The Relevance of Phenomenological Philosophy for Psychology

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I

THE ISSUE AND ITS BACKGROUND

I would like to begin with a brief exposition of the background for my choice of topic.

As far as psychology is concerned, one might well maintain that phenomenology has arrived in the American world, much more than it has in American philosophy, where it is still largely considered an exotic plant. Thus, in a recent symposium on behaviorism and phenomenology at Rice University, sponsored by the American Psychological Association,1 phenomenology was given equal ranking with behaviorism, apparently as one of the two major alternatives in psychology today. Among the participants, all native Americans, were such leading psychologists as Sigmund Koch and B. F. Skinner. And not only Robert B. MacLeod, long a spokesman for a phenomenology of "disciplined naiveté," pleaded the case for phenomenology. Carl Rogers, the founder of client-centered therapy, invoked phenomenology as the most important new ingredient of his "science of the person."

On the other hand, none of the philosophers invited, neither Norman Malcolm nor Michael Scriven, had any known ties with philosophical phenomenology. Even MacLeod, the most un-

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equivocal proponent of phenomenology stated, "emphatically," that in his view, "what we call psychological phenomenology is not to be confused with Husserl's philosophy." (p. 51)\(^2\) Thus the phenomenology considered at the symposium was one without any live ties with phenomenological philosophy. Does this mean that phenomenological psychology has declared its final independence? If so, is this total emancipation a good thing for psychology as well as for philosophy? Was their indisputable connection in the past merely a historical accident without lasting significance? It is these questions which I would like to discuss by proposing the topic of the relevance of phenomenological philosophy for psychology.

One way of doing this would be to show the historical connections between the two in a way which would make it plain that they have essential and understandable links, even though they are now often forgotten. While this can be done and seems to me eminently worth doing, my own experience has shown me that this can grow into a formidable enterprise. Such an attempt would have to consider more than just the lifework of Husserl, central though his position in the phenomenological movement was and remains, even after he moved more and more to left of center. For, as I would like to re-emphasize here, phenomenological philosophy is not synonymous with Husserl's work. A comprehensive appraisal of the contributions of phenomenological philosophy to psychology would have to include the work of Alexander Pfänder, Moritz Geiger, and Max Scheler, Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology, and the existential phenomenologies of Gabriel Marcel, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty.\(^3\) All

\(^2\) In a similar vein Alfred Kuenzli, in prefacing his anthology of articles on *The Phenomenological Problem* (New York: 1959), referred to Husserl as "not especially pertinent to the concerns of contemporary psychologists" (p. IX).

\(^3\) I am preparing such an account with the aid of the National Institute of Mental Health under the title "Phenomenology in Psychology and Psychiatry." A volume of translations from the writings of Alexander Pfänder, dealing mostly with his phenomenological psychology, entitled "Phenomenology of Willing and Motivation," will appear presently with the Northwestern University Press.
I can do now is to present some of the evidence in the case of Edmund Husserl, too often looked upon as the antipsychologist par excellence.

Another and ultimately more valid way of tackling the issue would be to consider, without regard to the historical connections, the essential relationships between phenomenological philosophy and psychology. I shall try this to the extent of discussing at least some respects in which psychology presupposes phenomenology in a more than psychological sense. But I chiefly want to demonstrate it concretely by introducing an exemplary case where philosophical phenomenology and psychological phenomenology seem to me to converge without being sufficiently aware of it, and where they may actually be interdependent. For I would like to make this clear: I am not thinking of a one-way street from philosophy to psychology but of a two-way exchange. It is philosophical phenomenology as well as psychology which stands to benefit from such a relationship.

But before I proceed with the task, I had better state in what sense I am distinguishing between phenomenological philosophy and phenomenological psychology. In so doing I do not want to suppress the fact that in the early days of phenomenology, i.e., around 1900, Husserl himself defined phenomenology as a descriptive psychology, much to his later regret. In trying to undo the damage, with only partial success, he stressed the point that phenomenology was not concerned with empirical facts, as is genuine descriptive psychology, but with the essences and essential relations of the psychic phenomena, regardless of whether there are any instances of such essences in existence. But there are other differences. Phenomenology, conceived by Husserl as the science of the essential structure of consciousness, comprised not only the acts of consciousness, which he later called the noetic acts, corresponding to what a phenomenological psychologist like Carl Stumpf had called psychic functions: consciousness points essentially to referents beyond itself, to “intentional objects,” to which Husserl later also attached the name of “noematic objects.” These, too, belong to the rightful domain of phenom-
enology—for instance, by way of a phenomenology of the body or
of works of art, which deal with their essential structures and
their ways of appearing. These intentional or noematic objects
lie clearly beyond the field of a psychology that is concerned
merely with what are strictly psychic phenomena.

On this occasion I shall not raise the question of whether
phenomenology, conceived as the descriptive science of the
phenomena of consciousness, is itself essentially philosophical or
rather a study that precedes all philosophy and science. All I
want to consider is the relation between the phenomenology
undertaken by such nonpsychologist philosophers as Edmund
Husserl in contradistinction to the one launched by such non-
philosopher-psychologists as Donald Snygg, the first representative
of what I would like to call an American phenomenology from
the grassroots. My question is then: Is what Husserl did under
the name of phenomenology relevant for psychologists, partic-
ularly those who now do the sort of things which these grass-
roots phenomenologists advocate?

I also feel a need to state what I understand here by the term
"relevance," a term whose vagueness may easily seem evasive.
Unfortunately I am not familiar with any explicit discussion of
this crucial term and shall have to draw some distinctions espe-
cially for this occasion.4

1. The strongest case of relevance is the one where something
is both the necessary and sufficient condition of something else;
this, according to Bertrand Russell, is the relevance of logic to
mathematics.

2. The relevance is slightly reduced when the condition is
necessary, but not sufficient; the relevance of mathematics to
physics is of this nature.

3. A further weakening of relevance occurs when the con-
dition is no longer necessary, though sufficient; thus formulation

4. For confirmation and substantiation of my impression see Wayne
A. R. Leys, "Irrelevance as a Philosophical Problem of Our Time," Memorias
del XIII Congreso Internacional de Filosofía, IV (1963), 173–85.
of a science in any modern language may be sufficient for its completion, but not necessary.

4. Finally, something may be relevant to something else even when it is neither its necessary nor sufficient condition. Nevertheless, its presence may make an important difference in the total situation, changing its entire configuration. It may be neither necessary nor sufficient for predicting a person's behavior to know about his phenomenal perspective and feelings. But it certainly adds substantially to a full understanding of his conduct, and is in this sense relevant.

Now in speaking about the relevance of phenomenological philosophy to psychology I do not mean to decide immediately what type of relevance is at stake. Clearly no one would claim that philosophy is the necessary and sufficient condition for a scientific psychology, nor even that it could ever be its sufficient condition. However, it may be that it is its necessary though insufficient foundation. This stronger thesis would be definitely in line with Husserl's views. But even a weaker thesis, according to which philosophy would merely "make a difference" without being indispensable, would be enough to establish its relevance for psychology.

II

ON HUSSERL'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO PSYCHOLOGY

But before discussing the systematic question, I would like to supply a minimum of historical facts about the actual relationship between phenomenological philosophy and psychology.

The belief is still widespread that Husserl was a sworn enemy of psychology. The fire behind this smoke is that at one crucial stage of his career Husserl had mounted his celebrated attack on psychologism. But this attack has to be seen and understood in its proper context: Husserl's attempt to prevent psychology from overextending itself by the kind of imperialism that would put it in complete control of the intellectual globe. But at the same time he was concerned to help psychology in the pursuit of its legitimate tasks.
A full understanding of this seeming ambivalence in Husserl's attitude toward psychology would demand a close study of his spiral-like course of development. It would have to consider the philosophical inspiration of the mathematician "E. G." Husserl by the new descriptive psychology of Franz Brentano and the hope, expressed particularly in the "psychological and logical studies" of Husserl's *Philosophy of Arithmetic* (1891), never completed, of supplying the missing foundation of mathematics by such a psychology. It would have to take account of his seeming aboutface in the first volume of his *Logical Investigations* (1900), with its classic critique of psychologism, and his further shift in the second volume to a new correlative method that accorded both the psychic act and the transpsychic content equal rights. For this latter approach Husserl adopted the name of "phenomenology," defined as the study of the essential nature of consciousness in its intentional structure. But soon the scales tipped back toward the subjective pole of the relationship: under the title of "transcendental phenomenology" Husserl undertook with growing insistence to locate the origin of all phenomena in a constituting subjectivity, a subjectivity that he always wanted to keep strictly separate from the merely factual subjectivity of empirical psychology, as he interpreted it, but which still implied the primacy of the subjective pole of the relation over its "objective" correlates.

However, this is not the place for plotting the curve of Husserl's progress or even of the variations in his proximity to actual psychology—of which, in any case, he did not keep abreast. Rather, the important thing in the present context is to give as clear a picture as possible of Husserl's basic attitude toward psychology. It is important not to misinterpret his opposition to psychology, first merely in logic and then along the entire front of philosophy, as hostility to psychology as such. His campaign involved only the freeing of philosophy from the abortive attempts of psychologists after the manner of J. S. Mill to convert logic into a branch of psychology and to make the factual laws of thinking the foundation of the logical laws and their claims to validity. In order to understand Husserl's antipsychologism it is
necessary also to realize that what he understood by psychology was the kind of psychophysics and psychophysiology which considered the psyche merely as part of a biological organism, to be explored by the experimental methods of the Wundtian laboratories.\(^5\)

Phenomenology, as Husserl finally conceived of it, was anything but opposed to psychology as a science. As he saw it, the two are essentially related.\(^6\) A true phenomenological psychology, once developed, would "stand in close, even closest relation to philosophy."\(^7\) Even with regard to the psychology of his time with its "immense experimental work and its abundance of empirical facts and in part very interesting regularities," Husserl expressed genuine admiration, particularly when it was in the hands of such experimentalists as Carl Stumpf and Theodor Lipps, who had seen the importance of descriptive clarifications before rushing off to the laboratories.\(^8\) But his final verdict was damning and blunt enough: Husserl denied the typical psychology of the time the right to call itself a rigorous science.\(^9\) For this so-called science, in its eagerness to collect factual and experimental material, had failed to make sure of its basic concepts and operated instead with the crude and uncritical terms of everyday language. Incidental discussions of terminological questions were insufficient to provide better foundations. Hence Husserl argued that only a full-fledged phenomenology that had investigated the essential structures of the phenomena in their variety could make sense of the experimental findings. Empirical psychology, then, presupposes phenomenological psychology, a psychology

5. For this point I may refer to the pertinent section in *The Phenomenological Movement*, pp. 149-52.
6. "Phenomenology and psychology are closely related, inasmuch as both are concerned with consciousness, though in a different manner and in a different attitude." (Logos, 1 [1911], 302) *Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft*, ed. Wilhelm Szilasi (Frankfurt-am-Main: 1965). Also in *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, trans. Quentin Lauer (New York: 1965), adequate, but not free from defects.
7. Ibid., p. 321.
8. Ibid., p. 304.
9. Ibid., p. 320.
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that works out the fundamental distinctions of the psychological phenomena on the basis of the celebrated, if not notorious, essential insights (Wesenseinsichten).

What did Husserl himself contribute to the laying of such a phenomenological foundation for psychology?¹⁰

He did not write a systematic work on phenomenological psychology. What was published under this title were his notes for lectures that he delivered in 1925 and again in 1928.¹¹ There does not seem to be any basis for the belief that he ever meant to publish them as an independent book. Nevertheless the text now before us provides, at least in its second half (pp. 130ff.), the best picture of what kind of topics a phenomenological psychology in Husserl's sense would have to include and how he wanted it to treat them. Typical items are: the stratification of the psychic phenomena (Section 21), their unity (Section 24), perception (Sections 28–39), temporality (Section 40), the ego (Sections 41f.), and the subject as monad (Section 43). But this is clearly not a complete system of phenomenological psychology.

However, we can also refer to extended chapters and sections in other works published or authorized by Husserl himself which take up the kind of psychological topics envisaged in “Philosophy as a Rigorous Science.” Thus the analyses of perception in Ideen, those of the inner consciousness of time in the lectures edited by Martin Heidegger, and those of experience in Erfahrung und Urteil, as elaborated by Ludwig Landgrebe, contain a wealth of basic descriptions and distinctions which are of considerable significance for psychology.

But, especially in the present context, it would make little sense to insert here a complete catalog of Husserl's treatment of various psychological topics. The only meaningful thing would be to show concretely how he dealt with an exemplary phenomenon.

¹⁰ For a very helpful attempt to bring together Husserl's main psychological findings systematically see Hermann Drue, Edmund Husserls System der phänomenologischen Psychologie. But it hardly justifies the use of the term "system" in the usual sense, a term which Husserl himself usually rejected.

¹¹ Phänomenologische Psychologie, ed. Walter Biemel (Husserliana, IX [The Hague: 1962]).
The most obvious candidate would be his account of the intentional structure of consciousness. This would involve showing how each conscious act, e.g., our consciousness of the building in which we are assembled, is essentially a consciousness of, namely, of the (intentional) object to which consciousness refers. In addition to this basic pattern, introduced by Franz Brentano's descriptive psychology, Husserl pointed out that in intentional consciousness the immediate data of our awareness, such as our sense impressions of colors or textures, are ascribed to objects and in this sense objectified. Even more important, the referents of the many acts in which this building is experienced are ascribed to one identical object into which the different appearances or perspectives are integrated or synthetized.

But to give a full and meaningful picture of these investigations into the structure of consciousness would clearly exceed the frame of this lecture. Besides, I can refer the more interested reader to the preceding contributions of my colleagues Roderick M. Chisholm and Aron Gurwitsch. Instead let me try to say something about the more general question of the role of phenomenological psychology in the total setting of Husserl's philosophy.

Quite apart from his early purpose in utilizing Brentano's psychology as a foundation for the philosophy of arithmetic, Husserl thought of psychology as an important if not as the only avenue to the new fundamental science of phenomenology, and particularly to its fully developed form: pure or transcendental phenomenology. This phenomenology was to be the study of the essential structures of consciousness purified from all "transcendent" existential beliefs. The purification was to be achieved by means of the celebrated phenomenological reduction, which was to "bracket," or, better, suspend all such beliefs and find the ultimate foundation for all philosophy and science in immanent subjectivity. One of the difficulties for this new radical conception of phenomenology was this: While in his Ideen (Section 31) Husserl had pointed out the theoretical feasibility of such a reduction on the basis of a free decision, he had not shown to his own and others' satisfaction why such a drastic step was neces-
sary. Most of his later efforts consisted in mustering arguments for the rational necessity of this step. And one of his major reasons was the "crisis in psychology," a crisis which, as he saw it, could be overcome only by giving psychology a new foundation in transcendental phenomenology.

Husserl developed this line of reasoning in several places:

1. In his lectures on "Phenomenological Psychology" of 1925 and 1928, he tried to show how psychology is transformed, once it is based on phenomenological philosophy.

2. In his ill-fated\textsuperscript{12} article on "Phenomenology" for the Encyclopaedia Britannica, Husserl began with a section on pure psychology, i.e., a psychology free from physical and physiological ingredients, along the lines of Brentano's descriptive psychology (or psychognosia), and one that focused on "intentionality" and was based both on a limited phenomenological reduction to "inner experience" and on an "eidetic" reduction to essences. In a second section Husserl tried to show how such a phenomenological psychology could serve as the foundation for transcendental phenomenology. For as Husserl saw it, there is a fundamental ambiguity in the way in which the world appears in our consciousness: in what sense is it real? This ambiguity calls for radical elucidation. Even phenomenological psychology shares the naïveté of all science in its simple belief in the reality of the natural world. But at least in focusing on the phenomena of "inner" experience such a psychology is already on the road to the subjective matrix. Carried through to the end it would lead to the complete transcendental reduction of all existential beliefs, as characteristic of transcendental phenomenology.

3. Finally, in the Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology of 1935ff., Husserl returned to psychology as an approach to phenomenology—now, however, second to the new and more publicized approach, that via the study of the life world. He saw the reasons for the crisis in psychology in the in-

\textsuperscript{12} "Ill-fated": After having gone through four German versions, now published in Husserlana, IX, the German version of this article was truncated by the inadequate "translator."
compatibility between an objectivistic approach in the style of Galilean science and the merely subjective approach from inner experience. Transcendental phenomenology would provide a new foundation for both in the constituting function of transcendental consciousness.

But the ultimate proof for the historical relevance of Husserl's phenomenological psychology could be supplied only by showing its traces in the work of the psychologists of the time. This is what I am trying to do on a larger scale in some of my historical studies. Here I shall merely give a few examples.

1. Husserl exerted considerable influence on the work of the younger psychologists associated with Georg Elias Müller, especially on David Katz, in Göttingen. Apart from the general credit Katz extends to Husserl, there is evidence that such distinctions as that between surface color and film color had some connection with Husserl's theory of the intentional structure of perception, surface colors being perceived as aspects of the intentional object or noema.

2. Husserl's phenomenology of thinking left extensive traces in the work of the Würzburg school of Oswald Külpe, particularly in the writings of August Messer and Karl Bühler, whose theory of language was also indebted to Husserl.

3. Apart from a growing general appreciation of Husserl's intentions among the founders of Gestalt psychology, one of its younger members, Karl Duncker, took a particular interest in Husserl's research.

4. Even more conspicuous is the corroborative influence of Husserl's early phenomenology on psychiatrists like Jaspers in his General Psychopathology. Ludwig Binswanger also put to use some of Husserl's later transcendental phenomenology.

It would take considerable time and care, however, to trace these influences in detail. It should also be pointed out that these influences were often not "total" but "partial," i.e., either merely stimulating or reinforcing or confirming. Such partial influences may actually be more valuable than the total ones.
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It is not from the historical effects that the full relevance of Husserl's phenomenology for psychology can be demonstrated. Anyhow, these influences have issued almost exclusively from the incipient phenomenology of his early *Logical Investigations*. The full-fledged pure or transcendental phenomenology of the *Ideas* and of his subsequent work has remained relatively ineffective. The most important question is therefore whether this phenomenology is essentially capable of and destined to make significant contributions.

In the present context, I can offer merely the following general considerations.

1. A full empirical psychology worthy of its name must include a pure psychology of the phenomena of consciousness. This consciousness is essentially intentional. But in order to give an adequate account of intentionality we need the kind of phenomenological investigation which the traditional psychophysical psychology, at any rate, fails to provide. In other words, a psychology that does not abandon consciousness after the manner of strict behaviorism presupposes a description of the intentional structures as given in immediate experience, regardless of whether they are matched by physical counterparts. As Husserl sees it in the *Britannica* article, this description presupposes a kind of bracketing reduction after the manner of phenomenology.

2. Empirical psychology presupposes a framework of fundamental concepts or essential structures. Perhaps a more direct way of demonstrating this prerequisite would be to point out that the usual texts in empirical psychology simply presuppose a set of concepts such as function, act, content, perception, conation, etc. Rarely, if ever, are they accompanied by explicit definitions. In fact, these concepts often seem to be not much more than stipulations vaguely based on ordinary usage. What phenomenology aims at is to put foundations under these seemingly arbitrary stipulations. It wants to derive psychological
definitions from what is called, perhaps a little pretentiously, an essential insight (Wesensschau), or a little more concretely, from grasping the essential types that can be intuited on the basis of a systematic variation of the observed phenomena. Seeing and describing such essential structures might put an end to the appearance, if not the reality, of definitional anarchy.

3. Phenomenology can provide a genetic understanding of the way in which the contents of our consciousness are constituted in our experience. Such constitution occurs either passively—when contents crystallize, as it were, without our participation, as in ordinary experience—or actively when we construct such contents, as in acts of judgment or in the imagination. Constitutive phenomenology, by paying special attention to these processes and describing them, leads to a much better understanding of the historic development of consciousness and its correlates than does a merely static description in the style of Husserl's earlier phenomenology.

Husserl claims that these steps—description of pure subjective experience, identification of essential types, and constitutive phenomenology—are indispensable to making psychology an exact science. In this case phenomenology would of course be relevant in the strong sense. It would certainly be a serious challenge to all existing psychology that is still innocent of such a phenomenology. Personally I doubt that the plight of present-day psychology is that precarious. Thus in the field of description of subjective consciousness a lot of conscientious work has been done not only by psychology of perception and descriptive psychopathology but also by our psychological novelists. As for the reflection on the basic concepts of psychology, the reexamination of basic definitions is by no means absent from the theory and philosophy of psychology. Even the field of constitution is not

13. I am thinking here particularly of the recent development of a philosophy-based "philosophical psychology" (see, e.g., Donald Gustavson [ed.], Essays in Philosophical Psychology [New York: 1964]). But apart from the question of the effect of these painstaking studies on the psychologists, the emphasis of analytic philosophizing on ordinary usage rather than on the structure of the phenomena raises the question of whether it can avoid dependency on the accidents of historical language and reach essential types.
uncultivated; thus the recent development in Continental psychology of what goes by the name of *Aktualgenese* in the second Leipzig School of Fritz Sander is a careful attempt to study the genetic constitutions of *Gestalts*. Moreover, some of Piaget's genetic psychology attempts at least something parallel to, if not identical with, constitutive phenomenology.

My conclusion is that at least implicitly some of the tasks outlined by Husserl are being tackled, however inadequately, in current research in psychology. Their explicit treatment might indeed be of considerable help to the cause of a truly scientific psychology. But it would be strange if these tasks, urgent as they are, had not been discovered and attacked in ongoing research. What I submit, therefore, is that while an explicit phenomenology can be relevant to psychology in its actual work, it is not indispensable as long as psychology implicitly attends to its phenomenological foundations. But this does not mean that a more explicit attack could not be of considerable value. Of this potential aid I would like to give an example.

### IV

**Phenomenology and Field Theory: A Chance for Co-operation**

Let me now turn away from merely theoretical considerations of what may be called "metaphenomenology." Instead I would like to show in a specific instance how philosophical phenomenology could become relevant in an area of recent growth in psychology in a manner that would at the same time stimulate philosophical growth. I have in mind the conception of the phenomenal field as developed in recent psychology and as paralleled by Husserl's much dramatized, and perhaps at times overdramatized, conception of the life world.

Psychological field theory as such owes its major development to the work of Kurt Lewin. Long before Husserl's conception of the life world had become generally known, Lewin formulated his conception of a life space as the frame of reference for a per-
son's actions and movements. He even devised an elaborate system for plotting these movements by utilizing the patterns of mathematical topology.

What must not be overlooked in taking account of and paying tribute to these pioneering studies is that Lewin is exclusively concerned with problems of action. His life space is consequently defined in terms of "the totality of facts which determine the behavior of an individual at a certain moment" (p. 12). Also, the life space or "hodological space" is organized according to the chances of personal access, which is often blocked by obstructive barriers. Questions of merely theoretical perception or emotional relationship are not considered as such. Moreover, while Lewin stressed the difference between the physical field and the psychological field, he defined life space facts dynamically as real in the sense that they have real effects on behavior, even though these effects need not be physical. What is even more striking is the absence of any references to phenomenology, striking particularly in view of Lewin's German background and at a time when Wolfgang Köhler, to whom the *Principles* were dedicated, along with other gestaltists put increasing emphasis on phenomenology. As a matter of fact, in 1917 Lewin himself had published a brilliant descriptive study of the phenomenal transformations of the landscape in stationary war, which he himself called a piece of "phenomenology." I suspect that his later avoidance of the term is indicative of his wish to keep aloof from all such philosophical entanglements, not only with Husserl's phenomenology but also with the "New Positivism" and its physicalism (*op. cit.*, p. 19). His chief concern was clearly to stay close to phenomenally observable behavior.

The "phenomenal field" as the basic concept in phenomenological psychology makes its explicit appearance in the first American text in the field by Donald Snygg in co-operation with

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Arthur W. Combs. It is defined as "the entire universe, including himself, as it is experienced by the individual at the instant of action" (p. 15). As such it is contrasted with the "objective physical field." More specifically, the field is identified with "the universe of naïve experience in which the individual lives, the everyday situation of self and surroundings which each person takes to be reality." Snygg and Combs describe the phenomenal field as more or less fluid, as "organized and meaningful," for instance on the basis of the figure-ground relation. The phenomenal self forms a special sector within the total phenomenal field as its "most permanent part" (p. 76). It "includes all those aspects of the phenomenal field which the individual experiences as part or characteristic of himself" (p. 78).

This concept of the phenomenal world has been taken over by Carl Rogers, who also uses such terms as "world of experience" or "experiential world." With the individual as its center, "it includes all that is experienced by the organism, whether or not these experiences are consciously perceived." The introduction of the term "organism" may seem to imply a rejection of consciousness. However, at a later stage, when Rogers emphasizes the noun "experience" for the phenomenal field, he makes it plain that "it does not include such events as neuron discharges or changes in blood sugar, because they are not directly available to awareness." Thus the term "organism" has clearly to be understood in a purely psychological sense.

Finally, I would like to mention a potentially even more sophisticated conception of the phenomenal world developed by Saul Rosenzweig in his theory of personality, also called "idiodynamics," an orientation that "adopts the dynamics of the individual as the fundamental ground of systematization in psychology." A fundamental feature of this idiodynamics is the

dominance of the "idioverse" (lately also called "idiocosm"), "the name given to the individual's universe of events." These events constitute "the population of the idioverse," which is to be explored by several methods, phenomenology among them. What seems to me significant about this conception is that here the idea of the phenomenal field is enlarged to that of the one encompassing world of the individual. True, thus far there is no further development of the idea, and no concrete idiocosms of specific individuals are described. But it should not be difficult to supply them as each case history in idiodynamics is bound to do.

It would be easy to show that similar conceptions occur among sociologists and anthropologists. What is so often called "culture" in all its ambiguities seems mostly an attempt to describe that part of man's social field which is not only shared by men but is man-made.20

The rise of such concepts in different schools of psychology and social science is symptomatic of the need for a systematic study of the phenomenal world. Such a study would require a clear conception of the structural organization of this world, of its dimensions, and of the proper categories for describing it. How far has the new grassroots phenomenology been able to supply it? If it has, I confess that I have not yet come across any such attempt. Lewin's model of life spaces for action is a promising beginning. But apparently little has been done on the basis of this foundation in more recent phenomenological psychologies of the phenomenal field in its entirety.

How far is philosophical phenomenology able to fill this need? At this point I would like to introduce Husserl's conception of the life world, which, while foreshadowed already in texts from the twenties, made its full-fledged appearance only in his mostly posthumous work on the Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology.

20. To my knowledge the only person who has noticed and stressed the parallel between cultural anthropology and phenomenology is Grace de Laguna in her article on "The Lebenswelt and the Cultural World" in the Journal of Philosophy, LX (1960), 777–91.
In order to do justice to this conception, one must be aware of the context in which it occurs. This context is the attempt to show the need for a transcendental phenomenology. Husserl wanted to demonstrate this need by a variety of approaches, all leading to the realization that the foundations for enterprises such as psychology or science in general can be supplied only by tracing their foundations in the subjective sphere, which Husserl called transcendental subjectivity. In his *Crisis* book Husserl takes a new approach to this goal by starting out from the everyday life world of the ordinary person, which is so different from the objectivized world of science. However, one must not expect of Husserl any sustained study of the life world for its own sake. All he needed for his purposes was the identification of those features in it that lead back to the fundamental layer in subjectivity in which they are constituted. Yet Husserl was increasingly aware of the fact that in order to show these origins he had to explore the life world to a much greater extent than he had done in his earlier work, where he had included the life world within the "natural world" explored by objective science.

Nevertheless, what can be found in the pertinent section of Husserl's last work proved highly suggestive to those who consider the independent exploration of the life world one of the most important contributions made by Husserl's phenomenology. It contains at least the rudiments of a structural theory of the life world. One of its basic features is that it has a center in the experiencing subject (in contrast to the uncentered objective world of science), designated by the personal pronoun singular in the case of the private world of the individual and by the plural in the case of social group worlds. The life world is polarized around these centers and displays such spatial characteristics as closeness or farness, being above or below, left or right—all characteristics that as such have no place in the scientific world with its objective co-ordinates. It also shows such emotional characteristics as "home" (*Heimat*) and "foreign" (*Fremde*), familiar and strange, old and novel. Husserl points to the cultural anthropology of Lucien Lévy-Bruhl as supplying striking illustrations of what a life world contains. But other-
wise the published part of the Husserl papers does not show concrete developments of the conception. Yet it would require little imaginative variation and extension of this pattern to supply it.

How much toward a systematic phenomenology or, as Husserl also calls it, an "ontology" of the life world has then been achieved thus far? What we have is certainly nothing like a "rigorous science" in Husserl's sense. Beyond the outlines of the basic structure of the life world and some of the categories, spatial and emotive, which would be distinctive to it, no general framework with basic propositions, definitions, and laws is in sight. What constitutes a "world" in this sense? Is there only one life world per person? Or can a person live "in several different worlds," as we often say? How far are these life worlds articulated, subdivided, etc.? This is not a mere matter of pigeonholing. Eventually any comprehensive account of a person's life world needs a framework that would allow us to plot its characteristic profile.

What has such a phenomenology of the life world to offer to the psychologist in his need for a fuller understanding of the phenomenal world? Clearly not a ready-made model or framework. But even in its rudimentary form Husserl's phenomenology of the life world may contain some new tools, some new dimensions, some suggestions toward what a full-fledged phenomenological psychology of the phenomenal world requires.

Let me go even a little further than Husserl and suggest some structural dimensions for the charting of life worlds. For instance, life worlds are articulated according to zones and regions. By "zones" I understand the concentric shells around the focal center of each life world arranged according to its closeness to or significance for the focal subject; by "regions" I mean the areas within the life world organized according to the content of these zones, i.e., the material fields of his interests. Obviously, zones and regions will intersect.

The articulation of the life world according to zones is foreshadowed in Aron Gurwitsch's important work on *The Field of Consciousness*, with its distinction between the thematic object, the thematic field, and the marginal field. True, his distinctions
apply primarily to single perceptions. Yet they can easily be transposed to the perceived life world in its entirety. We can then distinguish between a central area, relatively well lit up, a penumbral belt around it, and a surrounding zone fading off from full shade into twilight and final darkness. Such zones may be based on degrees of acquaintance, according to familiarity or novelty of content—obviously a transitory division, since novelty will change to familiarity. But zoning may also be based on emotional closeness, which may be much more persistent; criteria for such emotional closeness may be preferences, real or imaginary—the latter in case we stop to think what contents we would rather like to have or to do without.

The articulation of the life world according to regions would have to be based on an inventory of the variety of objects and concerns with which we are in living contact. Here any attempt to be complete would be doomed to defeat. Typical regions would be one’s own body, spatial environment, family, friends, and economic, political, cultural, and religious concerns. By way of an example, I shall merely try to indicate relevant features of the lived spatial environment. For the average adult upper-class Westerner this will usually be centered in his private room, surrounded by his house or apartment, oriented toward the street, placed within the town or city in which he happens to be permanently or temporarily settled. This immediate life environment usually stands in very loose connection and sometimes, in cases of disorientation, in no connection at all with geographical space, which is, chiefly, imagined space (though flying may do something for a better fusion of the two). Even this geographic space appears in all sorts of profiles, represented, for instance, on maps of the United States as mirrored in the typical perspectives of the inhabitants of some of our “hub” cities.

Each person also lives in a special time world in which different parts of present, past, and future appear in different perspectives, are very differently articulated, are empty or full, have very different meanings, etc. The importance of these time profiles has been shown especially by phenomenological psychopathology.
Man's social world is a most important area in his life world. What persons are included in it, by name or anonymously? How "close" or how "distant" do we feel to each of them? How do we rank them? How far are we aware of others' inner life worlds?

Then, what place do cultural products occupy in a man's life world? What does sport or art mean to him?

How does he see the entire cosmos in relation to himself? How much of his life is permeated by a sense of religious meaning?

In the present context there would be little point in developing a blueprint for a systematic study of life worlds. It is enough if this sketch can convey a sense of the vastness of the task and the need and chance to develop schemes and the proper categories for the description of life worlds, schemes that are indispensable for a fuller understanding of other individuals, sexes, generations, races, and ages. It is simply not enough to project ourselves into their places. We also need the directives for the proper exploration of the worlds for which these "places" are the centers.

Beyond such clarifications of the basic conceptions, philosophical phenomenology can offer the services of its intentional analysis to a study of the phenomenal world. Not only specific intentional objects but the encompassing field and world are given in characteristic acts and appear in different modes. Hence a study of the content of the phenomenal world invites the parallel study of the various acts, as well as of the modes, perspectives, degrees of intuitive concreteness or emptiness, clarity and vagueness, etc., in which they are given.

Finally, the genesis of a life world, its transformations, and, in short, its history present new tasks for any kind of phenomenology. There is, of course, the merely factual or empirical task of tracing the growth and transformations of the phenomenal world in each individual life, its widening and narrowing, its revolutions and realignments. But in addition to preparing the ground by outlining such possibilities, phenomenology may again show certain essential and typical structures and laws pertaining
to such "genesis." Thus one might well hypothesize that any enlargement of the life world affects the relative importance of the central areas, or that modifications of the phenomenal world presuppose the loosening of the rigidity of one's native world—in short, an open attitude.

V

Concluding Remarks

I hope I have made this clear: I do not claim that phenomenological philosophy contains all the answers to the questions, asked and unasked, of empirical psychology. Such extravagant claims would only be too apt to backfire—and it is no secret that they have backfired in the past. What I do want to suggest, however, is that certain developments in both fields have converged far enough to make the comparing of notes and the exchange of questions and answers meaningful. American phenomenological psychology from the grassroots and imported phenomenological philosophy are not as far apart as is often believed. The precedent of William James, itself an influence on Husserl's phenomenology, is sufficient proof of that. Undeniably there are obstacles to communications. There is the disregard of aprioristically minded phenomenologists for empirical psychology. And there is the esoteric style of much of their writing, of which the workers in the scientific vineyard are understandably afraid. But none of these obstacles are essential. Both parties stand to gain from increased dialogue. Neither one has the right to pose as the authoritative teacher. Both have their unresolved problems—and their skeletons in their respective closets. And both have common foundations: the phenomena in their unexhausted and inexhaustible richness and wonder, and their common objective, the attempt to understand them as far as is humanly possible.

Let us suppose this lecture to have shown that phenomenological philosophy is not altogether irrelevant to the enterprise of the psychologist: then I could still imagine that someone will ask, Why pick just on psychology? Is phenomenology
not just as relevant to any other science or human enterprise? I will not deny that my case has important implications for all these fields, from mathematics to religion. And I am not particularly interested in drawing any comparisons, invidious or complimentary. But this much I think can be said in pleading a special significance of phenomenology for psychology: It was hardly accidental that phenomenology came into being as a result of a cell division within descriptive psychology. For when this psychology had lapsed into psychologism in the abortive attempt to solve the universal tasks of philosophy, phenomenology as a new kind of a study of consciousness took over this task.

But there may be even stronger reasons for the special claims of psychology on phenomenology than the historical ones. There is a special fascination about psychological phenomena in their closeness to everyone's existence. Also, in their irreducible richness and depth of qualitative variety they present a special challenge and opportunity for phenomenological pioneering.

Long before the beginning of psychology as a science, Heraclitus proclaimed: "You would not find out the boundaries of the soul, even by travelling along every path: so deep a logos does it have." Let me, in concluding, slightly modernize the translation of this venerable fragment: "There is no end to psychology, no matter what method it uses; for in its essence the depth of the psyche is unfathomable." Perhaps the ultimate relevance of phenomenological philosophy for psychology is its clear sense for this depth dimension in the phenomena of the psyche.
