality of reason, the commitment to evidence and justification, and the idea of infinite inquiry and "infinite tasks" (albeit a concept not clearly specified by Husserl).[11] The scientific world, for Husserl, is

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[8]E. Husserl, *Die Lebenswelt: Auslegungen der Vorgegebenen Welt und ihrer Konstitution*, ed. Rochus Sowa, Hua. XXXIX (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008).

[9]Husserl's remarks about the Gypsies "vagabonding" around Europe (*Crisis*, 273/Hua. VI.318–19), and as not belonging to the spiritual essence of Europe, are particularly disturbing in light of the Nazi persecution of Roma gypsies. On Husserl's ethnocentrism see, *inter alia*, Ernst Wolfgang Orth, *Edmund Husserls* Krisis der Europäischen Wissenschaften und die Transzendentale Phänomenologie (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1999), 153ff; R. Philip Buckley, *Husserl, Heidegger and the Crisis of Philosophical Responsibility*, Phaenomenologica 125 (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1992), 31; Gary Madison and Ingrid Harris, *The Politics of Postmodernity: Essays in Applied Hermeneutics*, Contributions to Phenomenology 42 (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2001), 38; Enrique Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of "the Other" and the Myth of Modernity*, trans. Michael Barber (New York: Continuum, 1995), 20–26 (on Hegel); J. M. Diaz Alvarez, "Husserl y la identidad de la cultura Europea : La impugnación 'eurocéntrica' del eurocentrismo," *Thémata* 23 (1999): 185–91; Edda Kapsch, *Verstehen des Anderen: Fremdverstehen im Anschluss an Husserl, Gadamer und Derrida* (Berlin: Parados, 2007); Rodolphe Gasché, *Europe, or the Infinite Task. A Study of a Philosophical Concept* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 21–91; and Lau Kwok-Ying, "Patočka's Concept of Europe: An Intercultural Consideration," in *Jan Patočka and the Heritage of Phenomenology*, eds. Erika Abrams and Ivan Chvatik, Contributions to Phenomenology 61 (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011), 229–44.

[10]Husserl characterizes this idealization in several ways, including the idea of ideal exactitude, the taking of the exemplary individual instance as representative of the totality, the conception of the *immer wieder*, going beyond actuality to the ideal possibility, the idea of a thing as existing through its properties (*Crisis*, 345/Hua. VI.359), and so on.

[11]See Jacques Derrida, *Edmund Husserl's* Origin of Geometry*: An Introduction*, trans. John P. Leavey (Sussex: Harvester, 1978), 127–41, where Derrida explores the apparent contradiction in Husserl's claim that the Greeks opened up the concept of mathematical infinity and at the same time closed off the sphere of the mathematical as a self-contained system.

a world that in principle is committed to being built up infinitely (Crisis, 380/Hua.VI.460); generations of scientists work infinitely guided by the same goal. For Husserl, this new *telos* was first opened up for humanity by the ancient Greeks:

> . . . the *telos* which was inborn in European humanity at the birth of Greek philosophy . . . that of humanity which seeks to exist, and is only possible through philosophical reason, moving endlessly from latent to manifest reason and forever seeking its own norms through this, its truth and genuine human nature. (*Crisis,* §6, 15/Hua. VI.13)

Philosophical inquiry (giving birth to rigorous science) opens up an "infinite human future as an infinite form of work [*als ein unendliches Werkgebilde*]" (Hua. XXXIX.165) governed by "universal interests." In other words, the Greeks invented the very form of "theoretical mankind, philosophizing mankind" (*Crisis*, 350/Hua. VI.363). It is precisely this Greco-European commitment to a *theoria* of infinite extent that gives Greek philosophical-scientific culture its *universality* and allows Husserl to claim that other civilizations, such as the Chinese, Indian, or Papuan, are, in contrast, merely "empirical anthropological types" (*Crisis*, 16/Hua. VI.14), that is, loosely defined clusters that lack a defining exact essence.[12]

In a text that the editor of Husserliana VI, Walter Biemel, includes as *Crisis* §73,[13] Husserl calls attention both to universal rationality and at the same time to the relativity of particular cultural conceptions of reason and logic:

> [To say that] philosophy, science in all its forms [*Gestalten*], is rational—that is a tautology. But in all its forms it is on its way to [*auf dem Wege zu*] a higher rationality; it is rationality, which discovering again and again its unsatisfying relativity [*ihre unzulängliche Relativität*], is driven on to its toils, in its will to gain the true and full rationality. But finally it discovers that this rationality is an idea residing in the infinite and is *de facto* necessarily only on the way [*auf dem Wege*]; but it discovers also that there is a final form [*Endgestalt*] of a new sort of infinity and relativity—this, however, in the double sense of discovery which signifies, historically, two epochs of beginning [*Anfang*] and advance [*Fortgang*]. (*Crisis*, 339/Hua. VI.274)

Husserl believes there is an essential teleology to Western cultural development; it is committed to the universalization of reason (and furthermore others cultures will embrace Europeanization, and never vice-versa: the European will never feel an urge to "Indianize" [*Crisis*, 275/Hua. VI320]).

In contrast to this universalizing "European" culture, there are other cultures or civilizations, other forms of "humanness" (*Menschentum*), other "humanities" (*Menschheiten*—a word Husserl frequently employs in the plural), different social

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[12]By "type" (*Typus*) Husserl means an empirical generalization or a cluster of notions that empirically belong together and are pre-constituted in passivity through relations of similarity, e.g. I see a fox as much like a dog: "The factual world of experience is experienced as a typified world," Husserl, *Erfahrung und Urteil*, ed. Ludwig Landgrebe (Darmstadt: Meiner, 1999), trans. J.S. Churchill and K. Ameriks, *Experience and Judgment: Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), §83, 331. He discusses "types" of humanness in his *Kaizo* articles, for instance (Hua. XXVII.26ff). In general Husserl uses the term '*Typik*' ('typology', 'typification') in the *Crisis* to refer to an *a priori* set of concrete differentiations, e.g. those given to us in empirical experience (see especially *Crisis*, 218n/Hua. VI.222n and *Crisis*, 226/Hua. VI.229).

[13]Biemel adds this as the final section entitled "Schlusswort" and numbered *Crisis* §73, but Carr relocates it as Appendix IV of his translation, since the manuscript itself bears the note "zu K I" indicating that it belongs more properly in association with *Crisis* Part One.

groupings or "socialities" (*Sozialitäten*) that are living in a more or less isolated, or "self-enclosed" or "self-encapsulated" manner (*in Abgeschlossenheit lebende Menschheiten*).[14] Each of those communities has its own form of communal existence, Husserl says in the "Vienna Lecture":

> Personal life means living communalized as an "I" and "we" [*als Ich und Wir*] within community horizon, and this in communities of various simple or stratified forms such as family, nation, supranation [*Übernation*]. (*Crisis*, 270, trans. modified/ Hua. VI.314)

In the *Crisis* Husserl has little to say about the evolution and historical development of these cultural forms (more is to be found on the life-world in the *Intersubjectivity* volumes, Hua. XIII–XV, and in Hua. XXXIX). He is primarily concerned to draw a sharp distinction between *philosophical-scientific* and *traditional* or what one might call *pre-scientific* cultures (no matter how technologically advanced). Cultures untouched by theoretical science or which move only in the dimension of practical knowledge know only finite tasks (*Crisis*, 279/Hua. VI.324). So-called "pre-scientific" (*vorwissenschaftlich*) or "primitive" societies have their own conception of a "surrounding world" (*Umwelt*) and within it their own conceptions of fellow humans, but they lack the understanding of the scientific world and indeed the very notion of the scientific point of view (see Hua. XXXIX.53–54). In this respect Husserl often speaks of these pre-scientific cultures as entirely self-enclosed, cut off from, or uninterested in other cultures.[15]

In his conception of primitive culture (which he acknowledged was heavily influenced by the writings of the French social anthropologist Lucien Lévy-Bruhl) Husserl believes that there is a particular stage that every culture goes through where it mediates to itself symbolically using myth. As he puts it in his 1935 "Vienna Lecture",

> It is a known fact, but also a necessity essentially available to insight [*eine wesensmässig einsehbare Notwendigkeit*], that religious-mythic motifs and a religious-mythic praxis belong to every civilization living in the natural sphere—i.e., prior to the outbreak [*Einbruch*] and effects of Greek philosophy and thus of the scientific world-view [*Weltbetrachtung*]. (*Crisis*, 283/Hua. VI.330)

In other words, it is not just an empirical fact but an *eidetic necessity* that cultures go through a mythic stage; this belongs to the a priori form of cultural evolution. Here Husserl may have been influenced by the writings of Ernst Cassirer or of German classicists, such as Wilhelm Nestle, to whom we shall return (in the background, of course, is Hegel).

In "The Origin of Geometry" Husserl, directly addressing the "relativity of everything historical" (*Crisis*, 373/Hua. VI.382), which he cites as an objection to his "depth-inquiry" (*Tiefenforschung*, *Crisis*, 373/Hua. VI.381), writes,

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[14]See Husserl's Letter to Lévy-Bruhl, 11 March 1935, Edmund Husserl, *Briefwechsel*, Husserliana Dokumente, ed. Karl Schuhmann, 10 vols. (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994), vol. 7, *Wissenschaftlerkorrespondenz*, 161–64, esp. 162; trans. Lukas Steinacher and Dermot Moran, "Edmund Husserl's Letter to Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, 11 March 1935," *New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy* 8 (2008): 349–54.

[15]In some of his discussions, Husserl acknowledges the importance of trade and commerce for opening up connections between cultures and hence appreciations of difference.

> Every people [*Volk*], large or small, has its world, in which, for that people, everything fits well together, whether in mythical-magical or in European-rational terms, and in which everything can be explained perfectly. Every people has its "logic", and accordingly, if this logic is explicated in propositions, "its" a priori. (*Crisis*, 373/Hua. VI.382)

This inevitably leads, Husserl acknowledges, to the "objection" (*Einwand*, cf. *Crisis*, 279/Hua. VI.325; Hua. XXXIX.158) of relativism, namely, that there are different logics for different rationalities and hence that Europeans can think and reason only *as* Europeans. In his later writings Husserl gives great force to this relativist objection, but always eventually dismisses it in favor of a form of intersubjective communication and critique through which we can come to understand the 'other' and recognize what is universal and particular in each other's viewpoints (Hua. XV.632). There are continuities and regularities in our experiences of others, despite obvious differences.

2. THE NATIONAL SOCIALIST REJECTION OF UNIVERSALISM AND THEIR AFFIRMATION OF PARTICULAR WORLDVIEWS (*WELTANSCHAUUNGEN*) BASED ON RACE

The cultural and political context in the 1930s surrounding this discussion of the universality of reason and the particularity of peoples cannot be ignored. In terms of internal motivations driving Husserl's philosophy in the thirties, he is in part responding to the challenge of Heidegger's *Being and Time* (1927), which emphasized human finitude and historical embeddedness to the extent that it seemed to amount to a kind of relativism.[16] By 1929 Husserl had come to see Heidegger's *Being and Time* as developing an *anthropology* of human existence in the natural attitude.[17] Indeed, Husserl had regarded "anthropologism" as a particular form of relativism as early as the *Prolegomena to Pure Logic* (1900, especially §§36, 39, and 40), there applied to the Neo-Kantians; he now addressed it as part of a general kind of historicism such was to be found in Wilhelm Dilthey's work.

The external context for Husserl's musings must surely include reference to the "bomb" (as Husserl puts it in a 1935 letter) that exploded with the imposition of the Nuremberg Laws of 15 September 1935.[18] Indeed, as I shall show below, Husserl's *universalism* was specifically singled out for ridicule by quite a number of professional philosophers sympathetic to the National Socialist outlook, such as Friedrich Würzbach (about whom more below) and Ernst Krieck.[19] *Universalism*

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[16]On Heidegger's supposed relativism, see Cristina Lafont, *Heidegger, Language, and World-Disclosure* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), *passim*; and Jeffrey Barash, *Martin Heidegger and the Problem of Historical Meaning* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003), 179ff.

[17]See Thomas Sheehan, "Husserl's Marginal Remarks in Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*," in E. Husserl, *Psychological and Transcendental Phenomenology and the Confrontation with Heidegger (1927–31)*, eds. Thomas Sheehan and Richard Palmer, Husserl Collected Works VI (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1997), 287 and 301.

[18]See Husserl's letter to his son Gerhart, 21 Sept. 1935, in Husserl, *Briefwechsel*, vol. 9, *Familienbriefe*, 244–47, at 246.

[19]Ironically, in his writings of the early 1930s, Husserl uses much of the language that is politically in vogue to discuss communal culture: e.g. the terms *Volk*, *Weltanschauung*, *Vaterland*, *Boden*, and so on, albeit without racist overtones. He does, of course, also discuss physical and racial differences as they

was presented by these academic ideologues as a particularly Jewish plot designed to weaken claims of race. Ernst Krieck (1882–1947), for instance, a leading National Socialist ideologue (who held the Chair for Philosophy and Pedagogy at Heidelberg from 1934 to 1945) stressed his opposition to universalism:

> Since the National Socialist *Weltanschauung* has . . . ended any form of universalism and replaced it with the racial-*Volkish* principle; philosophy, since it has always depended upon universalism, must now also be declared over and be relieved through a racial-*Volkish* cosmology and anthropology.[20]

Similarly, in 1938, the Nazi-aligned political philosopher Alfred Klemmt (1895–1979)[21] contrasts spirit (*Geist*) that is "bloodless, abstract, universal humanity, rootless, and homeless" with *Geist* that is "blood-conditioned, vitally determined, organically rooted . . . anchored multifariously in the terrestrial reality, firmly embedded in the eternal ordering of the natural world."[22]

Let us quickly rehearse the National Socialist position on race.[23] Following Gereon Wolters,[24] we can summarize Hitler's vision of National Socialism as based on a number of central principles. First is the reduction of individual to race. Belonging to a particular people, *Volk,* or race is the central dimension of the identity of a person. Secondly, the so-called Aryan race is, biologically and culturally, the most developed and its historical culmination is the "master race" (*Herrenrasse*), namely, the Germans. Thirdly, mixing of races leads to deterioration towards the "inferior" part, threatening the purity of the master race. Finally, world history must be understood as a continuous war between the races for "space to live" (*Lebensraum*).

There were a significant number of philosophers in Germany who for various reasons allied themselves with this National Socialist ideology, including some of Husserl's own students, e.g. Oskar Becker (1889–1964) and Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss (1892–1974), as well as others such as Hans Alfred Grunsky (1902–88) and Friedrich Weidauer (b. 1894–unknown). The philosophers who supported

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are recognized in everyday life. Thus Husserl writes, "[W]e must include races here in so far as the commonality of our physical habitus goes hand in hand with specific social characteristics" (*Die Rasse rechnen wir hierher, sofern die Gemeinsamkeit des äusseren physischen Habitus Hand in Hand geht mit derartigen Gemeinschaftscharakteren*, Hua. XIV.183).

[20] *Da die nationalsozialistische Weltanschauung, wie soeben Reichsleiter Rosenberg durch einen Aufsatz in der Presse festgestellt hat, den Universalismus jeder Art beendet und durch das rassisch-völkische Prinzip ersetzt, müßte folgerichtig die Philosophie, da sie stets am Universalismus hängt, als beendet erklärt und durch eine rassisch-völkische Kosmologie und Anthropologie abgelöst werden*, quoted in Monika Leske, *Philosophen im "Dritten Reich": Studie zu Hochschul- und Philosophiebetrieb im faschistischen Deutschland* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1990), 303–4.

[21] Alfred Klemmt, *Wissenschaft und Philosophie im dritten Reich*, ed. Paul Beimeckenstein (Berlin: Junker und Dunnhaupt, 1938). On Klemmt's anti-Jewish stance, see Christian Tilitzki, *Die deutsche Universitätsphilosophie in der Weimarer Republik und im dritten Reich* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2002), 652–54.

[22] *. . . blutloser, abstrakter, allgemein menschheitlicher, wurzelloser, heimatloser Geist; . . . blutbedingter, vital bestimmter, organisch verwurzelter, in der irdischen Wirklichkeit vielfältig verankerter, in den ewigen Ordnungen des natürlichen Lebens fest beheimateter Geist.* See Leske, *Philosophen im "Dritten Reich,"* 85.

[23] For a most interesting study of the National Socialist theorists of race, see Hans-Christian Harten, Uwe Neirich, and Matthias Schwerendt, *Rassenhygiene als Erziehungsideologie des Dritten Reichs: Bio-bibliographisches Handbuch* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2006).

[24] See Gereon Wolters, "Der 'Führer' und seine Denker: zur Philosophie des 'Dritten Reichs,'" *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 47 (1999): 223–51.

National Socialism advocated the superiority of the German race and spirit (*Geist*). In various ways, they attempted to ground their "folk-outlook" (*Volk Weltanschauung*) in philosophical theory.

Oskar Becker studied with Husserl from 1919 to 1922, writing a Habilitation on the foundations of geometry.[25] He taught at Freiburg and Bonn, and, after a brief suspension from teaching in 1945, went on to have an illustrious career after the war.[26] Becker published a number of articles on race, including a notorious article entitled "Nordic Metaphysics" (*Nordische Metaphysik*).[27] Furthermore, whereas in 1935 in *Kürschners Deutscher Gelehrtenkalender* his fields of interest were listed as "history and philosophy of mathematics," in the 1940/41 edition a new research field is listed: *Rassenseelenkunde* ("race-psychology"), a term associated with the work of another of Husserl's students from his Freiburg years (1917–19), the psychologist and anthropologist Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss, a good friend of Becker's.[28] In his article "Nordic Metaphysics" Becker contrasts the traits of Near-Eastern desert

[25]Becker's Habilitation was published as *Beiträge zur phänomenologische Begründung der Geometrie und ihre physikalischen Anwendungen*, in Husserl's *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung* 4 (1923): 493–560; an excerpt has been translated by Theodore Kisiel in *Phenomenology and the Natural Sciences*, eds. Joseph Kockelmans and Theodore J. Kisiel (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 119–43.

[26]Oskar Becker published his second major work *Mathematische Existenz. Untersuchungen zur Logik und Ontologie mathematischer Phänomene* in Husserl's *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung* 8 (1927): 440–809, in the same volume that contained Heidegger's *Being and Time*. On his importance as a philosopher of mathematics, see Volker Peckhaus, *Oskar Becker und die Philosophie der Mathematik* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2005). Becker was, strictly speaking, not a member of the National Socialist party but belonged to the Nazi Teachers Association (as did Gadamer and many others). Becker remained close to Heidegger and was Jürgen Habermas's dissertation adviser. In a personal communication to me in Dublin on 15 June 2010, Habermas recalled that, as a doctoral student, he had been aware of Becker's National Socialist background (because it was well known that Becker had been suspended from teaching for a period) and Habermas had even glanced through one of Becker's racist publications in the library, but they had never spoken about it, and on a personal level Becker was kind to Habermas. At that time, Habermas recalled, one didn't see much of one's dissertation supervisor so contact between them was minimal. Becker, for instance, made no comment on Habermas' 1953 newspaper review of Heidegger's *Introduction to Metaphysics* that criticized the fact that Heidegger had left stand a reference to the "inner truth and greatness" of the National Socialist movement. Habermas has commented on this review in his "Work and *Weltanschauung*: The Heidegger Controversy from a German Perspective," trans. John McCumber, *Critical Inquiry*, 15.2 (Winter, 1989): 431–456, see esp. 451, 'In 1953 Heidegger published his lectures from 1935 on the *Introduction to Metaphysics*. I was, as a student, at that time so impressed with *Being and Time* that reading these lectures, fascist right down to their stylistic details, actually shocked me. I discussed this impression in a newspaper article-mentioning especially the sentence about the "inner truth and greatness of the Nazi movement." What shocked me most was that Heidegger had published in 1953, without explanation or comment, what I had to assume was an unchanged lecture from 1935.'

[27]See Oskar Becker, "Nordische Metaphysik," in *Rasse. Monatsschrift der Nordischen Bewegung*, herausgegeben im Auftrage des Nordischen Ringes in der Nordischen Gesellschaft von Richard v. Hoff, 5 (1938): 83–92. In this essay, Becker criticizes Heidegger's *Being and Time* for not accommodating the crucial concept of *race*. See Wolfram Hogrebe, "Von der Hinfälligkeit des Wahren und der Abenteuerlichkeit des Denkers. Eine Studie zur Philosophie Oskar Beckers," *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 54 (2006): 221–44; and Gereon Wolters, "Philosophie im Nationalsozialismus: der Fall Oskar Becker," in *Die Philosophie und die Wissenschaften: Zum Werk Oskar Beckers*, eds. Jürgen Mittelstrass and Annemarie Gethmann-Siefert (Munich: Fink, 2002), 27–64.

[28]I am grateful to Gereon Wolters for bringing this entry to my attention. The term '*Seelenkunde*' was one of the many Germanic replacements for foreign terms encouraged by the National Socialists, in this case intending to replace the Greek-rooted term 'psychology.'

peoples with those of Nordic peoples, drawing on the phenomenologically influenced race theories of Clauss.[29]

Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss (1892–1974), an Arabist, traveler, and overall colorful character who went on to have a checkered relationship with the Nazis, developed a cultural anthropology that claimed to employ phenomenological description (especially empathy) to understand and classify different cultural types (types of psyche) based on physical attributes. Clauss's books were extremely popular, and he eventually was appointed to a lectureship at the University of Berlin, with the support of the National Socialist student society.[30] In the Preface to his 1926 work, *Rasse und Seele: Eine Einführung in die Gegenwart* [*Race and Soul: An Introduction for the Present*],[31] Clauss records his debt to Husserl (his dedication disappeared from editions of the book published during the Nazi years):

> In this research I am grateful first and foremost to my early teacher, Professor Edmund Husserl in Freiburg, from whom I have learned the methodical approach of my research and particularly much valuable indications, for example, on the relationship between soul and living body, begun in earlier years . . . Autumn, 1925.[32]

Clauss's cultural anthropology accorded loosely with the National Socialist general perception concerning race, but his explicit rejection of the biological basis for race meant his views were later questioned by the Nazi theorists. Clauss claimed that peoples are experienced as foreign not based on their physical characteristics but on the experience of their "souls," which were molded by their interaction with the environment. Each people has its own particular "soul" that is particularly suited to its own landscape. There are desert peoples and forest peoples, peoples for whom space is infinite and must be conquered, and peoples who choose to

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[29]See Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss, *Rasse und Seele. Eine Einführung in den Sinn der leiblichen Gestalt* (Munich: Lehmanns, 1926, 18th ed., 1943). This book had gone through eighteen editions by 1943, such was its popularity! Clauss attended Husserl's seminars in Freiburg from 1917 to 1919 and completed his doctorate, *Die Totenklagen der deutschen Minnesänger*, with him in 1921. Clauss began teaching and writing on the psychology of race in the early 1920s, claiming to use a version of the phenomenological method involving empathic identification with other cultures; see his popular *Die Nordische Seele. Eine Einführung in die Rassenseelenkunde* (Munich: Lehmanns, 1923; eight editions by 1943). Clauss's work is discussed in Eric Voegelin, *Race and State*, trans. Ruth Hein (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1997). Clauss's racial theories were extremely popular but in fact were not genetically based, and eventually he got into trouble with the Nazis (denounced by his second wife) because of his amorous liaison with his Jewish assistant, Margarete Landé, whom he protected by hiding her in his house during the war. See Peter Weingart, *Doppel-Leben. Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss: Zwischen Rassenforschung und Widerstand* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1995). For a general discussion of Clauss's cultural conception of race, see Christopher Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich: Linguistics, Racial Anthropology and Genetics in the Dialectic of Volk* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005), 57–60 and 185–87. I am grateful to Robert Bernasconi for discussion of Clauss.

[30]See Harten, Neirich, and Schwerendt, *Rassenhygiene als Erziehungsideologie des Dritten Reichs*, 145. According to this account (see especially 140–50), Clauss was an early member of various anti-Semitic societies in Germany and, although he preached a "value-free" anthropology, his writing is replete with racial stereotypes (see 147).

[31]Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss, *Rasse und Seele: Eine Einführung in die Gegenwart* (München: JF Lehmanns Verlag, 1926). See also his *Die nordische Seele. Eine Einführung in die Rassenseelenkunde* (Munich: Lehmann, 1932).

[32]Clauss, *Rasse und Seele: In der Forschung selbst verdanke ich das Meiste und Beste meinem früheren Lehrer, Herrn Professor Edmund Husserl in Freiburg; ich habe von ihm die Arbeitsweise meiner Forschung erlernt und darüber hinaus manch wertvollen Aufschluß, z.B. über das Verhältnis der Seele zum Leib, in früheren Jahre empfangen. . . . Herbst, 1925.*

live in more restricted horizons. For Clauss, it is unscientific to approach Mediterranean peoples from the standpoint of Nordic peoples and vice-versa. Each race instantiates its own highest value. In fact, he resists an absolute ranking of races and a racial psychology based on purely physical characteristics (facial aspect, etc.).[33] The Nordic landscape has an openness that calls for space to be traversed; accordingly, it lies in the essence of the Nordic soul that it must penetrate and dominate the whole world. Other cultures must necessarily accept this Nordic mode of dominating distances (trains, planes, and so on). If the thought of the Chinese racing through their countryside in motor cars seems an absurdity, it is nevertheless a reality, Clauss says. The Chinese have succumbed to the "Germanic"[34] soul. Even in issues like clothing, the Germanic attire (he means trousers) has been more or less uniformly adopted by other cultures.

Adopting Clauss's characterization of the Nordic "forest peoples," Becker endorses the idea of a distinctive Nordic outlook that led to scientific discovery, something no people absorbed in myth could ever accomplish. In his "Nordic Metaphysics" Becker, echoing Clauss, writes,

> The true unspoilt Nordic researcher will never acknowledge that the magic-believing world of a Congo Negro in its kind could be as good as the results of his laborious observation of nature and conscientiously thought through conclusions. . . . The technology grounded on the Nordic natural science has conquered the world, not the magical art of primitive people.[35]

Becker associates the Western scientific accomplishment with the Nordic outlook in opposition to the non-scientific outlook of, for instance, the African.[36] Husserl has been accused of doing something similar especially with his assertion in the "Vienna Lecture" that the world is going towards Europeanization (*Crisis*, 275/ Hua. VI.320), but, as we shall see, his intention is entirely different; "European" means here openness to science as infinite tasks.

As former students of Husserl, Becker and Clauss remained largely appreciative of their mentor;[37] other academic philosophers adopted a hostile posture from the outset. A particularly virulent critic of Husserl was the philosopher and Nietzsche

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[33]Such a physically based account of race was promoted by another German race theorist, Hans F. K. Günther (1891–1968), who studied in Freiburg and was professor in Berlin from 1935 to 1940, and in Freiburg from 1940 to 1945. Günther also celebrated the superiority of the Nordic race; see his popular *Kleine Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes* (Munich: J. F. Lehmanns, 1929), an excerpt from which is to found in translation in George Lachmann Mosse, *Nazi Culture: Intellectual, Cultural and Social Life in the Third Reich* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 61–65.

[34]Mosse, ed., *Nazi Culture: Intellectual, Cultural and Social Life in the Third Reich*, 65–75.

[35]O. Becker, "Nordische Metaphysik," as translated in Eckart Menzler-Trott, *Logic's Lost Genius: The Life of Gerhard Gentzen*, trans. Craig A. Smoryński and Edward R Griffor (Providence, RI: American Mathematical Society, 2007), 216.

[36]Both Husserl and Heidegger also use the example of the African native, see M. Heidegger, *Zur Bestimmung der Philosophie*, Gesamtausgabe 56/7 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1987, 2nd ed., 1999), §14, 72; trans. by Ted Sadler, *Towards the Definition of Philosophy* (London: Continuum, 2000), 61, where he speaks of the non-scientific Senegalese Negro "suddenly transplanted from his hut" (*ein Senegalneger als plötzlich aus seiner Hütte*) who has no familiarity with college-style furniture, lecterns, and so on. Such a native would see the lectern not just a "bare something," a material object, but as "something which he does not know what to make of." Heidegger insists that an object presents itself from out of a particular "environment" (*Umwelt*).

[37]Albeit, Clauss makes reference to Husserl as a "Jew" in the 1920s with some indications of pejorative intent; see Harten, Neirich, and Schwerendt, *Rassenhygiene als Erziehungsideologie des Dritten Reichs*, 141–45.

scholar Friedrich Würzbach (1886–1961), founder of the Nietzsche-Gesellschaft, and responsible for editing the Musarion edition of Nietzsche's works in the twenties (1922–29).[38] Würzbach aligned himself wholeheartedly with the National Socialist cause and wrote a series of populist articles on the importance of race and blood from the early twenties on (one 1934 newspaper article is entitled "The Rebirth of Spirit out of Blood").[39] In his self-justificatory 1934 *curriculum vitae* (and repeated in his later mercy-plea addressed to Hitler in 1940—ironically, he was considered part Jewish), Würzbach particularly emphasizes that he had repeatedly attacked Husserl in his writings and lectures.[40] In "On the Spirit of Race" he writes,

> Some twelve years ago, I was invited to a lecture by the Freiburg student body. The Jewish philosopher Edmund Husserl had founded a large influential school there. I spoke out against him, against his impertinent arrogant intellectualism, against this inverted cripple, who hated the healthy thoughts and feelings of his students and, because of this hatred, misinformed and crippled. . . . Since the cowardly opponent did not enter into a discussion, I tried to make the then Culture Ministry aware of this danger for our youth.[41]

Würzbach, in his *The Two Fundamental Types of Human* (1932), for instance, presents Husserl's call for philosophy as a rigorous science as "un-German" (*undeutsch*) and "Jewish" (*jüdisch*).[42]

In his 1932 *Erkennen und Erleben* (*Knowledge and Experience*), Würzbach accuses Husserl of foolishly not recognizing the Nietzschean truth that culture is based on blood and inheritance.[43] Here, he differentiates between three kinds of animal:

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[38]F. Nietzsche, *Gesammelte Werke* (Munich: Musarion, 1922–29).

[39]F. Würzbach, "Wiedergeburt des Geistes aus dem Blute," *Völkischer Beobachter,* 14 January 1934. I am grateful to Gereon Wolters for providing me with a copy of this article.

[40]Würzbach claimed to have given a series of lectures, including attacks on Husserl, in Berlin in 1925, Freiburg (1926), Basel (1926), Paris (1926), and Riga (1928) (Würzbach, BR, 30-4-34; BR, 21-5-40), see his "Personnel File" from *Reichsender München*, Bayerische Rundfunk Historisches Archiv [BRHA], Friedrich Würzbach, RV. 16. Würzbach himself was, in the language of the Nazi Racial-Purity Department (*Reichsstelle für Sippenforschung*) "half-Jewish" (*Halbjude*, BRHA 14-9-39). He had a Jewish mother but falsely claimed that he had been born to a different mother, whose name his father had never told him, and thus was of true Aryan stock (BRHA, 21-5-40). Würzbach was eventually dismissed from his position at the radio station when his final plea for clemency, petitioned to Hitler, was declined. The Director of the station, Helmuth Habersbrunner (1899–1959) wrote a number of letters seeking to overturn Würzbach's suspension. In one such letter to a high ranking Nazi official, Habersbrunner wrote, "When one works closely with someone for six years, one ought to have, at least once, felt the Jew coming through. Especially me, who can usually sense a Jew from a hundred metres, against the wind. I have never spotted the slightest trace of Jewish *Geist*. On the contrary, a true Aryan mentality" (BRHA, 27-5-40).

[41]Friedrich Würzbach, "Vom Geist der Rasse," in *Frauenwarte* 20 (1938): 625. I am grateful to Gereon Wolters for providing me with a copy of this text.

[42]F. Würzbach, *Die zwei Grundtypen des Menschen, der "Grosse Kopf" und der "Gunstling der Natur"* (Reutlingen: Hort, 1932).

[43]See F. Würzbach, *Erkennen und Erleben: Der große Kopf und der Günstling der Natur* (Berlin: Wegweiser-Verlag, 1932), where having criticized materialism, realism, and idealism, he then claims that a mystical substance called "seed-energy" (*Keimplasma*) flows through human beings, and is responsible for transferring culture to humans through their blood, each race having its own form of *Keimplasma*. This *Keimplasma*, which he claimed had been scientifically established, enriches our biological inheritance and mixes with the mind at the pineal gland (*Zirbeldüsse*). According to Würzbach, *Keimplasma* is what the pure "minions of nature," such as Goethe, Kant, Nietzsche, and Hitler, harness to lead the masses. Those who do not use *Keimplasma* and think that rational argument can explain and ground cognitive thought and experience, are "brain-animals" (*Gehirntiere*), "intellectuals," "cripples," or "big-heads" (*große Köpfe*), all terms Würzbach also applies to Husserl.

"Nature's Minion or Favorite" (*Günstling der Natur*), "Vertebrate-Animal" (*Wirbeltier*) and "Brain-Animal" (*Gehirntier*)—the latter two representing different degrees of "Big-Head" (*Große Kopf*). The Big-Heads and Nature's Minions are opposing poles—Apollo and Dionysus—representing two types of knowledge, which he styles respectively "anthropomorphic" (available to all) and "suprahuman" (*übermenschlich*), which represents pure originality.[44] Vertebrate-Animals are defined by Würzbach as creatures that

> surround themselves in a narrow objectivity, limited, and hemmed in by the law governed basis of the rationality of the Vertebrate-Animal. And that is why we call those, which can never breach these boundaries, Brain-Animals; they are, in a biological sense, a higher, but exclusively specialized, poorly developed Vertebrate-Animal.[45]

In *Erkennen und Erleben* Würzbach specifically uses Husserl as a stereotype of the big-headed creature. Husserl was the perfect "magnifying glass" with which to make "the general, but insidious, state of emergency come into view; a state of emergency which is so widespread that there is no form of life which is not suffering under it."[46] In particular Würzbach attacks Husserl's universalism concerning truth as expressed for instance in the *Logical Investigations Prolegomena* §36, where he wrote,

> Whatever is true, is absolutely, intrinsically true: truth is one and the same whether men or non-men, angels or gods apprehend and judge it. Logical laws speak of truth in this ideal unity, set over against the real multiplicity of races (*der realen Mannigfaltigkeit von Rassen*), individuals and experiences, and it is of this ideal unity that we all speak when we are not confused by relativism.[47]

Würzbach, commenting on this very passage presumably because of Husserl's explicit mention of "races," claims that Husserl is turning "truth on its head."[48] Würzbach rejects the very idea of universal, non-race-based truths:

> . . . it did not matter if a European, a Negro or Jew, a Chinaman or Red-Indian, found a truth or solved a problem. If the knowledge was correct then it was valid for all humans, even for non-humans, angels and gods, and on in perpetuity, just as the Jewish philosopher Edmund Husserl proclaimed with immense arrogance only a decade ago. He believed the influence of blood and race would only tarnish and stain *Geist*; that pure *Geist* could get rid of the prejudices of one's nation, and that only *Geist* could ordain eternal and universal truths. A so-called aristocracy of *Geist* is

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[44] Würzbach, *Erkennen und Erleben*, 110–11.

[45] *Als Wirbeltieren entschließt sich uns nur die enge Objektivität, begrenzt und umgürtet von der Gesetzlichkeit der Wirbeltiervernunft, darum nannten wir die, welch über diese Grenzen nicht hinauskommen, Gehirntiere; sie sind im biologischen Sinne eine hohe, aber äußerst spezialisierte, entwicklungsarme Wirbeltier.* Würzbach, *Erkennen und Erleben*, 136.

[46] *Husserl ist wirklich ein starkes Vergrößerungsglas, mit dem man einen allgemeinen, aber schleichenden Notstand sichtbar machen kann, einen Notstand, der so allgemein ist, das es heute kein form des Lebens gibt, die nicht unter ihm zu leiden hat.* Würzbach, *Erkennen und Erleben*, 121.

[47] See E. Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen.* Erster Band: *Prolegomena zur reinen Logik.* Text der 1. und der 2. Auflage, ed. Elmar Holenstein, Hua. XVIII (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1975), §36, 125; *Logical Investigations*, trans. J. N. Findlay, rev. ed. Dermot Moran (London: Routledge, 2001), vol. 1, 79. The German reads, *Was wahr ist, ist absolute, ist "an sich" wahr; die Wahrheit ist identisch eine, ob sie Menschen oder Unmenschen, Engel oder Götter urteilend erfassen. Von der Wahrheit in dieser idealen Einheit gegenüber der realen Mannigfaltigkeit von Rassen, Individuen und Erlebnissen sprechen die logischen Gesetze und sprechen wir alle, wenn wir nicht etwa relativistisch verwirrt sind.* See Würzbach, *Erkennen und Erleben*, 119.

[48] *Die Wahrheit auf den Kopf.* Würzbach, *Erkennen und Erleben*, 119.

> fashioned which looks down with contempt on those who philosophize as Germans, as Italians, or as Frenchmen. Once again Nietzsche slashes the mask of such chatterers with a sharp smack of his blade and shows us their true face.[49]

Truth, for Würzbach, in opposition to Husserl, is relative to race. Würzbach, furthermore, preaches "the annihilation of the individual which means the annihilation of all private individualism, which means committing oneself to the great folk-community (*Volksgemeinschaft*) through primordial *Volk*-ish experiences such as religion and metaphysics."[50]

To give one further illustration of the onslaught against Husserl in National Socialist influenced publications, the 1938 edition of *Meyers-Lexikon*, a popular standard reference work re-edited under Nazi influence, is illuminating. The entry on "Phenomenology" characterizes it as a primarily Jewish movement (listing Husserl, Reinach, Geiger, Scheler) and describes phenomenology as an "abstract, unproductive logical-scientific theory of essential insight through experiencing consciousness."[51] Similarly, the entry on "Edmund Husserl" characterizes him as "one of the main protagonists in the Jewish over-foreignization of German philosophy" (*einer der Hauptschrittmacher der jud. Überfremdung der dt. Philosophie*).[52] *Meyers-Lexikon* portrays Husserl as the author of a mystical rationalism that relies on *Wesensschau*. Husserl is explicitly accused of trying, in his "Philosophy as a Rigorous Science" *Logos* article (1910/11) "to obliterate all natural *Weltanschauung*." Furthermore, the *Meyers-Lexikon* entry on Husserl lists in its short bibliography only works critical of Edmund Husserl, including Friedrich Weidauer's *Kritik der Transzendental-Phänomenologie Husserls* [*Critique of Husserl's Transcendental Philosophy*] (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1933) and a pamphlet, *Der Einbruch des Judentums in die Philosophie* [*The Break-In of Judaism into Philosophy*] by the Munich philosopher Hans Alfred Grunsky.[53]

Grunsky (1902–88) had joined the National Socialist party in 1930 and quickly became one of its more fanatical ideologues. He was appointed as assistant to Alexander Pfänder (against the latter's wishes) at the University of Munich in 1935 and, in May 1937, was personally elevated to the Chair of Philosophy and Psychology by Adolf Hitler, against the wishes of the Munich philosophy faculty. In this role, he was active in the denunciation of many Jewish professors including

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[49] See Würzbach, "*Vom Geist der Rasse*," in *Frauenwarte* 20 (1938): 625. I am grateful to David Florcyzk Jones for his assistance in translating this text.

[50] *Vernichtung des Individuums aber bedeutet Vernichtung alles privaten Individualismus, bedeutet Eingehen in die große Volksgemeinschaft, in uranfänglich völkische Erlebnisse wie Religion und Metaphysik.* See Würzbach, *Völkischer Beobachter,* 26 January 1934.

[51] *Meyers-Lexikon* (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1938), 1124. The term '*Überfremdung*' means literally to make something too foreign and was a distinctive National Socialist term. The term continues to occur in racially charged discussions about immigration. An appropriate rendering might be 'foreign infiltration.'

[52] See the entry "Edmund Husserl" in *Meyers-Lexikon*, Band 5 (1938), 1542–43.

[53] Hans Alfred Grunsky, *Der Einbruch des Judentums in die Philosophie, Schriften der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik.* I. *Idee Und Gestalt des Nationalsozialismus* (Berlin, Junker und Dünnhau pt, 1937), 14. This is a short pamphlet (37 pages), not a scholarly monograph. Grunsky was known after the war mostly for his work on Jacob Boehme, but he was a notorious and unrepentant National Socialist, having been an early member of the NS party, joining in 1930. He was personally made Ordinarius (full) professor on the orders of Hitler.

another of Husserl's students, Dietrich von Hildebrand (1889–1977).[54] Grunsky's nasty pamphlet portrays Husserl primarily as a Jewish philosopher who engages in a sterile mysticism; his work contains the "seed of Talmudic thinking" (*Kern des talmudischen Denkens*). Jewish philosophy lacks rootedness in blood and soil and is adrift. With no unique theme of its own, it "Talmudizes" the themes of genuine Aryan philosophy.

One could go on citing these academic philosophers' race-based criticisms of Husserlian universalism, but the point has been established. The National Socialist promulgation of a particularist and race-based "worldview" (*Weltanschauung*) with its race-based relativism contextualizes and gives new pathos to Husserl's struggle to defend the universalist, rationalist, non-relativist core of "European" and, thereby, world culture. Husserl's supposed Eurocentrism is actually a trenchant defense of the philosophical vision of universal humanity against these one-sided forms of racial particularism. Europe was in danger, Husserl said repeatedly (e.g. *Crisis*, 299/Hua. VI.348), and his aim was to secure philosophy "in times of danger" (*Crisis*, 392/Hua. VI.510) and to restore it to its primary mission of envisaging and instantiating in a secure way universal rational humanity. Husserl (as Habermas subsequently does) has deliberately embraced the Enlightenment project of "universal *ratio*" (Hua. XXVII.237) although he is critical of its traditional narrowness. In the *Crisis* and in associated essays (such as the "Vienna Lecture"), Husserl emphasizes that the current crisis is a crisis of *reason*: "the European crisis has its roots in a misguided rationalism" (*Crisis*, 290/Hua. VI.337).

3. HUSSERL ON THE LIMITS OF ENLIGHTENMENT RATIONALISM

Husserl believed in "autonomous philosophy" as "the fundamental principle of European culture" (Hua. XXVII.239), committed to the "life of reason" (*Vernunftsleben*) based on autonomous norms. However, he explicitly criticized the traditional Enlightenment conception of reason (see e.g. his 1934 supplement, Hua. XXVII.236-38; *Crisis* §§25–28). Enlightenment rationality had been too narrow (*Crisis*, 290/Hua. VI.337), since it ignored the pre-given environing world of practices and needs, and embraced naturalism and objectivism. There is need to renew the claim of reason, to renew its universality, and to commit humans to living in a rational community, defending what he calls in the *Crisis* "genuine humanness" (*echtes Menschentum*, *Crisis*, 6/Hua. VI.3–4).

The main problem facing a "renewal" (*Erneuerung*) of reason in our times is that in the modern period reason has become construed in a one-sided manner, due to the success of the mathematical sciences leading to the mathematization of nature. Husserl, like Heidegger (who made similar criticisms in his essays of

[54]Dietrich von Hildebrand began his studies in Munich under Theodor Lipps and then moved to Göttingen in 1909 to study with Husserl and Reinach. He completed his PhD with Husserl in 1912, published in 1916 as *Die Idee der Sittlichen Handlung* (*The Nature of Ethical Action*). He became a close friend of Max Scheler's and converted to Catholicism in 1914. He was sentenced to death in his absence by the Nazis for his efforts to counter Hitler's propaganda. He fled Germany for Austria in 1933 and subsequently emigrated to the US, where he taught at Fordham University. See the biography written by his second wife, Alice von Hildebrand, *The Soul of A Lion* (New York: Ignatius Press, 2000).

the thirties)[55] and later Marcuse,[56] is criticizing the *one-dimensionality* of the framework of technologically organized, calculative reasoning. Today's rationalism is in the grip of *objectivism* and *naturalism*, and it is transcendental phenomenological reflection (*Besinnung*), especially on the genesis of these meaning-formations, that will lead our concept of reason to a new form of "groundedness of existence" (*Bodenständigkeit des Daseins*, Hua. XXVII.238), a new universal "ground" or "soil" (*Boden*, ironically a frequent term in Husserl's writings from this period (e.g. Hua. XV 7), probably in part due to Heidegger and despite the strong National Socialist resonances, e.g. *Blut und Boden*).

For Husserl, this phenomenological renewal of reason opposed all forms of *naturalism*, including all purely biological explanations of human nature. Therefore Husserl's assertion in the "Vienna Lecture" that "there is, for essential reasons, no zoology of peoples" (*Es gibt wesensmäßig keine Zoologie der Völker*, *Crisis*, 275/ Hua. VI.320) must surely be read as a clear repudiation of race-based doctrines.[57] Furthermore, it is within the context of Husserl's defense of reason as a universal possession of all humans that, in his "Vienna Lecture", he makes his remark about Papuans, a remark that has been misconstrued as condescending or even as racist. Husserl writes,

> Reason is a broad title. According to the good old definition, man is the rational living being, a sense in which even the Papuan is man and not beast [*und in diesem weiten Sinne ist auch der Papua Mensch und nicht Tier*]. He has his aims, and he acts with reflection, considering practical possibilities. As products and methods grow, they enter into a tradition that is ever intelligible in its rationality. Still, just as man (and even the Papuan) represents a new level of animality—in comparison with the beast—so with regard to humanity and its reason does philosophical reason represent a new level. (*Crisis*, 290/Hua. VI.337–38)

Although this might sound patronizing today, it is in fact a cry from the heart for the recognition of the universal rational humanity of all peoples, including those who do not participate in scientific technicity.[58] Husserl always stresses the unity of what he calls the "regional essence" of humanity despite local ethnic differences and anthropological variations. We recognize all humans as belonging to the regional material essence *human being* (see Hua. XV.622), no matter how different they present themselves. These differences are only gradual differences;

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[55]See, for instance, Heidegger's 1938 essay, "The Age of the World Picture," in M. Heidegger, *Off the Beaten Track*, ed. and trans. Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 57–85.

[56]See Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon, 1964).

[57]It is possible that Husserl's immediate target is Oswald Spengler who, in his Preface to *The Decline of the West* (1918–23), approaches culture according to a biological model. See Oswald Spengler, *Untergang des Abendlandes: Umrisse einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte*, vol. I (Vienna: Braumüller, 1918), vol. 2 (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1923), trans. Charles F. Atkinson as *The Decline of the West*, eds. Arthur Helps and Helmut Werner (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). Spengler went on to oppose the National Socialists.

[58]Husserl's reference to Papuan natives in several places in his work is presumably an indirect allusion to the work of Lévy-Bruhl and especially his *Primitive Mythology*, which specifically discusses the Papua of New Guinea. New Guinea was a particularly evocative figure for German thinkers because it had been a German protectorate from 1885 to 1914.

we do not mistake humans for animals; even Gulliver's horse-people are really human (Hua. X.622).

Of course, Husserl also believes that the initial practical rationality of all can also be transformed through philosophy (and its offspring science) to a new and higher level of rationality, which becomes the infinite goal of all humans. Husserl always stresses this universality and breakthrough to infinity brought about by the Greek philosophical "theoretical attitude" (*theoretische Einstellung*, *Crisis*, 280/Hua. VI.326). This might itself seem like another form of particularism (so-called Greek "exceptionalism") and Eurocentrism, even a forthright assertion of the superiority of European culture. It is important to get clear on Husserl's conception of this breakthrough, because it is precisely an overcoming of finite particularity (including that of the "Greek" folk-*Umwelt*).

4. THE GREEK "BREAK-IN" (*EINBRUCH*) OR "BREAKTHROUGH" (*DURCHBRUCH*) TO THE THEORETICAL ATTITUDE

As is well-known, Husserl maintained that the "break-in" (*Einbruch*, *Crisis*, 283/Hua. VI.330; 285/Hua. VI.331) or "breakthrough" (*Durchbruch*, *Crisis*, 15/Hua. VI.13; and *Crisis*, 345/Hua. VI.358) to philosophy (or the "universal theoretical interest" [*Crisis*, 345/Hua. VI.358]) accomplished in the broad area of the Greek lands of the sixth century BCE enabled a new and permanent possibility for humanity. Only the Greeks could have made this breakthrough which in turn created what Husserl calls portentously a "new humanity,"

> . . . the breakthrough [*Durchbruch*] and the developmental beginning of a new human epoch—the epoch of mankind which now seeks to live, and only can live, in the free shaping [*Gestaltung*] of its existence, its historical life, through ideas of reason [*aus Ideen der Vernunft*], through infinite tasks [*auf unendlichen Aufgaben*]. (*Crisis*, 274/Hua. VI 319)

The ancient Greek "transformation" (*Umwandlung*, *Umstellung*) of culture involved a permanent revolutionary turning of interest of human beings away from the enclosed *practical* domain (aimed at satisfying needs), away from the all-encompassing mythical attitude with its "religious-mythic praxis" (*religiös-mythische Praxis*), toward the new, detached, theoretical attitude that made possible philosophy and the sciences that have blossomed ever since.[59] This universal theoretical interest uncovers invariant aspects of this variable world and particularly its "universal causal style" (*der universale Kausalstil*, *Crisis*, 345/Hua. VI 358). As Husserl writes,

> Man becomes gripped by a passion of a world-view [*Weltbetrachtung*] and world-knowledge [*Welterkenntnis*] that turns away from all practical interests and, within the closed sphere of its cognitive activity, in the times devoted to it, strives for and achieves nothing but pure *theoria*. ("Vienna Lecture," *Crisis*, 285/Hua. VI.331)

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[59]For Husserl's treatment of the Greeks, see Klaus Held, "Husserl und die Griechen," in *Phänomenologische Forschungen* 22, ed. E.W. Orth (Freiburg: Alber, 1989); Held, "Intercultural Understanding and the Role of Europe," in *Phenomenology: Critical Concepts in Philosophy*, eds. Dermot Moran and Lester Embree, vol. 4, *Expanding Horizons of Phenomenology* (London: Routledge, 2004), 267–79; and Held, "Husserls These von der Europäisierung der Menschheit," in *Phänomenologie im Widerstreit*, eds. C. Jamme und O. Pöggeler (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1989), 13–39. See also Elmar Holenstein, "Europa und die Menschheit. Zu Husserls kulturphilosophischen Meditationen," in the same volume, 40–64.

The Greek breakthrough, however, had its limitations. It is no longer possible to proceed *naively* and simply follow through or accept the concept of reason that has devolved to us from the past. "Reflection is required in every sense in order to right ourselves" (*Crisis*, 392/Hua. VI.510). For Husserl, we must return to the Greeks and reawaken the "genuine" sense of rationality inaugurated by Greek philosophy.

> Rationality, in that high and genuine sense of which alone we are speaking, the primordial [*urtümlich*] Greek sense which in the classical period of Greek philosophy had become an ideal, still requires, to be sure, much clarification and self-reflection; but it is called in its mature form to guide [our] development. (*Crisis*, 290/Hua. VI.337)

In *Crisis* §9, Husserl speaks of the "task of self-reflection which grows out of the 'breakdown' situation (*Zusammenbruchs-Situation*) of our time" (*Crisis*, 58/Hua. VI.59). Husserl frequently characterizes the necessary renewing reflection as a kind of "backwards reflection" (*Rückbesinnung*, *Crisis*, 17/Hua. VI.16) or "questioning back" (*Rückfragen*, or *Zurückfragen*, cf. *Crisis*, 56/Hua. VI.57; and again, *Crisis*, 69/Hua. VI.70), a regressive inquiry into the "original motivation" (*Ursprungsmotivation*, *Crisis*, 57/Hua. VI.58) that gave rise to modernity. This kind of historical self-reflection does not involve an empirical historical tracing back of origins of philosophy to the ancient Ionians, rather it is concerned with "the a priori of history" (*Crisis*, 349; Hua. VI.362; *Crisis* 351/Hua. VI.363) documenting the essential *meaningfulness* (*Sinnhaftigkeit*) of the process of philosophical/scientific idealization (*Crisis*, 347/Hua. VI.360).

Because of his Jewish descent, Husserl was prohibited from participating as an official German delegate in the Eighth International Congress of Philosophy held in Prague in 1934. Indeed, the official German delegation was dominated by Nazi sympathizers, as contemporary reports of the Congress confirm.[60] Nevertheless, Husserl wrote a letter that was read out at the Congress and later published in the Proceedings.[61] In this letter, he speaks of the "collapse of the West" (*Zusammenbruch des Abendlandes,* Hua. XXVII.243) and the danger of the "withering away [*Absterbens*] of philosophy and with it necessarily the withering of a Europe based on the spirit of truth" (Hua. XXVII.242). Self-reflection (*Selbstbesinnung*, cf. *Crisis*, 291/Hua. VI.339) as a radical questioning in the spirit of Descartes (e.g. Hua. XXVII.244) requires suspension of commitment (*epochē*) toward all existing tradition and all naïve thoughts concerning philosophical ideas and positions. Indeed, he

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[60]The Proceedings of the Congress were published as *Actes du Huitième Congrès International de Philosophie à Prague 2–7 Septembre 1934* (Prague: Comité d'organisation du Congrès, 1936) and Husserl's letter appears on pages xvi–xlv. For a report on the Congress see Ernst Nagel, "The Eighth International Congress of Philosophy," *Journal of Philosophy* 31 (1934): 589–601. Nagel reports: "Professor Hellpach of Heidelberg, a former Social Democrat and minister of education, pontifically laid down the thesis that *das Volk* is the central subject-matter of sociology, and that common descent and common purposes are constitutive marks of a *Volk*. From this norm for the social sciences he drew the interesting conclusion that every genuine culture is intolerant toward all others. The murmurs of protest from the audience at these words almost drowned out the speaker's voice" ("The Eighth International Congress of Philosophy," 593). He also records, "Professor Meyer of Hamburg defended the racial theories of the Third Reich, and perhaps only the lateness of the hour and the fatigue of the audience saved the day for law and order" (598).

[61]E. Husserl, "*An den Präsidenten des VIII. Internationalen Philosophen-Kongresses, Herrn Professor Dr. Rádl in Prag,*" reprinted in Husserl, *Aufsätze und Vorträge (1922–1937)*, eds. Thomas Nenon and H.R. Sepp, Hua. XXVII (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), 240–44.

portrays this self-reflection in terms of a critical re-appropriation of the *Urstiftung* of the Greek breakthrough to philosophy, to the eidetic, and to the theoretical attitude, and speaks of the necessity of involving all humanity in the process of this spiritualization through scientific reason (Hua. XXVII.241). In this "Prague Letter," philosophy, from its "primary founding" (*Urstiftung*) in ancient Greece, is presented as the great cultural product of Europe, its gift to the world. The challenge of philosophy is to live a life of self-responsibility (*Selbstverantwortung*).

> Philosophy is the organ for a new kind of historical existence [*Dasein*] of humankind, that of existing out of a spirit of autonomy. The primordial form [*Urgestalt*] of autonomy is that of the scientific self-responsibility. . . . Philosophical self-responsibility necessarily gets itself involved in philosophizing community. . . . Herewith the specific sense of European humanity and culture is designated. (Hua. XXVII.240; my translation)

As Husserl elaborates, the "mission" of philosophy possesses an inner "internationality" (*Internationalität*), not an internationality brought about by force, but one due to the "knowledge and work community" (*Erkenntnis- und Arbeitsgemeinschaft*, Hua. XXVII.242) that sustains it. Philosophy does not belong to a particular people but, once founded, is a permanent possession of a humanity united through autonomous reason (*eine Verbundenheit durch den Geist der Autonomie*, Hua. XXXVII.240).

Similarly, a year later, in his "Prague Lectures" of 14 and 15 November 1935 (now delivered as a private citizen), Husserl writes,

> What did it [modern European humanity] grasp as what is essential to ancient humanity? Nothing other than the philosophical form of existence [*Daseinsform*], freely giving itself in its whole life its law out of pure reason, out of philosophy. (Hua. XXIX.109; my translation)

The philosophical form of existence liberates from the "bindings of myth and tradition" (Hua. XXIX 109). In the *Crisis* §6, Husserl writes in similar manner:

> To be human at all [*Menschentum überhaupt*] is essentially to be a human being [*Menschsein*] in a socially and generatively united civilization [*Menschheit*]; and if man is a rational being (*animal rationale*), it is only insofar as his whole civilization is a rational civilization, that is, only with a latent orientation toward reason or one openly oriented toward the entelechy which has come to itself, become manifest to itself, and which now of necessity consciously directs human becoming. (*Crisis*, 15/Hua. VI.13)[62]

It is this claim of the intrinsic *universality* and *rationality* of a "Greek" culture made possible through philosophy (and the discovery of *infinity*—for which the idealization of space in geometry is paradigmatic) that allows Husserl to embrace a critical transformation and rethinking of the Enlightenment project of reason as foundational for a new international community of self-conscious, permanently vigilant ("wakeful") reason.

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[62]One can sympathize with the difficulties the translator David Carr encountered in attempting to render this sentence. The original reads, *Menschentum überhaupt ist wesensmäßig Menschsein in generativ und sozial verbundenen Menschheiten, und ist der Mensch Vernunftwesen (animal rationale), so ist er es nur, sofern seine ganze Menschheit Vernunftmenschheit ist latent auf Vernunft ausgerichtet oder offen ausgerichtet auf die zu sich selbst gekommene, für sich selbst offenbar gewordene und nunmehr in Wesensnotwendigkeit das menschheitliche Werden bewußt leitende Entelechie* (Hua. VI.13).

5. WORLDVIEWS, WORLD-CONSIDERATIONS, WORLD-REPRESENTATIONS (*WELTANSCHAUUNGEN*, *WELTBETRACHTUNGEN*, *WELTVORSTELLUNGEN*) AND THE CONCEPT OF "WORLD IN ITSELF" (*WELT AN SICH*)

Crucially, Husserl's account of the Greek breakthrough to philosophy involves the story of the Greeks coming to self-consciousness of their own world as a *particular* world involving a particular outlook, one not universally shared. Practical life-worlds have limited "knowledge-horizons" (see Hua. XXXIX.369). The very concept of one's own world in contrast with the "world in itself" (*die Welt an sich*, *Crisis*, 61/Hua. VI.62; Hua. VI.501) or "the true world" (*die wahre Welt*, *Crisis*, 127/Hua. VI.130) is, for Husserl, a breakthrough achievement of philosophy, and specifically of geometry with its conception of idealized infinite space (*Crisis* §8).[63]

In his 1934 so-called "Prague Treatise" (*Prager Abhandlung*)[64]—a draft paper entitled "On the Contemporary Task of Philosophy," written for the Eighth International Congress of Philosophy but never delivered and which marks the first of the *Crisis* texts—he speaks of the "originary founding" (*Urstiftung*) of philosophy as cosmology (Hua. XXVII.186). Philosophy (sometimes he specifically mentions the Skeptics here) allowed the Greeks to recognize their world-view as a local or national world-view (*Weltanschauung*) and hence its *relativity* in relation to other foreign world-views: "Thereby the Greek became conscious of the relativity of validity of the world" (*Damit wird der Grieche also der Geltungsrelativität der Welt bewusst*, Hua. XXVII.188). This leads the Greeks to make the crucial distinction between a "world-representation" (*Weltvorstellung*) and the "world in itself" (*Welt an sich*, Hua. XXVII.189), thereby setting in train a radical "demythification of the world" (*eine radikale Entmythisierung der Welt*, Hua. XXVII.189) and a critical stance-taking towards naïvely held traditional values (including individual, social, and national forms of praxis, Hua. XXVII.186). Philosophy, and especially skeptical questioning, forced the Greeks to disentangle themselves from the security of their own world-representation (*Weltvorstellung*, *Crisis*, 292/Hua. VI.340, or *Weltbetrachtung*, *Crisis*, 285/Hua. VI.331),[65] since they recognized it as one representation of the world among other possible ones. In the sphere of practice, nations oppose nations (Hua. XXVII.187). But with the breakthrough to the theoretical attitude,

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[63]Husserl's views concerning the discovery of infinity are very close to those subsequently articulated by Alexadre Koyré in his *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1957).

[64]See E. Husserl, "*Über die gegenwärtige Aufgabe der Philosophie*," in Husserl, *Aufsätze und Vorträge (1922–1937)*, Hua. XXVII.184–221. The text survives in typescript made by Fink, see 260.

[65]Husserl frequently employs the term '*Weltbetrachtung*'; e.g. in *Cartesian Meditations*, Hua. I.107; I.171, I.174, I.190, he contrasts the natural and the transcendental consideration of the world. At *Crisis* VI.424 he talks of the "theological-teleological worldview" of the Scholastics, which Descartes sought to overcome. Carr offers varying translations of the term including "consideration of the world" and "view of the world." For occurrences of '*Weltbetrachtung*', see *Crisis*, Hua. VI.54, 116, 178, 196, 205, 262, 312, 330, 331, 352, and 424. '*Weltvorstellung*' is used somewhat less frequently in the *Crisis*; see Hua. VI.182, 210, 317, 332, 340, 416, and 501. Of the three terms, '*Weltanschauung*' appears least frequently; see *Crisis*, Hua. VI.3, 72, 199, 509, and 550. Sometimes '*Weltanschauung*' is associated more with "personal outlook" but it is also used interchangeably with the other terms to mean an overall "cultural" or even "natural" worldview.

the very meaning of world is reconstructed or built anew (*Neubildung des Sinnes Welt*, XXVII.187) as the "thematic field of scientific judgments." This uncovers an infinite field of Being: "the idea of a rational infinite totality of being" (*Crisis*, 22/Hua. VI.19).

This self-differentiation within the Greek conception of the world gives rise to the crucial differentiation between mere subjective-relative *doxa* and genuine *epistēmē* (Hua. XXVII.189; cf. Hua. XXXIX.336–37; *Crisis*, 12/Hua. VI.11; 155/Hua. VI.158; 285/Hua. VI.332, and 345/Hua. VI.359), between commonly held communal opinions and knowledge. This came about not through smooth evolution but rather through a "leap" (*Sprung*, *Crisis*, 345/Hua. VI.359). With this demythification of experience, Husserl claims, "theoretical experience" emerges as does the theoretical attitude. For Husserl, the Greek discovery of *epistēmē* involves recognizing a "non-relative" (*Irrelative*) over and against relative perceptions and experiences. Initial "naïveté" regarding the world is disclosed precisely as such (Hua. XXXIX.336).

Husserl had been telling versions of this story since his 1906/07 lectures, *Introduction to Logic and Theory of Knowledge*,[66] praising the revolutionary skeptics, such that every philosopher must at some point be a skeptic (Hua. XXIV.179). He retells this story as part of his "critical history of ideas" in his *Erste Philosophie* [*First Philosophy*] lectures of 1923/24.[67] Similarly, in his *London Lectures* of 1922, Husserl asserts that the ideal of scientific philosophy received its "primal institution" (*Urstiftung*) in Plato, who systematized the Socratic demand for essential definition in opposition to the destructive *skepsis* of the Greek Sophists such as Gorgias.[68] Socrates and Plato stand for the possibility of true knowledge, *epistēmē*, facing down the dogmatic skepticism and relativism of Gorgias and Protagoras (see Hua. VII.8 and *Crisis* §17). Socrates' response to the skeptic's paradoxes had been to propose reform of moral life, such that the genuine human life became the life of reason (*ein Leben aus reiner Vernunft*, Hua. VII.9), where the demand for evidence replaces acceptance of opinion, and knowledge is understood in terms of evidence, insight, and clarification (*Klärung*, Hua. VII.9) as opposed to "unreason, blind spontaneous living in unclarity" (*Die Unvernunft, das blinde Dahinleben in der Unklarheit*, Hua. VII.10). The Delphic oracle's injunction to Socrates reported in the *Apology*, *gnōthi seauton* (Hua. XXXV.476), stands as the motto for the philosophical enterprise itself, "the struggle to make himself true" (*Crisis*, 13/Hua. VI.11).

The Greek breakthrough, however, had its limitations. Although the Greeks discovered the theoretical attitude and set in train the various sciences of the world, even in their most skeptical moments they did not question the "pregiven

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[66]E. Husserl, *Einleitung in die Logik und Erkenntnistheorie. Vorlesungen 1906/07*, ed. Ullrich Melle, Hua. XXIV (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1985), 146ff; trans. Claire Ortiz Hill as *Introduction to Logic and Theory of Knowledge: Lectures 1906/07* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2009), 145ff.

[67]E. Husserl, *Erste Philosophie (1923/24)*. Erster Teil: *Kritische Ideengeschichte*, ed. R. Boehm, Hua. VII (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1965); see 11–17 and 203–07. See also the text Husserl published in *Japanisch-Deutsche Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Technik* 1 (1923): 45–51, trans. Marcus Brainard, "The Idea of a Philosophical Culture: Its First Germination in Greek Philosophy," *New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy* 3 (2003): 285–93.

[68]E. Husserl, *Einleitung in die Philosophie. Vorlesungen 1922/23*, ed. Berndt Goossens, Hua. XXXV (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2002), 313; cf. Hua. XXIV.147.

world" (*die vorgegebene Welt*) itself. Indeed, their sciences were pursued precisely on the basis of the acceptance of the world and its taken-for-granted "obviousness" (*Selbstverständlichkeit*). Crucially, Husserl maintains in a 1935 research manuscript, antiquity never came to recognize the *correlation* relation between subjectivity and world (Hua. XXVII.228–31). This recognition requires a further breakthrough, one confined to modernity and indeed to the breakthrough to transcendental philosophy with Descartes.[69] Universal *epochē* is the driving force for this new approach that will uncover the *a priori* correlation and give birth to a new self-critical rationality (Hua. XXVII.238).

6. FROM *MYTHOS* TO *LOGOS*: VERSIONS OF AN OLD THEME

Husserl's discussion of the Greeks also needs contextualization in relation to the cultural context, where, again, a certain National Socialist ideology celebrated the Greeks in certain somewhat contradictory ways (Germans inherit the Greek heroic; Germans continue the Greek mysterious). Moreover, Husserl's account of the Greek breakthrough, involving a separation from a life absorbed in myth and practical interests and the rise of logical reason, is just one particularly interesting treatment of a theme popular among German academics such as Max Weber, Ernst Cassirer, Paul Friedländer, and others, e.g. Weber's notion of the gradual "disenchantment" (*Entzauberung*) of the world.[70]

Social anthropology (especially in the works of, for example, Edward Burnett Tylor [1832–1917][71] and Émile Durkheim) was also developing as a science, and the methods applied to so-called "primitive" societies and their myths and rituals were also being turned upon ancient Greece. In part inspired by nineteenth-century discussions by Erwin Rohde (1845–98), Friedrich Nietzsche, James George Frazer (e.g. *The Golden Bough*, 1890), as well as by the classification of the stages of religion in Durkheim and others, early twentieth-century classicists were moving away from the classical images of Greece as a balanced, rational society dedicated to the Golden Mean and were exploring aspects of Greek mystery cults, the Dionysiac, the irrational in general.[72]

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[69]In this regard Husserl is in agreement with recent scholars such as Myles Burnyeat who see radical skepticism about the very existence of the world as a specific product of modernity and indeed of the split between mind and world; see Myles Burnyeat, "Idealism and Greek Philosophy: What Descartes Saw and Berkeley Missed," *Philosophical Review* 91 (1982): 3–40, reprinted in *Idealism—Past and Present,* ed. Godfrey Vesey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 19–50; but see the counter-argument in Dermot Moran, "Idealism in Medieval Philosophy: The Case of Johannes Scottus Eriugena," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 8 (1999): 53–82.

[70]See Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and "The Spirit of Capitalism,"* trans. Peter Baehr and Gordon C. Wells (Harmonsworth: Penguin Books, 2002).

[71]E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1871; repr. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Husserl cites Tylor in the *Philosophy of Arithmetic* (Hua. XII.83 and 248). Tylor was an advocate of cultural evolution whereby cultures became more complex but also believed that the structure of the human mind was more or less stable across cultures.

[72]See for instance, Erwin Rohde, *Psyche. Seelencult und Unsterblichkeitsglaube der Griechen* (Freiburg: Mohr, 1894), trans. W. B. Hillis as *Psyche. The Cult of Souls and the Belief in Immortality Among the Greeks* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1925). This trend continued in classical studies such as Gilbert Murray's 1912 lectures printed as *Five Stages of Greek Religion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951) and F. M. Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy: A Study in the Origins of Western Speculation* (1912;

German classical scholars were at the forefront of this anthropological way of interpreting the Greeks.[73] However, during the 1930s, this interest in ritual and folk-culture often became entangled with National Socialist race ideology.[74] In this regard, the case of the German classical scholar, Wilhelm Nestle (1865–1959), is instructive. His monumental *From Myth to the Logos* (1940) brought together themes pursued in many earlier publications.[75] Nestle believed that all primitive cultures were originally steeped in myth. He opens his study *From Myth to the Logos* with a powerful image:

> Just as the surface of the earth was originally completely covered by water, which only gradually withdrew and let islands and continents appear, so too for primitive man, the world surrounding him and his own nature were covered over by a mythical layer of beliefs, which only over a long period of time gradually retreated enough from larger and larger areas to be uncovered and illuminated by rational thought.[76]

For Nestle, mythic "representation" (*Vorstellung*) must be contrasted with logical thought. *Mythos* is imaginative, imagistic, involuntary, unconscious; *logos* is understood as conceptual, intentional, voluntary, conscious. For Nestle, myth is not mere "intuition" (*Anschauung*)[77] but involves a kind of reasoning, albeit of a practical kind. The path from *mythos* to *logos* is (as it was for Hegel and Marx) a movement from immaturity to maturity. Furthermore, Nestle endorses Nietzsche's view that Socrates symbolized the first appearance of "the theoretical man" (*der theoretische Mensch*)[78] as overcomer of instincts and denier of myth.

However, Nestle also added a statement to the effect that this movement from myth to reason had been reserved for the Aryan peoples,[79] "the most gifted of races," a remark excised from later editions of this popular and respected work. Nestle appears to have been only an incidental Nazi fellow traveler and was actually trying to steer Nazi ideology onto a more rational path, away from what he perceived to be their attempted re-mythification of society through the re-activation of the Teutonic gods. Nevertheless, his example is indicative of the accommoda-

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reprinted Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991). More recent studies include A.-J. Festugière, *La Révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste,* vol. II, *Le Dieu cosmique*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Lecoffre, 1949); E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (1952, reprinted Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); and G. S. Kirk, *Myth: Its Meaning and Function in Ancient and Other Cultures* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), esp. 238–51.

[73]See Bruno Snell, *Die Entdeckung des Geistes* (Hamburg: Claassen und Goverts, 1948); trans. T. G. Rosenmeyer as *The Discovery of the Mind* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953).

[74]See *The Nazification of an Academic Discipline: Folklore in the Third Reich*, ed. James R. Dow and Hannjost Lixfeld (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994)

[75]Wilhelm Nestle, *Vom Mythos zum Logos, die Selbstentfaltung des griechischen Denkens von Homer bis auf die Sophistik und Sokrates* und *Griechische Geistesgeschichte von Homer bis Lukian in ihrer Entfaltung vom mythischen zum rationalen Denken dargestellt* (1940; 2nd edition, Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1942; reprinted, 1975). In 1947 this book was awarded the Kuno-Fischer prize. Nestle became a National Socialist supporter in the 1930s and regularly published in a German journal associated with the Nazis (it was subtitled "A Scientific Journal on National Socialist Foundation").

[76]Quoted by Glenn Most, "From Logos to Mythos," in *From Myth to Reason?: Studies in the Development of Greek Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 25–47, at 26. The quote comes from the first page of Nestle's book.

[77]Nestle, *Vom Mythos zum Logos*, 17.

[78]Nestle, *Vom Mythos zum Logos*, 8.

[79]Most, "From Logos to Mythos," 30.

tion of academic research to the prevailing ideology of Germany under National Socialism.

In his 1935 "Vienna Lecture," as elsewhere, Husserl too speaks of the withdrawal of myth, the rise of *logos* through the *Umwelt*-disruptive practices of the Greek philosophers. However, Husserl—like Heidegger—is anxious to combat the view that Greek culture is best understood in anthropological terms as a "primitive society." Societies absorbed in myth do not make the crucial distinction between their own mythically-imbued world and the idea of a "world in itself." They naïvely take the world which presents itself to them through their cultural perspective—their familiar "near-world" or "home-world" (*Nahwelt* or *Heimwelt*, see Hua. XXVII.234; *Crisis*, 324/Hua. VI.303)—as the actual world. They do indeed have a conception of the world as a whole or "totality" (*Totalität*, *Allheit*, *Weltall*, *Crisis*, 283/Hua. VI.330), but they make this totality thematic in a practical way: "The gaze [*Blick*] which encompasses it as a totality is practical" (*Crisis*, 284/Hua. VI.330). Their world is the finite "world of experience" (Hua. XXXIX.53). This is their "primary historicity" (*Urhistorizität*, Hua. XXXIX.53).

Husserl does not deny that a great deal of knowledge may be gained from within this mythic-practical attitude, but it is a knowledge oriented to practical interests, e.g. boat-building or practical engineering rather than physics or dynamics. Furthermore, he acknowledges that the pre-scientific primitive world is accessible to the scientific viewpoint (as Lévy-Bruhl has shown, Hua. XXXIX.54), but not vice-versa. For this very reason, it is a "falsification of sense" (*Sinnesverfälschung*, *Crisis*, 284; VI.331) to treat the Greek breakthrough as simply another manifestation of a mythic-poetic world view. The Greeks did something wholly different; they broke through to a conception of the world that in fact belongs to all humanity and is open to infinite exploration by reason.

Husserl's position is therefore far more complex that is often recognized. On the one hand, philosophy breaks with naïve acceptance of the world; on the other hand, with his conception of the concrete living *life-world*, Husserl wants to restore appreciation of the "much disparaged *doxa*" (*Crisis*, 155/Hua. VI.158). But to grasp the essence of life-world is also to understand how it is capable of variation across cultures and also how is can be transformed by the very sciences to which it gave birth. What is crucial for the scientific outlook, for Husserl, is the emergence of the guiding idea of the *one, true world*. This, moreover, Husserl says in his 1934 "Prague Letter," provides an "idea lying in infinity" (Hua. XXVII.241). But it must be understood against the backdrop of a thicker, more vitalist conception of the life-world as the world of possible experience (see Hua. XV.627–29).

7. ONE WORLD, UNIVERSALISM, AND THE PARTICULARITY OF CULTURES

Husserl's meditations on the concepts of "world," "world-view," "world-representation," and so on, are complex and cannot be fully unpacked here. Since *Ideas* I, "world" had been understood as the "horizon of horizons" and as such it is always understood as unified and singular, a concept for which a plural makes no sense:

> The world, on the other hand, does not exist as *an* entity, as an object, but exists with such uniqueness [*Einzigkeit*] that the plural makes no sense when applied to

> it. Every plural, and every singular drawn from it, presupposes the world-horizon (*Crisis*, 143/Hua. VI.146)

World is a "universal field" for all our acts (*Crisis,* 144/Hua. VI.147). It provides a context which allows our experience to have harmonious continuities of sense. But different horizons function in the world. In contrast to the idealized, scientific concept of the "true" world that emerged in Greek philosophy, each one has his or her own familiar "folkish environment" (*völkische Umwelt*, Hua. XV.214), although this remains unknown because not thematized as such. People's horizons can be limited, drawn into a "life-vocation" (*Lebensberuf*, *Crisis*, 379/Hua. VI.459). They have eyes only for what is contained within the horizons of this particular self-enclosed world. When caught up in a local *Umwelt*, the life-world as such is "unthematic for us."

Husserl conceives of the familiar lived world as constituted by a series of levels of overlapping horizons. The *Crisis* maps the way from familiar life-worlds grasped through the pursuit of practical interests to the breakthrough conception of the world-in-itself, the one true world. Husserl speaks of the life-world both in the singular and plural. In the plural, it refers to relative, local, and cultural environments (*Crisis*, 147/Hua. VI.150); on the other hand, all plural worlds get their sense from the life-world for which a plural gets no sense (*Crisis*, 143/Hua. VI.146).

In a Supplement from c. 1930 or 1931entitled 'Home-world, Alien-world, and "the" World' (Hua. XV.214–18) Husserl distinguishes *Umwelt* from *Welt*. He is concerned with the particular changes in motivation one has to go through to understand an alien world and somehow relate it to one's own (whether on the same level, as lower, higher or whatever). When we encounter an alien world, Husserl says, we constitute our own "humanities" (*Menschheiten*) over and against the distinct and separate humanities of others (Hua. XV.215). He then raises the question as to whether one can really experience the "mythical convictions of others" (*die mythischen Überzeugungen der Anderen*, Hua. XV.217), with their peculiar fetishes, gods, and their mythical causality. In so far as I maintain my hold on my own beliefs, alien beliefs are unavoidably constituted or characterized as "superstitions" (*Aberglaube*, Hua. XV.217). As Husserl puts it, if I have *my* world, then *their* world is posited as not valid. In fact, however, a transformation has already been effected. I have already *modified* my world to admit the alien world as a *world* in the first place; I recognize their world as a *variant* of my world (see also Hua. XV.632).

This leads Husserl to question, how can I come to speak of an experiential world *for all*? Despite our situatedness, the perceptual world is already experienced as there "for everyone" (*für Jedermann*). As Husserl puts it, "[T]he ontological form of the world is that of world for all" (*Die ontologische Weltform ist die der Welt für alle*, *Crisis*, Hua. VI.469). This shared unity is precisely the basis for our scientific investigation of the world. But what is the basis of its *sameness*? Phenomenologically we must begin from our familiar worlds and have to grasp how these are constituted before we can grasp the sense of a universal world.[80] We have to distinguish the

[80]The paradox that we can only understand the other on the basis of our familiar world is further explored by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "From Mauss to Claude Lévi-Strauss," *Signs*, trans. Richard C. McCreary (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 114–25.

phenomenological life-world as *universal horizon*, somehow running through and across particular local worlds (and giving them sense), from the specific sense of the "true" world in itself that is encountered in science.

Is there, on Husserl's account, one or many life-worlds? As we have seen, for Husserl, it belongs to the very essence of the experience of "world" that it is precisely experienced as *one* world *for all*. To be world means to be somehow a unified "sense-complex" (*Sinnzusammenhang*), albeit one with an open, infinite horizon. There is only *one* life-world, albeit multi-dimensional and temporalized. The common, material "world of things" (*Dingwelt*) provides a kind of fundament for the layers of social and cultural world. In the communal life-world, on the other hand, there are specificities and typicalities to which we belong and which essentially determine us in unique ways. We belong to families, groups and so on. Husserl writes,

> I was raised as German not as Chinese. But also as a small-town dweller in petit-bourgeois domesticity and schooling, not as an aristocratic, large landowner in a cadet school (Hua. XXXIX.161; my translation)

Ironically, Husserl considers himself German (Hua. XV.627), although this world too is differentiated into types: Bavarian, Northern German, and so on.

Husserl then asks, in consequence of this particularity, if we can allow the "objection" (*Einwand*) that the European has his "European way of thinking" with *European* concepts of truth, logic, its own world-view (*Weltanschauung*) and so on, whereas the primitives have *their* logic, their worldview, etc. (see Hua. XXXIX.170). Although he acknowledges the empirical "fact" (*Faktum*) of a plurality of cultures, Husserl thinks it is a fundamental mistake to settle for relativism in the sphere of culture. Each culture has, as it were, an intrinsic openness to the universal. The primitive is recognized in *my* world; he is "for me" (Hua. XXXIX.170). It is, for Husserl, a "nonsense" (*Unsinn*) that the universal (*das Universum*, Hua. XXXIX.170) in my thought can stand in opposition to the universal in another's thought. Each world can be recognized as a specific kind of *world*. I can recognize other people have their own validities and conceptions of people, things, etc. They can become "co-subjects" in my world (Hua. XXXIX.172). I see something as strange but I interpret it according to my typification, my set of expectations (Hua. XV.430). We understand the unknown in the horizon of the known (*Crisis*, 124/Hua. VI.126).

Amid the apparent diversity, Husserl emphasizes the universal structures of the life-world of humans as such, of humans as *persons* in *the personalistic attitude*. There is the common structure of the cycle of human life (birth, childhood, maturity, death), with common feelings (pain, pleasure, etc), needs (food, sleep, companionship), and drives (sex, hunger). As he writes in 1933,

> But foreign races, unfamiliar cultures—some not so recognizable, up to a point. They are humans, they need nourishment, have their daily meals, etc. That already plays a role: the greatest generality of the surrounding world. But wholly foreign human cultures live in a wholly foreign nature. For all that, no matter how foreign, there is commonality, earth and heaven, day and night, stones and trees, mountain and valley, diverse animals—everything that can be grasped analogically in the most general type [*Typus*], albeit as strange. (Hua. XV.632; my translation)

There is also the common sense of belonging to a familiar home-world, sharing a language and a culture.[81] In this regard Husserl puts particular emphasis (contrary to what is usually assumed) on the extraordinary role of *language* as itself embodying intersubjectivity. Language, as he will put it in the *Crisis* texts, is "already an interrelation of egos" (*schon ichliche Verbundenheit*, *Crisis*, 328/Hua. VI.307). Husserl elsewhere writes, "The human world is essentially determined by language" (*von der Sprache*, Hua. XV.225). Culture is formed through what Husserl calls "communicative acts" and empathy. Furthermore, language, indeed the signitive capacity, has an intrinsic openness. It allows for the expression of new thoughts and the repetition of idealities as the same ("The Origin of Geometry"). Husserl is deeply aware of the dual function of language, both as the *dialect* of my present home-world and as transformative medium of communication that goes beyond the present into an open plurality of subjects (Hua. XIV.289; Hua. XV.497).

One could obviously go into a much deeper understanding of the concepts of shared place, shared experience of language, time, concrete being-with-one-another, and so on, in relation to the life-world as ground for universality. My interest here is to show how Husserl explicated his concept of life-world with reference to the world of primitive peoples such as the Papuans (on whom Lévy-Bruhl wrote) in a way that was inclusive of their sociality.

8. THE PRIMITIVE, PRE-SCIENTIFIC WORLD: THE CORRESPONDENCE WITH LUCIEN LÉVY-BRUHL (1935)

Husserl occasionally invokes the Papuan (or African native) as the type for an enclosed surrounding world. The case of the primitive offers, as Ludwig Landgrebe puts it, a limit case of the idea of world as *Umwelt*.[82] Husserl had a long-term interest in the structural form of the original natural attitude as instantiated by "primitive" peoples (specifically peoples without writing or history). In this regard, his letter to the French philosopher, ethnologist, and anthropologist, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, written in March 1935, around the time when Husserl received an invitation from the Vienna Culture Society to deliver a lecture in Vienna (which he would do from 7 to 10 May 1935), is of particular importance and relevance.

In his letter to Lévy-Bruhl, Husserl says that he had deliberately interrupted his own work on the *Crisis* in order to study Lévy-Bruhl's writings.[83] Husserl owned several of the French anthropologist's books, including *La Mythologie primitive. Le Monde mythique des Australiens et des Papous* (1935), the book which is the explicit subject of Husserl's letter, and which contains the author's dedication.[84] He also

[81]See J. N. Mohanty, "Den anderen verstehen," in *Philosophische Grundlagen der Interkulturalität*, ed. R. A. Mall and Dieter Lohmar (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1993), 115–22.

[82]Ludwig Landgrebe, "The World as a Phenomenological Problem," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 1 (1940): 38–58, at 49.

[83]In fact, Husserl's library, as preserved in the Husserl Archief Leuven, contains a number of works by Lévy-Bruhl with author's dedication, including *Die geistige Welt der Primitiven* (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1927), a German translation by Margarethe Hamburger of Lévy-Bruhl's *La Mentalité primitive* (Paris: Alcan, 1922).

[84]According to Karl Schuhmann, in his *Briefwechsel* edition of the letter, Husserl is commenting on *La Mythologie primitive* (1935). Waldenfels and Luft, however, claim that the text under discussion

possessed a copy of Alexandre Koyré's 1930 review of *Die Seele der Primitiven,* the 1930 German translation of Lévy-Bruhl's *L'Âme primitive,* 1927) in which Koyré claims that the primitive and modern scientific worlds are so qualitatively different as to be incommensurate and it is not possible to go from one to the other.[85] In his letter to Lévy-Bruhl, Husserl thanks the French anthropologist for his novel insight, namely, the need to *empathize with* the primitive human community to understand their world:

> . . . it is a possible, and highly important, and great task to "empathize" [*einzufühlen*] with a humankind [*Menschheit*], living self-contained in living generative sociality [*lebendiger generativer Sozialität*] and to understand this humankind as having, in and through its socially unified life, the world [*die Welt*], which for it is not a "world-representation" but rather the world [*wirklich seiende Welt*] that actually exists for it.[86]

Lévy-Bruhl is best known for his proposal that pre-literate peoples possess a "primitive mentality" (*la mentalité primitive*) with its own kind of "prelogical" (a term he later regretted) rationality, with its mythical outlook, different conception of causation, reliance on memory rather than reasoning, lack of conceptualization, and so on (compare Husserl, Hua. XV.167: primitive peoples have "their own logic and their own categories"). Primitive thought, for Lévy-Bruhl, is essentially "mystical" and animist, involving a felt *participation* and unity with all things and a belief in a life-force running through the universe; such thought amounts to panpsychism or universal animism.[87] Europeans experience nature as ordered and reject entities incompatible with that order.[88]

Similarly, Lévy-Bruhl held that the primitive mind is untroubled by certain contradictions (at least as modern Europeans would perceive them) and that mythical thinking follows a kind of dream logic, not a typical subject-predicate logic. Indeed, the requirements of strict contradiction can only arise when literacy is achieved (compare Husserl's views on the fixing of ideal concepts by written signs in his 1936 essay "Origin of Geometry"). Of particular relevance to Husserl is the manner in which primitives relate to temporality and history. Lévy-Bruhl claims that primitives do not have a sense of 'historical evolution' (*évolution historique*),[89] and their sense of the tribal past goes back only as far as living memory (four or five generations).

In the autumn of 1934 Husserl wrote a text entitled "The Naïveté of Science" (Hua. XXIX.27–36), where he is reflecting on the different levels of historicity and the manner in which human beings live in history with a sense of past, pres-

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is *Die geistige Welt der Primitiven*, a translation of an earlier work from 1922. It is entirely likely that Husserl, although he could read French, consulted the German text of Lévy-Bruhl more closely than the French texts at his disposal.

[85]See Robert Bernasconi, "Lévy-Bruhl among the Phenomenologists: Exoticisation and the Logic of the Primitive," *Social Identities* 11 (2005): 229–45, and Paola Zambelli, "Alexandre Koyré versus Lucien Lévy-Bruhl: From Collective Representations to Paradigms of Scientific Thought," *Science in Context* 8 (1995): 531–55.

[86]See "Edmund Husserl's Letter to Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, 11 March 1935," *New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy,* 350.

[87]Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *L'Âme primitive* (Paris: Alcan, 1927), 3.

[88]Lévy-Bruhl, *La Mythologie primitive*, 41.

[89]Lévy-Bruhl, *La Mythologie primitive*, 42.

ent, and future. Humans live in groups, nations, and other supranational unities that Husserl calls "super-nations" (*Übernationen*), e.g. Europe, China, and so on. Strictly speaking, Husserl writes, there are no "first" humans (Hua. XXIX.37), rather families give rise to families, generations to generations. Nations live in a "homeland" (*Heimat*, Hua. XXIX.9) or "home-world" (*Heimwelt*),[90] with a sense of what is familiar and what is foreign (each nation has its opposing nation and an open horizon of foreign nations, Hua. XXIX.38–41). The stagnant world of the primitive lacks history (Hua. XXIX.39) and is immersed in a mythical cosmology: "The first surrounding world is the in-between-realm between earth and heaven" (Hua. XXIX.38). Different national groupings have their distinct myths of their place on earth, yet each myth conceives its people in relation to what is for them earth as a whole. Hence there is already a kind of shared *universality* (Hua. XXIX.44). There is, furthermore, a natural "animism" (Hua. XXIX.4 and 38) whereby nature itself is experienced as a living person. Things are not experienced as mere objects; the dead, for instance, are considered to continue to inhabit the world (Husserl is echoing similar claims to be found in Lévy-Bruhl). Husserl writes in another document from 1934 entitled "Human Life in Historicity",

> The original animism. Man lives his spiritual life not in a spiritless world, in a world [understood] as matter, but rather he is a spirit among spirits, among human and super-human, and this world-totality [*Weltall*] is, for him, the whole of existing living, in the way of spirit, of the I-being [*Ich-Seins*], of the I-living [*Ich-Lebens*] among others as I-subjects [*Ich-Subjekte*], life in the form of a universal I-community [*Ich-Gemeinschaft*]. (Hua. XXIX.3)[91]

Similarly, in his "Prague Treatise," Husserl speaks of animism as belonging necessarily to the outlook of pre-scientific humanity (living in national divisions, see XXVII.188).

Husserl's genetic account of world builds on the concept of "self-enclosed" world as the fundament against which more open cultures may be contrasted. A second stage of historicity emerges with the breakthrough to science through the theoretical attitude (XXIX.41). In this text from November 1934 Husserl speaks of the differences between the French, German, and other nations with their specific senses of history and indeed the manner in which they form institutions or "higher order persons." The Papuan by contrast, strictly speaking, has no biography, life-history (*Lebensgeschichte*), or "history of the people" (*Volksgeschichte*):

> A Papuan has in the genuine (pregnant) sense no biography and a Papuan tribe has no life-history, no history of the people. (Hua. XXIX.57)

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[90]Husserl frequently uses the term '*Heimwelt*' (Hua. XV, Hua. XXXIX.335) to express the manner the world always appears within a familiar context (the world as *die normale Lebenswelt* [Hua. XV.210]). The world is constituted according normality and abnormality (Hua. XXXIX.668-72) and unfolds necessarily within relations of proximity and remoteness. See Bernard Waldenfels, "Homeworld and Alienworld," in *Phenomenology: Critical Concepts in Philosophy*, eds. Dermot Moran and Lester Embree, vol. 4, *Expanding Horizons of Phenomenology* (London: Routledge, 2004), 280–91.

[91]Compare the "Prague Treatise," Hua. XXVII.188, where he says that animism is not a detachable part of the pre-scientific outlook but represents an essential way of making human action meaningful in the world.

Likewise, in unpublished notes on Lévy-Bruhl, Husserl recognizes that humans necessarily live in communities and that "culture" is a correlate of the "human." Primitive life, however, is life lived without history, without the trajectory of a temporality that extends indefinitely in both directions:

> The existence of primitive humanity is history-less, is "timeless." It is lived always in the present; past and future have no teleological sense. (K III 7 7a)[92]

The primitive know their world only as *the* actual world; they have not yet made the distinction between *apparent* and true world. Even the split between dream and actual has not been accomplished. But, for Husserl, the primitive world is a kind of foil to understand our world, the world that has already transcended its regionalism towards universality.

9. PLURALITY OF LIFE-WORLDS AND THE UNIVERSAL STRUCTURE OF LIFE-WORLD

The cultural world of the primitive is an exemplary *type* of closed environment, but it does not capture the essence of life-world as such, an essence that has an inbuilt openness to plurality and universality. In *Crisis* §36 (where the Papua are mentioned) Husserl explores the problem associated with the discovery of the life-world. The life-world was discovered through the operation of the *epochē* which peeled back the "objective" *Ideenkleid* of science (*Crisis*, 51/Hua. VI.52). But Husserl's question then is, after we peel back what was universal as constituted by science, is there anything left that is still universal, or rather are we left with many different life-worlds?

Relativity is a fundamental fact of human cultural life. Husserl frequently invokes the African or Chinese—or indeed Papuan—worlds as *alien worlds*:

> But when we are thrown into an alien social sphere [*in einem fremden Verkehrskreis*], that of the Negroes in the Congo, Chinese peasants, etc., we discover that their truths, the facts that for them are fixed, generally verified and verifiable, are not the same as ours. (*Crisis* 139/Hua. VI.141)

In order to truly understand them, we need to put ourselves in their place. Ideally, we need to grow up in their world (see Hua. XXXIX.158). Alternatively, we can imagine ourselves in their worlds, and grasp what is typical for us (trees, buildings, animals, and so on), even though their typification is not available to us. Husserl writes,

> The individual type [*Individualtypik*] is not completely known to me: a plant, but a strange sort, a field, but full of plants that are unfamiliar to me. The work on the field: I do not figure out their typical way to cultivate the land. A house is built in alien ways. Is it a temple, or is it a building of the government? I am in China, on the market trade and traffic, but in an alien way. I do know that they have their own typification [*Typik*], but I have no knowledge of them; somehow there are people there in the market. (Hua. XXXIX.159)

[92] This is a translation of the passage quoted in Sebastian Luft, "Europa am Kongo. Zu Husserls kulturphilosophischen Meditationen," *Journal Phänomenologie* 10 (1998): 15–22.

There are degrees of familiarity and strangeness, and I can understand the alien sphere through analogy with my own. There is also a degree of shared commonality but within limits. The primitive, for instance, has no way of entering the European world of science (Hua. XXXIX.158).

The dilemma, for Husserl, is that if we focus on what is common to all worlds, we *transcend* the life-world and are back on the road to universal science with its conception of the "true world" (of the kind advocated by the Vienna Circle Manifesto with its "scientific conception of the world"). This "surpassing" (*Überschreitung*) of, or stepping-over, the life-world is precisely what the performance of the *epochē* wishes to avoid. Husserl continues,

> But if we set up the goal of a truth about the objects which is unconditionally valid for all subjects, beginning with that on which normal Europeans, normal Hindus, Chinese, etc., agree in spite of all relativity [*Relativität*]—beginning, that is, with what makes objects of the life-world, common to all, identifiable for them and for us (even though conceptions of them may differ), such as spatial shape, motion, sense-quality, and the like—then we are on the way to objective science. When we set up this objectivity as a goal (the goal of a "truth in itself") we make a set of hypotheses through which the pure life-world is surpassed [*überschritten ist*]. We have precluded *this* [type of] "surpassing" through the first *epochē* (that which concerns the objective sciences), and now we have the embarrassment of wondering what else can be undertaken scientifically, as something that can be established once and for all and for everyone. (*Crisis*, 139/Hua. VI.141-42)

Husserl goes on, however, to comment,

> But this embarrassment disappears as soon as we consider that the life-world does have, in all its relative features, a *general structure*. This general structure, to which everything that exists relatively is bound, is not itself relative. We can attend to it in its generality and, with sufficient care, fix it once and for all in a way equally accessible to all. (*Crisis*, 139/Hua. VI.141–42)

Husserl, then, defends a "general structure" (*algemeine Struktur*, *Crisis*, 139/Hua. VI 142), a certain *universality*, already available *within* the life-world that *grounds* the formal universality inherent in the scientific ideal of world-in-itself. The life-world has invariant features (*Crisis* §37). This universal framework for world, in fact, already has the "same" structures as that of the scientific world—space, time, corporeality, causality—although they achieve an idealization and exactitude in the scientific purification of the life-world. This is the "universal a priori" of the life-world, akin to the "prelogical a priori" upon which everything logical is founded (*Crisis*, 141/Hua. VI.144). Husserl, then, makes a very particular shift towards incorporating the prelogical mentality as a necessary stratum *within* our life-world conception.[93]

Overall, as Husserl acknowledges in his letter to Lévy-Bruhl, historically speaking, relativism has "undisputed justification" (*zweifelloses Recht*) as a kind of surface fact about human cultures. But he is not content to remain with this apparent

[93]In this regard, Husserl's position comes close to that of Claude Lévi-Strauss in his *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 15, who argues for the concrete classificatory achievements of primitive peoples as a "science of the concrete" that identifies necessary connections in the life-world.

relativism understood as an irreducible pluralism. There are necessary, *a priori*, eidetic laws that govern the very nature of social acculturation and historicity. This is the "universal a priori of history" ("The Origin of Geometry," *Crisis*, 371/Hua. VI.380). The *a priori* of science is grounded on the concrete *a priori* of the life-world (*Crisis*, 140/Hua. VI.143). The life-world already exhibits universal and particular, familiar and strange, sameness and otherness, in ways that ground the scientific elaboration of these themes.

10. CONCLUSION

Husserl's meditations on cultures (including so-called "primitive" cultures) have to be understood not only in relation to the context of his time but also in relation to his larger mission for a phenomenological explication of the life-world as ground of the sciences. Furthermore, it is only from the standpoint of the Husserlian idea of the ideal of universal reason, with its intrinsic commitments to *ideality* and *infinity*, that his discussion of cultural particularities and his remarks about cultural "types" can be properly understood. Husserl believes these ideals have a transcendent, breakthrough status relative to self-enclosed worlds. Autonomous scientific-philosophical rational inquiry inevitably challenges the boundaries of every *Weltanschauung*.[94]

Undoubtedly, Husserl does presuppose a notion of cultural development, of "ascending culture" (*aufstiegende Kultur*, *Crisis*, 350/Hua. VI.362), as he calls it, but it is ascending toward universality, not to a higher race or *Volk*. Similarly, he advocates the radical idea of "essential history" (*Wesenshistorie*, *Crisis*, 350/Hua. VI.362), a pre-delineated meaning-trajectory on which the forces of social communalization are necessarily embarked, and to which, for instance, the capacity to idealize essentially belongs. Furthermore, Husserl undoubtedly embraced the view that all cultures begin in some kind of non-historical, practical mythic stage before becoming historically differentiated. For Husserl, this mythic stage involves immersion or "captivation" in the natural attitude. It is not something necessarily that belongs to the past but is actual integral to ongoing life in the natural attitude.

It is clear, moreover, that Lévy-Bruhl's conception of the primitive mentality had an enormous imaginative influence on Husserl's thinking. He obviously has Lévy-Bruhl in mind when he writes in his 1936 "Origin of Geometry,"

> One will object: what naïveté to seek to display, and to claim to have displayed, a historical a priori, an absolute, supertemporal validity, after we have obtained such abundant testimony for the relativity of everything historical, of all historically developed world-apperceptions, right back to those of "primitive" tribes. Every people, large or small, has its world in which, for that people, everything fits well together, whether in mythical-magical or in European-rational terms, and in which everything can be explained perfectly. Every people has its "logic" and, accordingly, if this logic is explicated in propositions, "its" a priori. (*Crisis*, 373/Hua. VI.381–82)

[94]For Husserl, it is clear that the ideal of scientific inquiry challenges all forms of value imposed by closed worlds. Strictly speaking, for him, as for Heidegger, there cannot be something like "Islamic science" (which restrains science within the framework of the sacred), "Christian philosophy," "feminist mathematics," and so on. On the other hand, and therein lies the paradox, all sciences are ungrounded until they recognize their own inescapable relation to the life-world. Genuine science (infinite inquiry), however, transforms the life-world into a universal horizon for all human beings.

The recognition of other cultures *as other than one's own* is already a first step toward this universality. Husserl in fact believes that the possibility of analogization and idealization through free variation must belong essentially to all human cultures "even if it remains undeveloped for factual reasons" (*Crisis*, 350/Hua. VI.363). Furthermore, there is no evidence that Husserl thinks that Indian or Chinese civilizations are essentially incapable of making the breakthrough from myth to the theoretical attitude, originally performed by "a few Greek eccentrics" (*Crisis*, 289/Hua. VI.336). It is the great and irrational "fact" of history that this breakthrough took place only in Greece. Only in "Greece" (itself an idealization of discoveries scattered across Greek-speaking lands) did the philosophical attitude emerge to produce this breakthrough.

For Husserl, discovering the essence of human nature and historicity requires grasping the specific difference between temporal-historical existence and life lived in the flowing present without a sense of history. Indeed, the Italian phenomenologist Enzo Paci (1911-76), commenting on Husserl's Lévy-Bruhl letter and notes, interprets Husserl's concept of the primitive precisely as identifying a layer of experience that still inhabits our contemporary world-outlook:

> Both European man and primitive man must find a deeper rational essence of man. . . . European man is in a crisis because he no longer knows how to find in himself what is valid in primitive man, in the "total" world in which primitive man lives. And, in turn, primitive man must arrive at logic, at science, not fetishized science, but that science of sciences according to which mankind must realize itself (the science of history? phenomenology?). We must teach primitive man our science, if we do not fetishize it, and our technology, if we free ourselves from our barbarism, from our irrationality. Primitive man can teach us his own way of feeling and of living in participation, in relationship, in communion, if he frees himself from his barbarism, from his irrationality. . . . To the extent that European man does not understand primitive man, he does not understand himself, and the revolt of primitive man is the self-alienation of European man, the self-destruction of European "civilization."[95]

Husserl ends the "Origin of Geometry" by saying that we stand on the boundary of a great problem, namely the problem of reason—"the same reason that functions in every man, *animal rationale*, no matter how primitive he is" (*Crisis*, 378/Hua. VI.385). All facticities have their root "in the essential structure [*Wesensbestande*] of what is generally human" (*Crisis*, 378/Hua. VI.386). In his final writings he struggles to articulate his new discovery, the great problem of the "essential a priori of history" that precisely illuminates the transcultural, universal, rational structures at the heart of all relativities. Rationality itself has a historicity, e.g. Cartesian, modern Enlightenment, transcendental phenomenological, which precisely calls attention to the dangers of one-sidedness. The very notion of reason must be expanded and enhanced; it can also be—and has been—deformed. Philosophy's embrace of irrationalism in Husserl's day was further testimony to the need for eternal vigilance, and for the renewal of philosophy as strict science.

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[95]Enzo Paci, *Diario Fenomenologico* (Milan: Bompiani, 1973), trans. Luigi Bianchi, *Phenomenological Diary* (1998), entry for 22 May 1957, online at http://www.yorku.ca/lbianchi/paci/diary_ver_02.html.