CHAPTER-III
MAN AND THE LIFE - WORLD

INTRODUCTION

The third chapter of the thesis attempts to lay down the methodological significance of the notion of life-world, of the role it is to play, and of the function it is destined to fulfill within the existential phenomenology of Merleau Ponty. What is meant as "life - world" is the world as encountered in everyday life and given in direct and immediate experience. Man as a mundane existent and his modes of existing reveals the operation of consciousness which is in the life-world. In other words, man is encountered within the life-world and as "inserted" into it. Hence it is argued that the life-world may be understood as an oriented world with an experiencing consciousness at the center.

i) Husserl's conception of life-world

As early as 1913, Husserl in "Ideas" designated a descriptive and analytical study of the world of common experience or as it has come to be denoted in the terminology of his later writings, the 'life-world' (Lebenswelt) as an urgent desideratum. What is meant is the world as encountered in everyday life and is given in direct and immediate experience, especially perceptual experience and its derivatives like memory, expectation, and the like, independently of, and prior to, scientific interpretation.
At every moment of our life, we find ourselves in the world of everyday experience; with this world, we have a certain familiarity not derived from what science might teach us; within that world we pursue all our goals and carry on all our activities, including scientific ones. Accordingly, Husserl postulated an all encompassing description of that world, pursuing it in all its dimensions and considering it under the totality of its aspects, as a scientific task of the first order of importance, a task which at the time of Husserl's writing had hardly been embarked upon nor even seen as a task.

What in 'Crisis' Husserl came to denote as the 'Lebenswelt' has also been dealt with by German and French existentialists. Thus for Heidegger, Sartre and Merleau Ponty, Lebenswelt stands in the center of their philosophical interest. Later, Schutz who has done more than anybody else to advance its study and elucidation from the point of view of its social aspect has seen the life-world as primarily a social world.

ii) Life-world as the Human World

Husserl has not dealt with the specific problems of human existence. He has concerned himself with the problem of the constitution of the cultural world, a world made by men in the various forms of their mutual cooperation, and upon whose objects sense and meaning is bestowed by virtue of its intellectual and mental functions. He conceives of
the cultural world, or rather worlds, as arising on the basis of the "natural world", "natural" now to be construed as not man made, but still as given in direct perceptual experience.

The conception of life-world in all his other publications is understood by Husserl strictly as the "human" world, i.e.; as a sphere characterized by its specific spiritual and cultural character; it is the human world of human experience as interpreted by man which is continuously in the process of becoming in the course of history. The definitive character of life-world is experienced as a 'unity' pointing to the meaning of a coherence of experiences. Accordingly, meaning of life-world does not mean a 'closed whole' devoid of man's experiences i.e. one that is essentially held open for new experiences to enter. This sense of an essential openness for every new experience is also one of the significances connected with the term "horizon" which Husserl has introduced to designate "how" the life-world is typically being experienced.

iii) Life-world as a clue to intentionality

The Husserlian concept of Lebenswelt which was little known or discussed during the life-time of Husserl, became widely known through the emphasis given to it in the writings of Merleau Ponty. His remarkable writings investigates the significance of human experience which Husserl did not emphasize. In Husserlian phenomenology, the
existence of transcendent objects still remained even after performing the phenomenological epoche. What he altered was the structure of the eidetic reduction. Instead of a direct intuiting of essences by a pure consciousness stripped of all content, the eidetic reduction clearly begins in experience. The experienced Lebenswelt offers the content for which consciousness will uncover essential structures. In the later phase of his writings, Husserl places the Lebenswelt in the central position from which consciousness can proceed forward to construct its science and mathematics, or from which it can move back in order to uncover the foundations which make every experience possible. In other words, Husserl acknowledges experience to be the foundation of all science; what he seeks now is the foundation of experiences.¹ The Lebenswelt, Husserl thought, would yield a particularly revealing clue for the study of intentionality in experiences.

iv) Life-world as our world-experiencing life

To prepare the way for the rigorous foundation of his philosophy, Husserl again and again urged the epoche, the bracketing of all presuppositions and especially the presuppositions of the natural sciences.² For, the knowledge of every natural science is originally based on the

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evidences obtained from the Lebenswelt, and by virtue of that rootedness in the original evidences alone could natural sciences bear their constant meaningfulness for the world and for life. The life-world consists of all those experiences - perception, responses, interpretation, and synthesis or organization of the many facets of everyday affairs - in which human beings are typically involved. This dimension of life-world is the source from which sciences must abstract their objects. To that extent, they provide only a partial grasp of reality. Much of the rich and meaningful elements of experience remains after the sciences have abstracted the elements of their concern. Indeed, the very nature of being a scientist is unaccounted for by science itself. Only a rigorous analysis of the way in which the life-world functions in people's unsophisticated experience as well as in science will provide an adequate basis for philosophy. In the last analysis, the basic justification or confirmation of truth is to be found in the type of evidence that derives from events of the life-world. The totality of these events of the life-world is what Husserl calls "our world - experiencing life". Through this notion of the life-world, Husserl sought to liberate philosophy from a point of view which is dominated by the various natural sciences. For, the purpose of an even more useful mode of science, in order to liberate the spirit, Husserl fashioned a way of discovering what the world is
like before it is interpreted by the scientific outlook. Through the epoche, the life-world emerges as a fresh terrain for the enterprise of description, opening a new way of experiencing, thinking, and even theorizing. Husserl thought that he had discovered the "world" as subjects know it to be, for it is, as he says, "the correlate of the subjectivity which gives it ontic meaning, through whose validities, the world 'is' at all". It was this return to the life-world and subjectivity which channeled many facets of phenomenology into Existentialism.

As noted earlier, Husserl's acknowledgment of Lebenswelt did not bring any existing transcendent objects into the phenomenological reduction. It is the possibility of experiencing the Lebenswelt itself that is under study now:

The life which affects world validity in natural world-life does not permit of being studied from within the attitude of natural world-life. What is required, then is a total transformation of attitude, a completely unique, universal epoche.³

Husserl continues to stress that natural interests are put out of play (by the universal epoche) But the world, exactly as it was for me earlier and still is, as my world, our world, humanity's world, having validity in its various subjective ways, has not disappeared, it is just that,

during the consistently carried-out epoche, it is under our
gaze purely as the correlate of the subjectivity which gives
it ontic meaning, through whose validities the world 'is' at
all. This is not a "view", an "interpretation" bestowed upon
the world. Every view about, every opinion about "the"
world, has its ground in the pre-given world. It is from
this very ground that Husserl feel himself through the
epoche: I stand above the world, which has now become for
me, in a quite peculiar sense, a phenomenon.4

A study of Lebenswelt may appear not only as an
unscientific but even as an unphilosophical enterprise or at
best as a pre-philosophical one. But no matter how it is
classified, it is precisely such "matters of course" which
philosophy cannot afford to neglect. Not even science can do
so, if Husserl was right in asserting that some of the
"crisis of European Science" is due to the neglect of the
Lebenswelt from which it has taken its start. Besides, the
Lebenswelt presents some very definite tasks and problems
for investigation. Each life world shows certain pervading
structures or "styles", and these invite study by what
Husserl calls an "ontology of the life-worlds".

It should also be emphasized that the life-world is
by no means immediately accessible as such to the common man
in the "natural attitude", especially insofar as he has come

under the spell of the scientific interpretation of the world. As Husserl sees it, a peculiar kind of first reduction, a suspension of science, is indispensable in order to get sight of the life-world and of its structures. Thus even the study of the life-world is already a type of phenomenology, through this may still be a "mundane phenomenology". It would seem, then, that only after such inquiries have been carried out, will Husserl's phenomenological or transcendental reduction have a sound basis and a proper guide. This performance of reduction leads us back from the 'structures' of the life-world to the hidden function of intentionality. The discovery of these functions would then allow us to trace the constitution of the characteristic features of life-world and of other objectivities based upon them.

v) Life-world as an oriented world

In Husserl's view, the only way to restore the proper balance was to realize that science was in fact nothing but a distillate, as it were, from the fuller life-world. Thus "a life-world" is to be conceived as an oriented world with an experiencing self at its center, designated as such by personal pronouns. By world, Husserl meant not a thing, not any set of objects but rather an ultimate horizon within which all such objects and the individual himself are understood in the "natural attitude" of everyday life. This horizon of the concrete experience is sharply contrasted
with the objective horizons of science which attend exclusively to objects via perspectives that are partial and abstract. It may be noted here that the human life which is concrete, subjective and relative to man, is understood from the perspective of one's life-world situations. This analysis has now been very generally accepted, and most European philosophers would agree that the task of describing the phenomena of life-world and of analyzing its structure is of primary importance for philosophy. The scientist like the rest of us, lives and moves within this world, and in a sense, it is presupposed in his investigations but we cannot expect him to perform the task of analysis, since he is interested in special, abstract objects of his own. Furthermore we must recognize that, since the time of plato, philosophers have disregarded 'Lebenswelt' as a subjective region of shadows, and have turned their attention rather to transcendent objects and problems.

The American philosopher William James played a vital role in this important discovery. In his 'Principles of Psychology',\(^5\) he points out that the objects of experience are not insular impressions sharply separated from one another, as the British Empiricists had supposed. This is a logical ideal of how we should experience them. In our

actual perception, however, they are always surrounded by a field of meanings which refer them to other objects. These references are easily taken for granted, or forgotten, as we concentrate on the central object of our attention. But they play a vital role in all perception. James called them fringes. Consequently, it leads Husserl to his notion of Lebenswelt, the last horizon of meanings in what he called the natural attitude of our everyday existence. After Husserl's investigations, this world horizon has been studied by many thinkers, including Sartre and Merleau Ponty in France. The result of these studies may be summarized as follows:

The life-world is a horizon of meaning and is always found with men. It includes all the persons, events, and things which we do or can encounter. This world includes not only spaces and places but things, persons, and modes of action. Hence when we seek to express the most far reaching doubt concerning any of these categories, we use similar expressions, saying, what in the world is this thing? Who in the world will do this for you? and how in the world will he do it? This horizon of meaning encompasses all that we can know by feeling, thought, imagination and by natural power. Hence, to speak of another world, or of what lies beyond this world, is a reference to what transcends our experience in the widest sense of this word. Any person, event, or thing in the world presupposes this background of
meaning, for something not in this world would not be intelligible and would no longer be a thing. Indeed, it would be doubtful whether we could meaningfully refer to its a being, for what a thing really is, refers to its place in a final world horizon.

vi) Life-world and its spatial aspect

The world has a spatial aspect: The primordial space of the life-world is very different from any geometric space. These are later abstractions from it. Hence, when I think of myself or some other person as being in the world, I mean something more than mere spatial inclusion, as a cup is in the cup-board, or a shoe is in the box. I am in the world rather as in a field of care, as we speak of a woman as being in nursing. This world is divided into the different regions of my care, like the kitchen for cooking, the bedroom for sleeping, and the library for reading and study. The different utensils in these regions are for some use, and are either in or out of their proper places. This is usually taken for granted and hidden under the 'obvious'. But when something is lacking or out of place, it may suddenly loom into view. The tools of a given region have a bearing on one another, the chair bears on the desk and the desk on the paper for writing whole regions bear on one another, as the procuring of raw materials bears on manufacturing, which is for distribution. All these different regions are for the use of man who orders them in
different ways, depending on the ultimate objects of his devotion. Hence the world order, or cultural pattern, of one people will differ from that of another, and in those where personal freedom is respected, the world of one individual may differ radically from that of another.

This is the world of history into which we are born, in which we exist and engage ourselves in our chosen projects, and in which we die. It is the world of ordinary language with its wealth of concrete usage, its obscurities, and ambiguities. The exploration of this world and the non-technical language in which it is interpreted and expressed, though long neglected, is now proceeding throughout the western world in different ways. The reflection of the Lebenswelt, in which we actually exist and work out our individual styles of life and thought, goes back, as we have noted, at least as far as Plato's warning against the cave and its unstable confusions, and the advice he gave philosophers to leave the cave in their disciplined reflections to find abstract and objective explanations. This advice was followed all too literally in ancient and medieval times. In the modern period, epistemological arguments absorbed the attention of philosophers, and served to discourage the serious exploration of the world of our existence. Our knowledge of the things and persons around us was attacked as distorted and biased. This knowledge was finally whittled down and discredited to such a degree that
doubts were raised as to whether there was any external lebenswelt at all. As a result of this, Philosophy became isolated from real life as a special academic discipline with restricted technical concerns of its own.

Though the life world, as explicated by Husserl, and later expounded by Merleau Ponty, is indeed the humanworld, yet it is by no means merely subjective. Far from being a private phantasy, it is precisely the 'real' for us, real not only in the sense that it exists for others but also in the sense that it resists us and forms the basic limits of our active powers. We cannot change it merely by imagining it otherwise, but only by matching our imagination with real possibilities and allying ourselves with the predetermined structures of reality. Husserl, for one, was always a realist in the sense that he sought always to distinguish the object of experience from the experience we have of it. But the life-world is still the human world, the world for us, of which it would be non-sensical to say simply that it exists without an essential relationship to man's experience, just as subjectivity is essentially world related and would be nothing without its world. Subjectivity and objectivity, insofar as we can speak of them in isolation, are abstract poles that we can separate only in thought. Both derive from a more fundamental nexus of relations in which consciousness and world form a system of

interlacings, to use Merleau Ponty's words.

vii) Life-world: The Project of Phenomenology as Transcendental Philosophy

The above contention suggests that, the concept of the life-world is the fulfilment of the project of phenomenology as transcendental philosophy; the search for the universal, underlying structures of experience but from its inception, both in Husserl and in his successors, the concept has been linked with another idea which threatens to compromise the transcendental project and may cause us to question all we thought, we have gained. In the 'crisis', where the concept of the life-world is elaborated, we find Husserl increasingly preoccupied with the historical character of all experience and thought, and of philosophical inquiry in particular.

Subjectivity is seen as essentially historical, that is, as caught up in a network of prejudices inherited from its social and historical background. The life-world itself is characterized as a historical world, though Husserl does not make clear what he means by this. If it means that the most fundamental level of our experience, even of our perceptual experience, is a function of our historical situation, then the concept of the life-world we were outlining before has been displaced and transformed.

viii) Lebenswelt as an Intersubjective World

The Lebenswelt is an intersubjective world because we

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implicitly assume the existence and similar experiences of interacting individuals\textsuperscript{7}. It therefore has an historico-cultural connotation: the 'idea' of the world we prereflectively experience in our everyday lives is a product of the culture and times, we live in. The 'Renaissance world', for example, includes these everyday experiences usual to people who lived at this time in history, combined with the unquestioned world-view readily available to them. This type of mundane consideration of the world is native to the cultural sciences, which deal only with particular empirical examples of human communities. The cultural sciences are not alone in their intimate relationship to the 'Lebenswelt', although this fact has been obscured. Modern science, at least since Galileo, has idealized nature and treated it with idealized concepts obfuscating the role subjectivity plays in constituting knowledge. In the minds of contemporary people, the 'Lebenswelt' has been superceded by these idealized concepts created by natural scientists. In fact, the concepts of science, logic and mathematics, occur within, and are justified and validated in the evidences of, the 'Lebenswelt'. All theoretical truth, contrary to the idealized version of science prevalent today, if founded upon such evidences. 'Objective sciences asks questions only on the ground of this world's existing in advance through

\textsuperscript{7} Gorman: The Dual Vision.
pre-scientific life. Like all "praxis", objective science presupposes the being of this world. In other words, all the products and theories of natural science presuppose those non-reflective acts of consciousness through which the 'Lebenswelt' appears as pre-given and prior to scientific activity. Scientific knowledge is therefore relative, unknowingly built on the foundation of the 'Lebenswelt'.

To clarify the real meaning of 'objectivity', we must turn our awareness towards the 'Lebenswelt' and uncover the vital role that prereflective consciousness plays in constituting what we believe in 'science'. This discovery will substantiate the view that 'objective' laws of nature have their roots in the unquestioned world of everyday life, only the popularly accepted but entirely unfounded claim to 'objectivity' cloaks their actual status as cultural facts pertaining to the 'Lebenswelt'. The 'Lebenswelt', not the world of natural science, is therefore the most universal of themes to investigate. "Lebenswelt", as would be seen, includes all the objects, persons and events which we encounter in our experience. All the different worlds divided in regions are appearing as figures at the background of one common life-world.

The life-world as one world common to all of us seems to have its characteristics: it is immanent in the various

worlds, but yet it transcends them all. The method of reduction opened up a realm of pure experience consisting of constitutional acts of our intentionality. This reduction also helped Husserl to find the solution to his problem of the foundation, the very central mission of Husserl's phenomenology. This leads Husserl to his "first philosophy" in the sense of a philosophy of fundamental principles. The term "first philosophy" at this level expresses what we understand in phenomenology by experience in a non-empirical sense of pure intentionality. It is this aspect of 'search' which is called "radical". But reduction also shows that our consciousness is essentially related to the world we live in. The field of our lived experiences populating our life-world is not brought forth or created after the performance of reduction, it is always there and reduction makes the importance of the life world clear. All that happens is that we now see and live this world of experience in its meaning. To see the life-world in its meaning means that it is constituted in a higher experience which is nothing else but the constituting consciousness. The life-world is not foreign to the phenomenological reflection; it is rather the manifestation in which the transcendental phenomenology of Husserl culminates. To discover the constituting performances of the transcendental subjectivity means to lay

bare the ways in which the life-world is constituted.

The concept of the life-world reaches its terminological fixation clearly in his "Experience and judgment" and "Crisis". Although the origin of the idea of the life world may be traced back to the "Ideen" wherein Husserl speaks of working out the concept of a natural world, still the life-world is systematically thematized mainly in the above mentioned books of Husserl. The life-world, considered systematically represents the opposite pole of the so-called objective world of the sciences. Irrespective of the polarity - prescientific and the scientific world-, the life-world is nothing but the most common world appearing to us phenomenologically.

ix) Life-World as a Field of Actions and Thoughts

The life-world, according to Husserl, is the most familiar natural field of all our actions and thoughts. It is the stage of all our performances, theoretical as well as practical. It is given to us as a universal field\(^\text{10}\). This universal field means the universal horizon capable of endless extension. To live is to live already and always in a life-world. One of the main lines of argument of Husserl's "Crisis" is its attempt to show that, as over against the dominant tradition of western thought, it is the prescientific, prepredicative horizon of the life-world

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\(^{10}\) Husserl, Crisis, The Hague : Martinus Nijhoff, P.145f.
which is prior to all constructions of the objective sciences and is more comprehensive. Such an understanding of the concept of the life-world is corroborated by the independent researches of such thinkers as James, Hume, Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger who all have their own points of departure. The phenomenological investigations of the "Crisis" deal with and discuss the problem of the life-world in relation to its fundamental structures.\textsuperscript{11}

The life-world is prescientific for it is there prior to all theoretical scientific activities; It is the basic premise. Husserl recognizes this as the universal horizon in which we ourselves, our acts and our intentions with all their manifold ramifications have their being. It is in this universal horizon that all the different types of beings appear. It is one and the same world differing in its various modes of giveness. We all, as scientist or laymen, live in this life-world, and all our diverse questions are put to it. Husserl speaks of the life-world as the "forgotten sense - foundation of natural science"\textsuperscript{12}. In his criticism of Kant, Husserl speaks of the life-world as the implicit presupposition of Kant's philosophy.\textsuperscript{13} The life-world is the most concrete and the most common point of


\textsuperscript{12} Ibid, P.48.

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid, P.105.
reference. This world has its own unknown structures which are discovered by means of concrete scientific researchers.\(^{14}\)

The very concept of our scientific induction, Husserl tells us, is rooted in the prescientific "inductivity" of the life-world. This is what Husserl terms as our "day-to-day induction"\(^ {15}\). He also speaks of a style of causality which is a characteristic of the life-world. Our life-world is the realm of evidence which is more original.\(^ {16}\) The life-world is the world immediately present to us, and all over lived acts, intentions and objects in it are no constructions of a scientific method. The essence of our life world is thus to be sharply distinguished from the beings whose appearances are just made possible within this life-world; it is a unique world of our lived-experiences and can never be completely concretely worked out into a set pattern with fixed principles. There seems to be a relationship of "figure" and "ground" between all our different worlds, including the ideal worlds, and our life-world.

x) **Life-world as the World of Manifold Human Experiences**

The life-world is the basic world of all our experiences. As the premise of all our experiences, it is

15. Ibid, P.50.
not an object of experience among other objects. The life-world is the unmoving ground, basis of all our knowledge regarding the movement of our earth. The earth does not move to our immediate experience; the knowledge that it rotates stems not form our immediate experience, but from our scientific explorations. Husserl thus speaks of a "turning round" of "copernican revolution" which consists in the insight that all our experiences necessarily presuppose an unmoving ground.

Husserl distinguishes between the life-world and the so-called "objective world" constructed by the sciences through idealization and mathematization of nature. The worlds of the different sciences are ideal constructions and require the life-world as the model - giving base. The facts populating the life-world are different from the scientific facts. Whereas the facts of our life-world are immediately present to us and are given directly to our immediate consciousness, the scientific facts remain abstract constructions and can be understood only when we follow the methodological dictates of those sciences.

One of the most intriguing passages in Husserl's "Crisis" is the passage wherein he discusses the problem

18. Ibid, P.141f.
of the relativity of the different worlds, say the world of the Chinese, of the Indians and of the Europeans. All these different worlds are lived by them and consist of lived experiences. None can be relegated to a sheer abstraction. It is here that the concept of the life world as the world common to all of us shows its weakness. This weakness consists in our not being able to relegate any of the worlds counted above to a fiction or to a purely private world. Is then the life world common to all of us itself a fiction in the sense that we hardly meet it in our life? Husserl of course knows and admits that our worlds differ in so far as we all have our own points of departure conditioned differently. But when questions are asked regarding the fictional or non-fictional character of this or that particular world, of this or that particular culture, these questions themselves are not put and asked within the limited horizon of any one of the particular worlds. They are asked within the universal field of our common discourse.

It is wrong to maintain that we can arrive at such a universal field by way of abstraction or generalization. This world of common discourse is prior to all such processes and is presupposed by the different worlds belonging to different historico-cultural surroundings. It is truer if we understand the life-world as an accomplishment of a particular situation of our
consciousness.19 Thus the life-world is not just the raw world of uncultivated nature; it is rather the world as shaped and worked out by all of us.20 The different worlds of the Chinese, Indians and Europeans appear as figure at the background of the universal field of common discourse.

A fictional analysis of the life-world fails to take into account the most important fact that all the different worlds themselves presuppose an unmoving base as the common ground making all communication possible. It is true that we are objects among other objects within this life-world. But when Husserl speaks of the constitution of the life-world, he brings in his concept of the constituting ego which is an instance of pure theoretical reflection.

xi) **Life-World and the Scientific Practices**

Since the life-world is pre-given and is prior to all activities, the universe of objective science requires the life-world in order to get an ultimate clarification. The life-world is the unquestioned presupposition of all scientific practices, our tools used in our experiments form part of our life-world. The concept of the life-world does not include only the actual mundane existence; it is rather the world continually present to our experience, and all the different worlds, actual as well as possible, real as well

as ideal. When we speak of "nature", "bodies" and so on within our life-world, we do not mean the idealized and formalized nature of the objective sciences but the nature given in direct and immediate experience.

The term "nature" as used here has a two fold meaning: nature of the objective science not given to our immediate experience and nature as the structure of passivity of our constituting transcendental subjectivity. Husserl speaks in this context of a "Naturseite" of our transcendental subjectivity. The life-world is always one and this is an unquestioned foundation of our common experience. The possibility of our communication needs the life-world as the most common field of our discourse.21 The life-world is not non-historical; it possesses a historical connotation. The life-world is also relative to a certain society at a given time; it has its own history. It is this historical nature of the life-world which explains the differences between the world of a mythico-magical society and that of our modern society. As mundane existences, we are part of the life-world, and this points to a type of naturality which expresses the pre-reductive character of this judgement. But we are also subject with respect to the life-world. It derives its meaning from our collective social mental life. The society of "egos" in their communicative relationship is

the absolute foundation of the world.

Our life-world is thus a collective accomplishment and comprises all our diverse cultural products. The life-world is not something static; it is no entity beyond all change and modification. In and through the interplay of our activities it undergoes modification. Life-world is historical in character and is dynamically relative to the living community. Since the life-world is no ideal construction it is hard to thematize it within the methodological sphere of objective science. For, the methodology of objective science our life-world is too "opaque" and Husserl realizes this very well. For a systematic exploration of the life-world the phenomenological method of description is the most suitable approach. The problem of the life-world, in its wider connotation, includes not only a description of what it is, but also an exploration and a scientific investigation into its invariant structures. Such an investigation results in working out a science of the life-world. Our exploration with regard to the invariant structures of the life-world really points to the problem of an a priori of the life-world. When Husserl mentions the concept of a science of the life-world, he does not mean a science of Galilean style in which the life-world would be described as a purely subjective construction. The science of the life-world aims at working out the constituting moments of the society of
our constituting egos.

xii) Life-World and the Idea of Science

In order to reach such a systematic exploration of the life-world, we need to perform first of all an "Epoche" concerning the whole field of "objective science". This of course does not mean ignoring the importance of the objective science. The scientific achievements are not denied and while performing such an "Epoche" we do remain interested in the universe of science. All that we aim at is the suspension of this world; we no longer participate in it actively. We refrain from being involved in it. Thus we reach the attitude of "disinterestedness" which is no callous indifference. The truth of objective science is of course all the time "hidden" to us. Husserl says that the life-world is naturally given to all of us as persons within the horizon of our fellow-beings, that means, it is present in each and every connection, communication and relation we have with our fellow human beings. It is present to us as "the" world.²² It is the most common world presupposed by all the life-worlds differing from society to society, from culture to culture. The life-world is not a world among the other worlds; it is the premise of all of them. It is difficult to maintain that the idea of science of the life-world can be free from all formalism and abstraction.

The idea of a science of the life-world points in fact to the most radical point of termination in the phenomenological search for an ultimate realm. This realm is the transcendental subjectivity. But the phenomenological reflection does not divide the world into two: the empirical and the transcendental - genetic. All that it does is to comprehend and elucidate the empirical - natural transcendentally. In other words, this means that the world we live in forms itself in the genesis of the transcendental ego. Thus there is no duality of human nature either for there are not two types of men: one sensuous and the other pure. The reflection teaches us further that man is a "transcendental I" and all the psycho-physical processes and occurrences like stimuli, affections, impressions, perceptions, acts of will, acts of thought etc. are the transcendental functions. In the "Crisis", Husserl clearly speaks of the identity between the "empirical I" and the transcendental one.23

In "Crisis", Husserl proposes to work out a science of the life-world, and he speaks of an "exposition of the problem of the science of the life-world". Such a science, he further tells us, can be thematized in a two fold way: the life world can be explored as the partial problem within the general problem of the objective science and it can also

be thematized independently in the sense of a universal problem of philosophy. Husserl himself is more in favour of the latter way of thematizing the life-world.

Our brief exposition of the concept of the life-world has made its relation to the objective world of science clear. The life-world serves as the foundation for the scientific world. The only justification our concept of empirical induction possesses lies in the inductive style of the life-world.

The idea of a science of the life-world, first introduced in the "Crisis" as a postulate, culminates in the science of the transcendental subjectivity which works out its own world-constituting performances. The universe of true being is inseparably related to the universe of possible consciousness. Husserl speaks of the "concretion of the transcendental subjectivity" in relation to the constitution of the world. The fundamental philosophical importance of the life-world cannot be grasped if we remain within the fixed static schema "life-world - objective world of the sciences". It evades such a schema and Husserl himself admists it in "Crisis".

In his later writings Husserl calls the transcendental field of consciousness the Lebenswelt and he defines

26. Ibid, (34, e) and f.
phenomenology as Ruckgang auf die Lebenswelt, a going back to the pre-predicative or prethematic region of experience. For Husserl, consciousness is a *welterfahrendes leben*, life-experiencing-the world, and the sense of this definition includes not only the intentional, world-directed nature of consciousness but also the sense that implies the strict correlativity of subject and object in experience. The ego and the world are given in any experience as the constituent subject-object poles of this experience.

On the other hand, phenomenology is clearly not a realism or an empiricism if by that one means that meaning and value are to be found in "things" independently of any reference to human consciousness. It is true to say that phenomenology is not a description of the "real world" but it is a description of the experience of the perceived world as the primary reality. If by "real world" one understands the world minus subjectivity or the world as totality independent of and prior to any relationship to consciousness, it would be nonsensical to speak of a phenomenological elucidation of the "real world". On the other hand consciousness does not create the world since it is experience of the world. What consciousness adds to the "real world" is a relationship to itself, and it is in terms of the directional, intentional structure of consciousness that we can speak of the a priority of consciousness: it is the subject which experiences the world and not vice versa.
The world has no meaning in itself because meaning always involves consciousness. But the constitutive intentionality of consciousness should not be understood as the creation of meaning and value ex nihilo, or out of itself alone, or, much less, the creation of the world as such. Consciousness is constitutive of the world in the sense that it objectifies the world, differentiates and "constitutes" objects within the world, and that it is in and through this essential objectifying activity of consciousness that it experiences itself as subject.

Thus, for Husserl, the world as the noematic correlate of experience is as apodictically certain as the ego; those who place all apodicticity on the side of the cogito have a non-Husserlian, i.e., a non intentional, notion of consciousness. But to say that the ego and the world are apodictically certain and always given together, with the same evidence, in experience, is not to say that either is ever known adequately or completely. In the words of Merleau Ponty: we can have absolute certitude of the world in general but only relative certitude about any particular thing in the world.\(^\text{27}\) The world, in short, is given in any experience as the ultimate horizon or ground of experience, as the ultimate meaning - structure in which any given phenomenon is inserted and it is understood.

\(^\text{27}\) Maurice Merleau Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, P.344.
The life-world is experienced, prior to all scientific judgements, as "extended" is space and in time. The experienced space and time are not the constructed concepts of objective science; they are given directly. We encounter in the life-world corporeal things, bodies which are not the defined bodies of the natural sciences. We have already noted that the life-world shows its own causal style which is characterised by a typical uniformity, regularity. It has its own "habits" and "habitual forms" of behaviour. The things of the life-world behave similarly under similar circumstances. Another invariant structure of the life-world is its native inductivity which works as the premise for the further development and construction of our infinite scientific induction.

xiii) The Life-World vs The Objective Universe

Every mode of knowing has its own perspective, or range, within which it places what it is able to know. The horizon of that original, revealing power which is expressed in our ordinary language is the world.

Objective reason and science have another perspective by which everything, including human history, can be observed in a certain way. In this perspective, things are seen as objects out there before the mind from a detached point of view. An attempt is made to abstract from bias and from "Subjective" interest of every kind, the observer trying to see only what anyone would see, and to recognize
only what could be verified by other impersonal observers of the same kind. What can be observed and analyzed in this way belongs to the horizon of nature, or the objective universe, as we may call it. Since man can be regarded from this point of view, it is often held that he himself and the whole of his existence can be eventually included within such a frame.

Those who defend this theory use the term subjective in referring to human existence and the human Lebenswelt as inner experiences or impressions, not yet fully understood but eventually to be objectively analyzed as complex occurrences in the field of nature. This field has a spatio-temporal character, and the things of nature are in this geometric space as in a large container, as water is in the glass. Things are in this objective time as an event is dated in what we call clock time. Before analysis, this objective field is called experience. After objective analysis, it is called the objective universe, or things as they really are. Ordinarily, the perspective is forgotten. Experience is simply the seem total of experiences; the universe simply what there is - all the things there are.

I am in this world not merely as an extended object is in a spatial container. I am in the world not only spatially but also temporally as in a field of care, as a child is in school or a soldier in the service. I am engaged in this world, and its structure varies with different forms of care.
which are subject to choice. Thus we speak of the businessman's world, the artist's world, and the disturbed worlds of those we call mentally ill, which have now been revealed by psychiatric analysis. The different world views which have been worked out critically in the history of philosophy are an expression of this freedom of world constitution. But here we must distinguish between those which are merely secondary intellectual constructions and those primary modes in which the author has been able to live and to exist. For most of us, and I include myself, the primary world in which we actually exist is different in varying degrees from that which we consciously profess, and has been worked out uncritically, and largely subconsciously, by a primary mode of thinking under cultural control.

The world is the horizon of that way of understanding which belongs to our daily existence and to our common speech. Science also has its background, or horizon, but this has a distinctive character of its own. For me to understand something for myself is in the concrete means for me to give it a place in the order of meaning, not necessarily an organic whole, which constitutes my version of the world. The field of nature which underlines the objects of science may be neutral to value, but the life-world is pervaded by meaning and value, as is our ordinary speech. The world horizon is spatial as well as temporal,
though it has now been shown that its modes of space and
time are different from those of an objective perspective.
Lived time is not the same as the clock time by which it can
be measured, and the oriented space of the life-world is
not the same as geometric space. I myself, including not
only my observable acts and utterances, but my innermost
thoughts and feelings as well, am in this world, which has a
place for what we call the subjective as well as the
objective. Indeed, this world-field is knit together by
such overarching meanings as being, knowing, history, and
morning itself, which embrace both poles of this
distinction.

Since James's revolutionary investigations in the field
of what he called the philosophy of pure and experience and
Husserl's related discoveries in the field of what he called
phenomenology, I believe that many important advances have
been made. The disciplined exploration of the life-world
has actually been inaugurated; a really radical empiricism
is now under way. In the first place, it is now possible to
hope for the coming of that foundational discipline for the
human sciences of which Dilthey dreamed in the last century,
though the name "philosophical anthropology" would seem more
appropriate to this discipline than what he suggested a
descriptive and typological Psychology.

In the second place, we must remember that the
divergent worlds of different tribes, peoples, and
individuals open into the world, which includes all these versions and their histories, all the hidden aspects of things and persons we know that we do not know, and mysteries that we know we can never comprehend. Traditional thought was mistaken in thinking that it could pass directly from the objective study of things to the world. Such an objective path leads to the very subjectivism it is trying to avoid. We cannot escape our subjectivity by simply forgetting it, or by placing it as the "Subjective" in an objective frame. This way is no longer possible for us. The only way to what was called metaphysics is through anthropology - the only way to the world as it is, is through man. A primary task of philosophy is to keep our minds open to this world by tentative speculation in the light of such evidence as there is together with a constant critique of all forms of onto-logical dogmatism.

Finally, in the third place, we may hope for this radical empiricism that it may help professional philosophy, as it is already beginning to do in our time, to escape from its narrow confinement in special technical procedures, and once again to get into closer touch with the actual philosophic process which is always proceeding in the lives of living men. In this way, it may once again achieve vital contacts with art, literature, and religion, and with the other living institutions of our culture. This does not mean the abandonment of all discipline, nor of the most arduous
socratic discipline, which must be renewed with each on
coming generation, of stimulating, clarifying, and purifying
the spontaneous, primary reflection of living men, and in
thus helping to keep human freedom alive.

The life world is a distinct horizon with an order of
its own. This can no more be reduced to the abstract
perspectives of science than can the open structures and
meanings of ordinary language be reduced to the abstract
grammar of an ideal language or logic. The two worlds are
quite different.

xiv) Notion of Lebenswelt and Merleau-Ponty's Understanding

Merleau-Ponty's most explicit and most significant
statement about the meaning of phenomenology was his preface
to the 'phenomenology of perception'. It combines a unique,
reaffirmation with a reinterpretation of Husserl's
phenomenology. It brings with the frank admission that no
commonly agreed definition of phenomenology exists, and that
phenomenology has practically become all things to all
people. But this does not prevent his asserting that
"phenomenology can be practiced and recognized as a mode of
thought or as a style, it exists as a movement before having
arrived at a full philosophical consciousness. It is in
ourselves that we shall find the unity and the true sense of
phenomenology. Phenomenology is accessible only to a
phenomenological method". Such pronouncements make it clear
that Merleau Ponty claimed for himself the right to
interpret phenomenology in the light of his own insights. Yet he began by discussing each one of the major features of phenomenology as developed by Husserl -

i) Phenomenological description, originally an attempt to go to the "things" themselves and to give a scientifically rigorous account of them, means to M. Ponty primarily a protest against science, understood in the sense of an objective study of the things and of their external causal relations, in favour of a return to the Lebenswelt, the world as met in lived experience in the sense of later Husserl. Yet by implication Merleau-Ponty refused to follow Husserl in his reflective analysis designed to trace back life-world to its roots in the subject. "The return to the things themselves differs absolutely from the idealistic return to consciousness. The world is here before any analysis I can make of it. They real must be described, not constructed or constituted". There upon, with obvious allusion to Husserl's climactic quotation from St. Augustine at the end of the Paris lectures that one has to "Turn into oneself : truth dwells only in the inner man". What Merleau-Ponty makes clear is that, there is there is no such thing as an inner man: "Man is within the world, it is in the world that he recognizes himself". What I find in myself is a subject vowed to the world.
ii) Phenomenological reduction, with its bracketing of the reality of the natural world, consists in the level of phenomenological idealism, for Husserl. However, for Merleau Ponty, it becomes the device which permits us to discover the spontaneous surge of the life-world. Merleau Ponty refers this interpretation to Eugen Fink's discussion of the phenomenological reduction in an article which, to be sure, had Husserl's summary ratification, and in which Fink had spoken of the "awakening of an immense amazement at the mysteriousness of the belief in the world" as the foundation for the operation of suspending it. Merleau Ponty sees in this account of the fundamental amazement the "best formula of the reduction" itself. Hence "the great lesson of reduction is the impossibility of complete reduction". Thus, oddly enough, in Merleau Ponty's hands the phenomenological reduction becomes the means of refuting constitutive or phenomenological idealism.

iii) Similarly, the eidetic reduction, for Husserl, is the way from existence to essence, becomes in Merleau Ponty's hands a "means" rather than a "end", a "net" designed to catch "like fish and palpitating algae" the living relations of experience. Phenomenology, as Merleau Ponty saw it, attempts to catch the facts in their uniqueness prior to all linguistic formulations.
Eidetic reduction helps us indirectly in this attempt by letting the world stand out against the background of the essences. It embodies the "resolution to make the world appear as it is before reducing it to subjective states or thoughts". This reversal of the phenomenology of essences in a way which makes phenomenology actually subservient to the study of existent fact is clearly in line with the shift of the existentialists from essence to existence.

iv) Intentionality - according to Husserl- the fundamental structure of consciousness, and its main theme and clue to the theory of constitution, assumes a new role in Merleau-Ponty's pattern. Its main function is to reveal the world as ready-made and already "there", very much in the way Sartre had used it in his "ontological proof" of transphenomenal being. Ultimately Merleau Ponty aims at an "enlarged" conception of intentionality, which applies not only to our conscious acts but underlies our entire relations to the world and our "comportment" toward others.

v) "The most important attainment of phenomenology is without doubt to have combined extreme subjectivism and extreme objectivism in the idea of the world or of rationality". This final claim for phenomenology contains again a momentous reinterpretation of Husserl's conception. Husserl's clear objective had
been to find the ultimate foundation of all knowledge in pure subjectivity. Merleau Ponty's interpretation shifted decisively the center of gravity in phenomenology. It denounced by implication an appeal to subjectivity and attempted to combine the subjective with the objective approach through something which might be called "bipolar phenomenology". There is also a significant difference in the interpretation of the role of Merleau Ponty's unifying conception of "world". For, Husserl's philosophy was certainly not world-centered, even though it became increasingly world-based when he decided on the fresh start from the description of the Lebenswelt.

xv) Life-World-Re-Oriented as the Human World

From the Husserlian point of view we now have to raise the problem of access. Whether we concern ourselves with the universe as constructed and interpreted in the sciences of modern style or, for that matter, of any style, or with the life-world as directly experienced, or with whatever else, it is through acts of consciousness and through such acts alone that what we deal with is given and presented to us and thus becomes accessible to us. In the case of the life-world and whatever it comprises, the acts in question for Merleau-Ponty pertain to perceptual consciousness in both its originally and derivative modes. As regards the scientific universe, allowance must be made not only for
perceptual experience but also for specific acts of conceptualization, idealization, and formalization which presuppose perceptual experience, because they are founded upon it in a way.

In raising the problem of access to "reality" in whatever sense the term is understood - we come to discern the pre eminent role played by perceptual consciousness. On the one hand, it is required as an avenue of access to reality; it is in fact the only avenue. On the other hand, by its very nature, perceptual consciousness does yield that access. Existential philosophy is often credited with having accounted for the immediacy of our contact with the world and mundane existence, for our being "at" the world. Such immediacy of contact, however as we have shown else where - follows from Husserl's theory of the intentionality of consciousness, especially perceptual intentionality. The novelty which is original with existentialism consists in the emphasis on involvement and commitment. However, for involvement in any of its forms and modes to be a possible topic of discussion and even to be experienced or "lived" acts of consciousness are required through which the involved subject becomes aware of his being involved and of the specific form and sense which his involvement assumes in a particular situation.

Whether we concern ourselves with the life-world along the lines of Husserl's orientation or, following the
direction of existentialism and philosophical anthropology, deal with human existence within the life-world, in raising the problem of access we are led to considering consciousness and its acts: acts through which the life-world presents itself to us and is interpreted in the sense it has for the socio-historical group to which we belong, further acts through which we conceive of ourselves as mundane existents, as human beings in a sense which is congruous with that in which we interpret our life-world. Acts of consciousness are in play in all our conduct, in all our doings, involvements, commitments, hopes, fears, actions and projects. What matters in the present context is the reference to consciousness as the universal and only medium of access. By this token, the life-world and all that it comprises, man as a mundane existent, all his modes of existing and conducting himself in the life-world reveal themselves as correlates of acts and operations of consciousness and of multifarious concatenations, Syntheses, and systematic organization of those acts and operations. With respect to the life-world as well as with regard to any domain of being, the task arises of setting forth and analyzing the corresponding and correlated "equivalent of consciousness", (Bewusst seins equivalent) an expression which might well serve as a succinct formulation of the program of Husserl's constitutive phenomenology.

Adopting and appropriating the supreme law of
philosophy, we are led to consciousness as the ultimate ground of all our awareness and knowledge, of all validation and invalidation, of all founding and grounding.

As a result of our discussion, the discovery of the life-world cannot be considered as the disclosure of the ultimate philosophical dimension but, at the most, as a stepping stone on the way towards the disclosure. We may say that with the discovery of the life-world, the penultimate but not the ultimate philosophical dimension is reached, the ultimate one being consciousness under the aspect of its transcendental function.