Log

Disorienting Phenomenology

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Husserl and The Problem Of Worldliness

Edmund Husserl introduces the word *world* in the second sentence of his *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (1913), thereby emphasizing its prominence as a theoretical proposition in his thinking. In asking what Husserl might mean by the word, I could take a broad view of his writings, but instead I have chosen to read *Ideas* sentence by sentence from the beginning, interpreting them as I go to at least begin a conversation. The subtext of my discussion is a broader exploration of the status of that mysterious word in colonial-era thinking. Nineteenth-century European philosophy never developed a critique of the concept, so one has to chase after the repressed to make philosophy speak despite itself.

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1. German quotations are from Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*, 1913. English translations are from Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. W.R. Boyce Gibson (New York: Collier, 1972).

The first sentence of Husserl's *Ideas* reads: *Natürliche Erkenntnis hebt an mit der Erfahrung und verbleibt in der Erfahrung.*[1] (Natural knowledge begins with experience and remains within experience.) *Natürliche Erkenntnis* are not just first words, they are also last words: Husserl's summation of philosophy's goals and an indication of philosophy's limits. *Natürliche Erkenntnis* is a manifesto in two words.

Erkenntnis does not translate as "knowledge" as easily as one might think. It means something like "that which is identified as knowledge," or perhaps better, "that which *self*-identifies as knowledge." *Erkenntnis* is the objectification of the known by an *un*known agent, or at least by an agent that is individual and yet trans-individual. Adding *natürliche* to *Erkenntnis*, however, raises the question of what would be meant by *Erkenntnis* that, if left alone, would presumably veer toward some unpronounced "unnatural," and this means that because *natürliche* is the first word of the sentence, there is no mistaking the looming presence of "unnatural" as a potent threat to the very possibility of knowledge.

What, then, is this unsignified unnatural?

Though an adjective, *natürliche* is proactive in its own right as it purposefully refuses to point upward to some abstract Nature. It takes knowledge out from under the spell of some larger metaphysical presence. In this, *natürliche* contrasts with Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* and his attempt to organize nature into a grand universal system. Husserl's true target, however, is Spinoza, who, shockingly for his age, argued that god was essentially equivalent to Nature. Furthermore, god had to be studied as something separate and distinct from the human. An anthropomorphic god was no god at all. Spinoza's god, if one can use that word, was remote and, above all, voiceless. Why would god speak Hebrew to some, and Greek, Arabic, or Latin to others? The Jews excommunicated him, Roman Catholics famously portrayed him as the devil incarnate, and even the Protestant authorities of Amsterdam were suspicious. On several occasions, Spinoza was in danger of being arrested or worse.

All subsequent philosophers, tied as they were to the lifelines of academia, had to disprove or at least supersede Spinoza in some way by allowing a more conventional god back into the system. But for Husserl the damage was done. God was in essence unnaturalized – cut off from the human realities that needed it most.

Kant, for Husserl, only made it worse, since Kant basically placed the issue of god outside of philosophy in the separate-but-equal discipline of theology. For Husserl, it was an all-too-convenient compromise. Husserl was no theist, but locating the divine in the domain of specialists was clearly yet another part of his implied unnatural, since from his perspective it forced Kant to reduce the world of mankind to little more than a social construction. Indeed, Kant famously argued in his *Critique of Judgment* that mankind was "destined for society."[2] He called it *sensus communis*, or "sense of community."[3] *Sensus communis* had two readings, Kant stated, one nonphilosophical and the other more elevated. People know the first simply as "common sense," whereas the other – implied in the Latin – is more theoretical and learned. Kant's point is that the two are related; the high and the low are figurations of each other, meaning that the low should not simply be dismissed as lacking in the proclamations of Reason's superiority. To get these two zones of reality to communicate, Kant devised Three Maxims: Maxim One: think for yourself; Maxim Two: put yourself in the place of others; Maxim Three: endlessly repeat maxims One and Two. Even though this allows society to stitch itself together, moving from a *sense* of community to

2. Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgment*, trans. J. H. Bernard (London: Macmillan, 1914), 174.
3. For added discussion, see Mark Jarzombek "Kant, Modernity, and the Absent Public," in *The Missed Encounter of Radical Philosophy with Architecture*, ed. Nadir Lahiji (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 69–78.

real communities, it forces the Self to be split into an "I" and "You" – a separation that can be overcome by a range of inter-actions, from the casual to the more formal, the full scope of which produces the need for a systematic study of the human known as anthropology. In his *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798), Kant gives us some of his own "anthro-pological" observations. It is best, so he discovered at his own dinner parties, to serve wine instead of beer, wine being good for maintaining a spirit of joviality, and beer, according to him, having the opposite effect. This type of anthropology, exercised not as philosophy but as part and parcel of what it means to be human, would allow the human to overcome the rather terrifying split between "I" (Maxim One) and "not I" (Maxim Two). The problem, however, was that the resulting disciplinary project required humanity to delay the processes of Reason while gathering information about themselves and their habits, even if hopefully to use that information to cre-ate a better society. One can say that Kant put the majesty of Reason on the doorstep of some imagined department of anthropology where all humans are in essence transformed into lifetime researchers of humankind.

For Husserl, this meant that philosophy had unmoored itself from some "natural" understanding of the human. We have to begin, he implies, with the natural condition of anthropo, not displace the problem of knowledge into anthropology and wait patiently for scholars to tell us who we are. The cumulative alienation of the human from itself – and its dependency on the delay mechanisms of expertise cultures – allows this urgent call for "naturalness" to make its belated, restorative appearance. In other words, for Husserl, the presumed naturalness of knowledge has to come built into the system and not be constructed either as a grand exterior-ity – that is, as Nature with a capital N – or as an extended process of social contact.

From Husserl's point of view, *Erkenntnis* – in the condi-tion of the Enlightenment's extended failure – thus requires a semiotic supplement to protect it not just from the vari-ous naturalized unnaturals of Reason, but also from philoso-phy's un-natural colonization of disciplinary territory. The "unnatural" that structures the Enlightenment study of man-kind – hidden in the teleology of Reason – is for Husserl not so hidden after all. Though unpronounced, it is figured forth by the word *natural*, even if as a consequence it leaves that "natural" oddly empty in its meaning.

What, then, is the content of this "natural knowledge?" The answer is *Erfahrung* (experience), a venerable philosophical term used by Kant and others. But here, too, we have to read Husserl against the grain of missing signifiers. At the end of the 19th century, the use of the word *Erfahrung* was challenged by the introduction of a new word for experience: *Erlebnis* (from *leben*, or life). Husserl's experience does not point to this new, modernist vitality-of-the-subject. Instead, his *Erfahrung* is the classical experience-over-time. The word derives from *fahren*, to drive, and so implies something on the order of a mature adult who has gone the distance, not of a young person who might get a thrill out of something novel. But Husserl's *Erfahrung* has little to do with how the word was used by Enlightenment philosophers. For Kant, experiences cohere into what he called an *opus*, a consolidation of creativity into a product that has the appearance of nature but is fully man-made. Though the Kantian *opus* can only be made by a genius, it is not an isolated museological product but a root system from which subsequent efforts by other people can grow. In this way a community is produced, orienting itself around its creative class. Husserl's *Erfahrung* steps back from the foreclosures of the "I" into these types of cultural activities. It is continuously at work and yet it has no mandate to perform outside of itself. It "remains *within* experience," meaning that it cannot step out into society's regulatory space and still remain "experience."

Husserl uses the verb *anheben* to solve the problem of what *Erkenntnis* does as it moves toward *Erfahrung*. Translating *anheben* (literally *hebt an*) as "begins" is not wrong, but Husserl did not use verbs like *anfangen* (to start) or even *beginnen* (to begin). *Anheben*, which derives from *heben*, to lift, is a rather arcane word that implies an internal, almost organic growth to knowledge as it "heaps itself up." It neither begins nor ends, and most importantly, it has no metamorphic capacity. In other words, unlike Kant's *Erkenntnis*, which eventually ends in Reason and manifests itself in an *opus* to become operative in the world, Husserlian *Erkenntnis* possesses and develops an inner momentum that does not translate, so to speak, into an external "real."

Time is a critical component in this revisionism of experience. After all, *Erfahrung* does not produce *Erkenntnis* by itself. This only happens when *Erfahrung* "lifts itself up" high enough over time. Kant's approach to time was of a very different order. In *Was ist Aufklärung?* (What is Enlightenment?, 1784) Kant admits that developing a *sensus communis* is

4. Immanuel Kant, "Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?," *Berlinische Monatsschrift* (December, 1784): Heft 12, 481–94.

"difficult and slow to accomplish," one of the reasons being that it was multigenerational.[4] Husserl, by way of contrast, equates philosophy here with the time-scale of a human life (presumably the longer the better).

Something, however, must regulate experience to keep it from popping into the realm of concepts, cognition, abstraction, opuses, or even pedagogy. After all, *Erfahrung* should not be just a mirror of the unreflected quotidian. From Husserl's opening sentence, it is not clear what that force is, but at the end of the sentence it is palpable as an invisible dark matter emanating from the word *verbleibt*. Translating it as "remains within" misses the punch. *Verbleibt* implies a regulatory form of staying, a type of human within the human that models itself on the permanence not so much of "god" in the conventional figural sense, but of an *anthropo*-centric god, permanently attached to the very being-ness of the human. Unlike Spinoza, who saw anthropo as all that was wrong with the human – as that which tragically limits the ability to understand the divinity of Reason – Husserl, in restoring anthropo to human – each as the perfect nonresidual imaginary of the other – argues that only in the context of anthropo can the human sense the main attribute of the divine, its permanence. If Spinoza removed anthropo from the zone of the divine to protect the divine from the agonism and narcissism of anthropo-centrism, Husserl restores the link between human and anthropo by introducing a type of divinity that needs *only* to charge the system with the lightest – or perhaps the weightiest – of touches, as pure permanence.

A problem presents itself. If reason and nature are mere conveniences that resolve the crisis of meaning in a post-theological world (mediating it through the structures of science, anthropology, creativity, and geometry), then what happens when these universals are no longer in play? How exactly does experience stay *within* experience? Husserl begins to answer this question in his second sentence, where he further defines the meaning of the "natural": *In der theoretischen Einstellung, die wir die "natürliche" nennen, ist also der Gesamthorizont möglicher Forschungen mit einem Worte bezeichnet: es ist die Welt.* (Thus in that theoretical position which we call the "natural" standpoint, the total field of possible research is indicated by a *single* word: that is, the *World*.)

While his first sentence tries to separate the "natural" from the abstract Enlightenment-era idea of nature (as an

artifice of reason and its various disciplinary administrations), here, in a remarkable escalation of scale, Husserl links the natural to something larger and potentially more abstract than even Nature: "World."

So what is meant by this word *Welt*? Is there, as with "natural," a semiotic indicator to something that is left unspoken?

Husserl's *Welt* is clearly in opposition to Kant, for whom the protocols of socio-epistemological processes aim not only to familiarize man with mankind, but also ultimately to produce, as Kant famously argued, a world citizen (*Weltbürger*). To put this in context, we have to remember the impact of colonialism on the Europeans. It produced encounters internal to Europe that took place in many forms, from the import and consumption of goods – coffee, sugar, tobacco, potatoes – to encounters with foreign people and things that were culturally different. At stake in this great mash-up of destinies and realities – the blowback effect of colonialism – was not just the remote colonial subject, but also the status of European culture. For the sake of simplicity, I use the term *worldliness* to describe this continental phenomenon. By worldliness, I do not mean the standard dictionary definition of someone who is sophisticated, experienced, cosmopolitan, streetwise, or cultivated. I mean European self-defamiliarization in the colonial context. What we still somewhat carelessly call the Enlightenment was a period in which colonialism, science, industry, and war rearranged realities in profound ways. Kant had hoped – optimistically – that a powerfully designed regime of world-oriented knowledge making that privileged the genius and was supported by a heavy dose of cultural pedagogy would offset the problem of estrangement.[5] For Husserl, in essence, this was to open the door to the falsification of the "I." So just as Husserl wants to liberate the natural from Nature, he also wants to liberate World from any sociopolitical imaginaries that would be forced onto the human (the European in particular) in the fateful encounter with the outside. In removing -*bürger* from *Weltbürger* he frees *Welt* for new signification.

In this world without pluralities, Husserl is partially following Hegel, who was one of the first to criticize Kant's Maxim Two: Put yourself in the place of others. For a conservative, urban-oriented philosopher like Hegel, this was asking for trouble. The modern worldly world was dangerous and had to be reconfigured around the singularity of the "I." For Hegel, Kant's philosophy was not just naïve, it also posed a serious danger to society's core need for law and order

5. It is also in this context that one could read Kant's *Was heißt: sich im Denken orientieren* (1786).

as it more or less forced me and you to get to know each other without first asking who you are. Hegel's all-encompassing dialectic got rid of that troublesome Maxim Two, thereby also erasing the intelligence coefficient so important to Kant. The final work of the dialectic was to place *all* people of the world in a set of clear, historical frames at the inner margins of which was the modern nation-state. For Hegel, there was no need for two people to engage in some Kantian-styled exercise of knowing-the-other when the Other and the Self were basically an already-known.

But for Husserl, Hegel only managed to change Kant's "I" and "You" to "I" and "We." Furthermore, Hegel exchanged anthropology with history, thus continuing philosophy's overreach into academe. Though Husserl certainly agreed with Hegel's antipathy for Maxim Two, he believed that Hegel deadened the entire project by leading us to the grand disciplinary and museological project of *Weltgeschichte* (world history) as administered by experts and curators. Just as Husserl wants to deburden *Erkenntnis* from an obligation to anthropology, he wants to unburden the "I" from Hegel's heavy load of history and its blind obligations to civil society.

In Husserl's critique, philosophers faced the problem of worldliness by modifying the "I" in relation to a *phantom* "You," a *phantom* "We," or a *phantom* Nature, meaning that philosophy had to enter the marketplace, civic centers, universities, laboratories, parliament buildings, and factories in search for ever more potent and comprehensive answers. Philosophers became anthropologists, historians, theologians, and politicians. The cumulative result, according to Husserl, was that the "I," whether directly or indirectly, was reduced to a wishy-washy "not-I," or worse yet, to an overextended, over-empowered "We." For Husserl, Enlightenment philosophy was nothing more than a humiliation of the very thing that it so proudly discovered: the Self. Husserl's *Welt* thus removes the onerous loads that are implied by compounding *Welt* not only with *-bürger*, but also with *-geschichte*. World, as he states polemically in the sentence, is "a single word." It is also singular; world, not worlds.

The question that Husserl faces in the second part of the sentence is, What is this "I" that is given the world liberated from the bureaucracies of knowledge? More specifically, How does the Self produce content for this to-be-filled/already-filled world-oriented *Erkenntnis*? His answer is not the usual

fallback of empiricism, but rather the more dynamic idea of "research." This is a rather unexpected answer, since one might think that research must imply scientific communities and peer-reviewed publications. Not for Husserl. The authentication of the natural Self works its magic in "the total field of possible research," which could have been translated more literally as "the total-*horizon* of possible research." The difference between a field and a horizon might seem negligible, but Husserl does not want to imply a disciplinary field, which is demarcated and organized through conferences and peer-reviewed processes. To be fair, neither Kant nor Hegel could have imagined anthropology or history to be the full academic disciplines they are today. They imagined the disciplining that came through anthropology and history as embedded in the life-activities of the Self. But that was not the case at the end of the 19th century, when the word *research* became the buzzword in the explosion of the sciences in academe.

The idea that research is not a direct product of the early Enlightenment might come as a surprise, since it is clearly related to the issue of scientific method. But from a more historical point of view, there is no doubt that research only became the code word for academic rigor in the second half of the 19th century with the emergence of large, scientific-academic environments that needed a clear set of protocols to determine value and membership.[6] From then on, the concept of research came to be heavily theorized. In his illuminating 1882 essay "An Address on the Place of Original Research in College Education," historian John Henry Wright argues that individual creative research is just as important as the setting in which it occurs, namely, in organized universities and seminars that train "one to the methods of research." In the give and take between individual effort and institutional setting, scholarship, he argued, "ceased to be dull and pedantic; it became the business-like activity of serious minds." Germany was for him the model of success in this respect.[7]

Husserl was reacting to this development, seeing in the emergence of large-scale disciplinary research the ultimate *denouement* of the Enlightenment. But instead of flipping the switch in favor of the irrational (think of the late 19th-century fascination with dreams), Husserl plays the game of the Enlightenment toward an alternative logic and gives "science" back to the regular person, so to speak, whose research horizon is built circumferentially around the "I" – everything the Self does is research (even though after I read Husserl I will presumably fine-tune that effort into a more

6. Examples include: Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich (1854); École pratique des hautes études (1868); Technische Universität München (1868), and Technische Universität Berlin (1879).
7. John Henry Wright, "The Place of Original Research in College Education," *National Education Association of the United – Session of the Year 1882: Saratoga* (Boston: Alfred Mudge and Son, 1882), 91–117.

philosophical productive orientation). For Husserl, my normal, unreflected daily life, the so-called *natürliche*, is already a type of research, though I would not recognize it as such. But with a bit of reflection, or *Erhebung*, I can thicken life enough that my experiences rise to the level of research.

Research is thus cut off from the necessity of an exterior judgment. If I am a limited person, my World and my research will be limited. If I am an avid traveler and autodidact, my World will be larger. But no comparative judgment can be made. The limited person is not really limited; the more expansive person is not really expansive; the educated person is not really educated; they are all just different. In refusing to elevate judgment to a philosophical value, there is no way for the one person to pronounce his or her superiority over an other unless it is mutually agreed upon by individuals acting within the research of their experience. Politics has been stripped out of the system along with any a priori moral or ethical mandates.

The meaning of research is refined in the third sentence in the opening paragraph of the book: *Die Wissenschaften dieser ursprünglichen[1] Einstellung sind demnach insgesamt wissenschaften von der Welt, und solange sie die ausschliesslich herrschende ist, decken sich die Begriffe "wahrhaftes Sein", "wirklisches Sein", d. i. reales Sein, und – da alles Reale sich zur Einheit der Welt zusammenschliesst – "Sein in die Welt."* (The sciences proper to this original[1] standpoint are accordingly in their collective unity sciences of the World, and so long as this standpoint is the only dominant one, the concepts "true Being", "real Being", i.e., real empirical Being, and – since all that is real comes to self-concentration in the form of cosmic unity – "Being in the World" are meanings that coincide.)

These researches are more "real" than the research of the scientists who live in the ostensibly unnatural world of autonomous reason. As such, Husserlian research extends far beyond what an individual can do at any given moment, and yet each moment has to implicate the "real" (*das Reale*) of that possibility and, of course, nothing more. We have to imagine *Wissenschaften*, translated as "the sciences proper of this original standpoint," as an internal metaphysics, cementing the "I" to itself, meaning, as the sentence explains, that this "science" functions only when it is the dominant one, literally when it functions as *ausschliesslich herrschende* – that is, as controlling its collective content by "locking out" anything that is not appropriate. This protective locking out resolves itself at the end of the sentence where the world (*die Welt*)

"locks itself together" (*zusammenschliesst*) with Being. It is not a self-enforcement that is implied but an enforcement of the Self unto the Self in the name of a "natural" or "original" (*ursprünglichen*) standpoint. This enforcement is seemingly natural to the a priori of Being, and yet can only remain natural to consciousness when its boundedness is respected. Like the symmetry of the human body, it warrants no opposition. *Only* in those circumstances can Husserlian research produce the real Being as something that merits the empirical reality of the world-oriented sciences (*Wissenschaften von der Welt*).

In reading only the first three sentences of *Ideas*, it is unclear how we go from an individual's lived experience to the realm of the social, which might include family, friends, lovers, neighbors, fellow citizens, and the like. It is obvious, however, that this social cannot identify itself as a determinant of world. Husserl's imagined world-oriented, quasi-scientific research either displaces a person's social realities to the realm of an outside – as something irrelevant to experience – or integrates it fully into the realm of research. Most likely it is the former, since even though the capacity for Being-in-the-world is technically open to all, Husserlian research strikes one as an essentially masculine effort couching itself as a universal.

Let's imagine two people with two different backgrounds meeting for the first time. For Kant, the two would go to a café and begin to talk; over a span of years or decades they would solve the problem of difference through a universalized mechanism of cultural uplift that would expand to include their friends and relatives. They would go to concerts, attend seminars on contemporary art, and attend wine parties. For Schelling, the two would be drawn together by their animal magnetism, assuming it had not been destroyed by prolonged contact with the modern world. The man would go off and become a genius of some sort, perhaps working on differentiating color patterns in vacuum tubes; she, well, who knows. Their favorite activity would be a yoga class where they could overcome duality, taking walks in the woods dressed in white robes. These two see no worldliness at all since they assume from the outset that they are fully embedded in the potentialities of Nature. They would feel so natural that they would not know what to do should they encounter an aboriginal in the forest. Hegel, the realist, frightened by the specter of modern arbitrariness, is consistently trying to constrain worldliness. But unlike Schelling, he does not want

worldliness to disappear into Nature; he wants it to be seen everywhere! He wants the hard structure of history and the nation-state to regulate human encounters and sublimate differences. The dangers of worldliness are to be exported to the other side of the border. In his view, the two imaginary people would have official papers and be citizens of their respective nations and would not meet face to face, but in a consulate. If they fell in love and wanted to get married, it would have to be in a church.

Turning now to Husserl, it is not hard to imagine a man collecting leaves falling from a tree in his front yard, measuring them for water content, and framing them for his living room wall. After 20 years his interior walls are unrecognizable; he would firm up his experiences into legitimate *Erfahrungen* by recording his observations on note cards stored in thick leather-bound folios. If he has a love life, it is either of no consequence to his research or is studied in all its world-making detail. There is no middle ground.

Are we to suppose that in creating the expanded World-field of the "I" that Husserl is opening the possibility for a truly radically autonomous (though masculinized) "I," an "I" unhinged from pretensions, family, and institutions? What is the glue that keeps things from unraveling – from degenerating into murder and mayhem?

The answer lies embedded not only in the verb *verbleiben* (remain), but also in its companion word in the third sentence, *original (ursprünglichen)*. It assumes a type of spiritual universal without, as in Hegel's Spirit, that takes on overt, world-shaping powers. But what then holds *original* in place? By what authority can it be spoken *as philosophy* and not some neo-metaphysical vagary? The only solution is to see it as a monotheistic *ursprünglichen*. And it is here that we come to the awkward implications disguised in the catenation of "natural," "world," and "original" that seem to ask for a diffuse, atmospheric *divinicity*, if I may coin that word, a divinicity that can operate only within the space of a monotheistic imaginary. Unlike *natürliche*, which can only be read as a semiotic pointer to the unnatural, the word *ursprünglichen* has no clear semiotic dualism that can trip it up. It pronounces itself as the tautological core of *Erlebnis*. We are not talking about an Adam sprung whole by the will of God. Or are we?

There is a footnote after the word *ursprünglichen*, which is perplexing, given what is at stake! It reads in part: "We are

not talking here in terms of history . . . there need not be, and should not be, any thought of genesis along the lines either of psychological causality or of evolutionary history." In other words, just as history, as the inner essence of Being, is to be rejected, so too the modern notions of psychology and human development. The very fact that Husserl has to add a footnote warning against shallow misreadings that would make this *ursprünglichen* all too human means that he does not yet quite trust the reader. In a sense, he is demonstrating how quickly the unnatural can raise its head. Obviously for Husserl, it is not just the human who has to be saved from the humiliations of reason, but god as well. His god is no longer packaged as religion or theology, it is a more ghostly anthropo-mono-theistic ethos. And yet, for Husserl, it is clearly still unstable in the modern world. The problem of the unnatural and of worldliness can be repressed into the empty space of the philosophical page, but the accumulating secondary voices relating to the core problem of the *ursprünglichen* can, so it seems, not be so easily disappeared. God now needs a footnote.

Who then inhabits the domain where the experience "remains" and where it also remains "original" to itself? Perhaps the better question would be, who does not fit in? Kant was very open about the people who did not conform to the expectations of the Enlightenment. He called them dim-wits, shallow-pates, the prejudiced, the suspicious ones, the imitators, the false geniuses, dream-seers, egoists, and the like. His treatises are filled with references to these characters. Admittedly, this was not consistent with his Enlightenment-focused worldview, but these characters are nonetheless the staged, living embodiments of a messy *worldly* world. Hegel was more categorical. In the grand "We" of the nation-state, he targeted foreigners and atheists as those who most likely would not fit the mold, not to mention various nationalities that would be left behind by the great dialectic, including the Chinese and Indians.

Husserl warrants no externality of the "I," and so on the surface targets no one in what at first seems to be a refreshing liberation from bourgeois norms. Technically speaking, no philosopher of the post-Enlightenment was more inclusive than Husserl, and this at a time when racism was systemic in European worldviews. And yet Husserl passively allows a devious purging to take place. Just as "natural" points to an unsignified unnatural that hangs threateningly in the air of an implied dualism, that same "natural" also points to the word *healthy* as a word that, like monotheism, does not need

to be technically signified since it is subsumed within the body of expectations to begin with. If unnatural is an active nonsignified signifier, the concept of healthiness is that which is repressed within the code. It assumes that if the ego is in some way damaged, it will not be able to fill the necessary process of *Erfahrung*. Husserl does not need to list all those who would be incapable of real Husserlian research. It would be a long list that would include philosophers, professors, scientists, priests, narcissists, criminals, Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and on and on. They all simply disappear as philosophically irrelevant.

Spinoza put worldliness in the lowly realm of the anthropo. Kant put it – more optimistically – into the framework of what we might call culture, whereas Hegel put it into the stressful space of geopolitics. Husserl, to protect the Enlightenment Self from its teleological entanglement with modernity, exported the difficulties back to whence they supposedly came, the area outside of philosophy's concern. The result: a world without worldliness, and just as important, a worldliness without a world. Lording over the liberated vessel of Being and animating its content is an atmospheric and uncontested "natural" – and presumably healthy – anthropo-monotheism. In this, Husserl anticipates and gives voice to the geopolitics of retrenchment, with the side effect being that the unnatural has now risen to the level of operative abstraction. Ironically, the same worldliness that so befuddled the Enlightenment now functions, in the 21st century, at an even larger scale. In fact, to use the word *global* today is to immediately bring to mind the worldliness *of* worldliness. How we live and act in that context is still an unresolved philosophical, epistemological, and geopolitical question, but to retreat to the safety of an empty signifier of a singular World is not the answer.

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