

Any interesting answer has to be accompanied by an explanation of *why* this is the right answer.” [p. 135]. One does not have to embrace foundationalism (in any form), of course, but in that case it must be clear what the alternative is (as an infinite regress is, presumably, unacceptable); might coherentism, e.g., be considered a viable approach? One may appeal to the intersection of philosophical and scientific issues [pp. 196, 197], but that raises the question: which matters are specifically philosophical? Perhaps Cappelen is drawn to a position such as naturalized epistemology.

In addition, if no appeal may be made to intuitions, it is unclear how Cappelen would deal with cases in philosophy that resemble axioms in mathematics. At present, few cases are generally accepted to have such a status compared to previous periods in (Western) philosophy, when it was attempted to resolve epistemological (and metaphysical) issues by appealing to self-evident starting points, but a proposition such as ‘ $\neg(p \wedge \neg p)$ ’ (the principle of contradiction) is still considered by some to have such a quality; would Cappelen support it by arguments and thus avoid an appeal to an intuition? He does appear to suggest that logic may have to be considered to be something separate from philosophy [p. 229], but this seems to be an *argumentum ad consequentiam*: ‘if something needs to be supported by an intuition, it cannot be qualified as philosophy’. It is of course unacceptable (or at least unproductive) to operate from one’s own private notion of what constitutes ‘philosophy’, especially if no arguments to use that private notion are offered.

To conclude, Cappelen has shown that intuitions are not decisive elements in a number of cases, but he has failed to efface their role in the justification process. On the basis of the foregoing, I would answer the question of what the relevance of this work is as follows. Apart from the merit that it presents a forceful criticism of those who too easily resort to intuitions, or who don’t even reflect on their position, it must be considered a propaedeutic work in the sense that it primarily serves as a springboard for the crucial questions to come to the fore. This observation in no way derogates from the author’s meticulous and elucidative analysis, which is impressive and must be commended, but merely indicates what the next step must be, whether to be undertaken by the author or others.

JASPER DOOMEN *Leiden University*

### ***Husserl’s Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction***

DERMOT MORAN

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Edmund Husserl’s last and unfinished book, *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (1936/1954, hereafter referred to as the *Crisis*), represents a key moment in the phenomenological tradition.<sup>1</sup> In his late 70s and suffering under the oppression of the National Socialist regime, Husserl realized that his work would remain largely unfinished, and he felt misunderstood or abandoned by many whom he had foreseen as the future of his movement, “phenomenology.” He found himself in a world engulfed in moral, spiritual, and philosophical crises, a world dizzied by the success of science and technology. The moment thus called for a defense of transcendental philosophy and for an expansion of phenomenology, and Husserl

responded with a courageous reflection on the sciences and human culture that continues to fuel research in phenomenology. In the *Crisis*, Husserl—who had “lived in all its seriousness the fate of a philosophical existence” (cited at p. 19)—reorients phenomenology toward history, the life-world, and a more robust account of intersubjectivity.

And yet, as Dermot Moran notes, the text is an “unfinished masterpiece.” Husserl had planned to write six parts, but during his lifetime he only published two of the three parts we now call the *Crisis*. His assistants and editor compiled Part III, and also included several lectures and fragmentary essays related to the direction of the project. As less a book than a patchwork of writings from 1934–1937, the *Crisis* is the perfect candidate for an “explanatory and critical introduction,” and there could not be a better guide than Moran’s introduction. Moran’s book is simultaneously an accessible introduction for non-specialists, an impressive contribution on the history of phenomenology, and an invaluable reference for students and scholars of Husserl. I strongly recommend this companion to anyone reading Husserl’s *Crisis* or seeking a deeper understanding of phenomenology in general.

Moran begins with an excellent survey that locates the *Crisis* in Husserl’s overall corpus. Indeed, the *Crisis* breaks new ground and introduces concepts that contrast with Husserl’s earlier “Cartesian” approach to phenomenology. Phenomenology, as Moran writes, is “the descriptive science of consciously lived experiences and the objects of those experiences, described precisely in the manner in which they are experienced” (4). Understanding the fundamental structure of *intentionality*—that is, the manner in which all consciousness is consciousness *of* something—required a rigorous method: the phenomenological reduction or the *epochē*, a “bracketing off” of our theories *about* the objects that appear to allow a pure description of the noetic act (intending) and noematic object (intended) that make up any conscious experience. Yet given the resulting perspective of the “transcendental ego” of the Cartesian approach, intersubjectivity and the shared life-world seemed difficult to account for. The *Crisis* offers a radically new approach to phenomenology, a “genetic” phenomenology. And yet, as Moran adeptly insists, for Husserl nothing of phenomenology had essentially changed in the *Crisis*, even if a new pathway was being opened through history and the life-world.

But what is this “crisis”? Facing the progress in science and technology, as well as the political barbarism emerging after WWI, Western culture had, according to Husserl (sounding like Weber), lost a sense of wonder for *universal philosophy*. This was coupled with a commitment to naturalism that had led to an utter failure to account for the “subjective contribution to the experience of the world” (9). Transcendental phenomenology thereby promised a single medicine for all cultural crises. Philosophers, when properly practicing as phenomenologists, have a responsibility to act as the “functionaries of humankind” (8) called to unravel crises by working out the very essence of European rationality. “Europe,” under Husserl’s pen, is not a political entity or ethnic category, but the teleological structure of Western rationality. Uncovering the instituting moments of European culture amounts to a “critique of pure reason” (36) and a defense of “universal critical rationalism” (14).

After an excellent chapter on Husserl’s life and writings, Moran provides a “toolbox” for reading this “unfinished masterpiece,” including discussions of the method of *Rückfragen* (backward questioning), “self-reflection,” “sense-bestowal,” “intentionality,” and several other key concepts. This is followed by Moran’s careful and lucid exploration of Husserl’s critique of modern science (Chapter 3, 66–98). As Moran rightly emphasizes, Husserl traces the sense of modern science back to Galileo’s “mathematization of

nature,” thereby offering an “intentional history”: “Husserl’s intellectual *reconstruction* involves recovering the scientist’s own motivations and, indeed, also revealing what other forces were at work on him” (74). Galileo established modern science by approaching it as “entirely amenable to exact quantification” (76), while simultaneously rejecting perception and experience as secondary and *merely* subjective. Linked to Newton and Descartes, then, Galileo’s name henceforth invokes the radical shift in modern metaphysics where nature and mind are definitively split apart. Moran is also able to draw upon Husserl’s other late writings, such as the famous “Origin of Geometry” fragment, thus capturing the flavor of this entire phase of Husserl’s thought.

Chapter 4, “The crisis in psychology,” is a valuable exploration of Husserl’s attempt to establish phenomenology as a radical new science of subjectivity and intersubjectivity. Husserl finds psychology in “permanent crisis” because of its erroneous *naturalism*, and Moran offers a convincing study of Husserl’s critique of psychology as well as a further clarification of Husserl’s notions of intersubjectivity and embodiment. The following chapter takes up Husserl’s account of history, which includes: the notion of the *teleological* progression of philosophy itself, “the existential structures of human culture” (156), the role of communalization (154), and the concept of “institution.” A phenomenology of the sense of history is required since, as Moran puts it, “[o]ne cannot live genuinely in a world where progress and disappointment are taken as mere arbitrary happenings” (163). This requires a return to the Greek theoretical attitude (against myth and tradition), and all of humanity, then, is metaphorically and metaphysically called to “Europe” as the *telos* of humanity, and as the universal form of reason.

The *Lebenswelt*, or the life-world, (discussed by Moran in Chapter 6), is an iconic concept from Husserl’s late works. The life-world is the world of experience, the world given to the natural attitude, and the very foundation of every gesture in the natural sciences. Any student of Husserl’s will appreciate the careful discussion of the enduring influence of the “life-world” in phenomenology and beyond (215-17). Moran’s book ends with two important chapters on phenomenology as a completion of what Husserl called his “transcendental-phenomenological idealism,” terms that he had fitted “with completely new meanings” (219). Indeed, transcendental phenomenology is meant to provide the grounding that can resolve the paradox that humans are “subjects ‘for the world’ and also objects ‘in the world’” (223). This leads to intersubjectivity and the constitution of the ego as essentially consistent across Husserl’s late work. There is, in short, no way of thinking of “being in itself” without thinking the structures of “constituting subjectivity,” and there is no way of thinking of subjectivity without revealing the subject as always already caught up in intersubjective and pre-reflective activities constituting the world as such.

Any student of the history of philosophy will want to study the *Crisis* carefully, both for its historical significance and for its continuing influence, and Moran’s introduction is the perfect companion.

DONALD LANDES *Concordia University*

## Notes

- 1 Husserl, Edmund *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. David Carr (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970).