

Josef Moural, Moses 136, office hours Wed 2-4 (but not this week due to the conference)

The Readings: Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations* §§ 1-42, 62-64  
Husserl, *Crisis* §§ 1-17, 28-55, Appendices IV, VI and X  
Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, selections tba

### **A Brief History of Phenomenology**

Franz Brentano (1838-1917) - a very influential Austrian philosopher, the teacher of Husserl. In *Psychology from Empirical Standpoint* (1874) introduces the concept of intentionality and discusses mental life in terms of act/content scheme, in 1889 lectures names the main task of his philosophy 'descriptive phenomenology'.

**Edmund Husserl** (1859-1938) - founder and one of the two main stars of the movement. Taught in Halle (1887-1900), Göttingen (1900-1916) and Freiburg (1916-1928). Main works: *Logical Investigations* (1900), *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy* (vol. 1 1913, vols. 2 and 3 posthumously), *Cartesian Meditations* (French translation 1931, original posthumously), *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (posthumously).

the main figures of the early (realistic) phenomenology: Max Scheler (1874-1928), Alexander Pfänder (1870-1941), Roman Ingarden (1893-1970).

**Martin Heidegger** (1889-1976) - the other great star of the movement, a brilliant lecturer and author. Husserl's younger colleague and assistant in Freiburg (1916-23), teaches in Marburg (1923-28), Husserl's successor in Freiburg (after Husserl's retirement in 1928). However, he subsequently deviates from phenomenology, is perceived as the founder of existentialism (which he rejects as a misinterpretation), and develops a position oriented towards the Being and poetry. Main work of the phenomenological period: *Being and Time* (1927).

Husserl/Heidegger students of the 1920's:

**Hans-Georg Gadamer** (1900-2001), the main figure of the post-war German scene, develops a position based on Heidegger's conception of hermeneutics. Main work: *Truth and Method* (1960).

**Hannah Arendt** (1906-1975), political philosophy.

**Jean-Paul Sartre** (1905-1980) - one of the founding figures of phenomenology in France. Subsequently abandons philosophy in favor of fiction-writing and social and political commentary. The paradigmatic French intellectual, hugely popular and influential in his days (Nobel-prize for writing, which he rejected). Main work: *Being and Nothingness* (1943).

**Maurice Merleau-Ponty** (1908-1961) - most widely studied post-war phenomenologist. Taught in Paris (1945-61). Combines and originally develops motives from Husserl and Heidegger, uses material from his extensive study of the 1920's and 1930's psychology (with a special interest in pathological cases). Main work: *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945).

**Emmanuel Levinas** (1906-1995) - became influential late in life. Began as Husserl scholar (translated *Cartesian Meditations* into French), then developed his own position (influenced also by his Judaism) which attempts to base ontology on ethics. Main work: *Totality and Infinity* (1961).

**Paul Ricoeur** (1913-2005) - translated Husserl's *Ideas I* and *II* into French, one of the main figures of recent French philosophy. Wrote on action and ethics, hermeneutics, language and narration, politics and community.

**Jacques Derrida** (1930-2003) - started as a Husserl scholar, then developed his own -- bizarre but influential -- position ('deconstruction') critical of Husserl.

## The crash-course

- 1) *awareness* (consciousness, experience, givenness, *cogito*)
  - includes all kinds of awareness (perception, thinking, recollection, desire, imagining ... whatever)
  - each awareness is awareness of something, of a certain formation of sense (*cogito-cogitatum*)
- 2) *phenomenological reduction*
  - an explicit acknowledgment that anything at all, in so far as we have to do with it, is given in awareness of some kind (and, conversely, that in so far as there is no awareness, we do not have anything to do with the thing)
- 3) *evidence* as the only legitimate source of conviction and justification
  - emptiness x fulfillment
  - 'intuition' (*Anschauung*) ... better 'immediate grasp'
- 4) *intentionality*
  - a name of the relationship between awareness and its object
  - but also, ontologically, Husserl speaks as if intentionality was somehow the bearer of all the happenings in the mind that has to do with awareness and its objects
- 5) *reflection*
  - the distinction 'what is given' x 'how it is given', i.e. the givenness x the mode of givenness
  - corresponds to the distinction *noema* x *noesis*
  - see CM §§ 15 and 17
- 6) focus and background (one concept of *horizon*)
  - no givenness isolated, each focused (or thematized) givenness surrounded by open infinity of background givennesses (unthematized or co-thematized up to a degree)
- 7) *temporality*
  - presence field extended, the 'primal presence' (corresponding to the 'now') surrounded by the fields of *retentions* and *protentions*
  - see not the *Lectures on the Internal Consciousness of Time*, but the post-1916 stuff
- 8) *horizon* as system of predelineated potentialities of consciousness
  - thus, not only the present unfocused 'aspects' but also the absent ones are included
  - see CM § 19
- 9) *synthesis*
  - the old notion of the transition from an 'empty intention' to a 'fulfillment' now applied to the incessant transition from a protention to a 'now'
  - see CM §§ 17-18
- 10) type/token (*eidōs*, essence (*Wesen*))
  - a token should be seen as an instance of a type
  - phenomenology is interested in such *eidetic structures*
  - see CM § 34
- 11) *intentional analysis* (i.e. the study of constitution) as the main task of phenomenology
  - see CM § 20
- 12) the abandoned project
  - an application of the intentional analysis to the practical realm, from local decisions to the entire life-projects