Introduction to volume 1

by

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Even though The Asia-Pacific Region is geographically far away from the birthplace of phenomenology, the development of phenomenology already had its impact on this area as early as the 1920s. Notably, the Kaizo articles of Husserl were first published in Japanese long before they were published in their original language. Currently there are at least 20 local phenomenological organizations in this region.

Nevertheless, the apparent expansion of this philosophical approach did not happen until the second half of the 20th century. With the founding of phenomenological organizations in 1978 and 1980, respectively, in Korea and Japan, phenomenology found the renewed echo among scholars in East Asia. And during the 1990s, we witness scholars of younger generations spreading this approach vigorously across the whole area, not only in Japan and Korea, but also in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. A few names of the representatives from each region are to note: NI Liangkang from Guanzhou (China), JIN Xiping from Beijing (China), MURATA Junichi from Tokoy (Japan), TANI Toru from Kyoto (Japan), LEE Nam-in from Seoul (Korea), CHEUNG Chan-fai and LAU Kwok-ying from Hong Kong as well as TSAI Cheng-yun from Taiwan. A regional organization called P.E.A.C.E (Phenomenology in East-Asian Circle) was brought into life with assistance of Lester Embree (USA) in 2002, and three conferences have been held respectively in Hong Kong (2004), Tokyo (2006), and Seoul (2009). Many participants who are active in the P.E.A.C.E are also active in the Organizations of Phenomenological Organizations (OPO).

The phenomenologists from this region are very engaged at understanding this approach. Besides publishing books and articles either in their own languages or in Western languages such as English, German or French, many of them are also translating the original works from the West into their own languages. Because of the distance in culture and language, there is obviously much to overcome in their working, but such efforts will be highly evaluated as long as the difficulties are being fought with and a solution being sought. In other words, the Asia-Pacific can best contribute to the development of phenomenology once they make a genuinely “Asia-Pacific Phenomenology,” instead of solely Phenomenological Research in Asia-Pacific Region. Even though the convergence of their cultural background with phenomenology is still to be expected, it is already more or less undertaken. The first two parts of this volume are evidence of this.

The present volume gathers papers from countries or regions such as Japan, Korea, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Australia. The articles are arranged according to their themes, which can be divided in six different categories: a) Implantation of European Philosophy and Intercultural Dialogue; b) Comparative Study of Husserl’s Phenomenology and Yogacara Buddhism; c) The Study of Merleau-Ponty’s Phenomenology and its Implication; d) Research on Husserl’s Phenomenology; e) On Heidegger; and f) On Scheler and Other Phenomenologists.

a) Implantation of European Philosophy and Intercultural Dialogue

The article by FANG Xianghong (The Chinese Society of Phenomenology, China) makes a general report on how the continental philosophy, in which phenomenology of course plays a central role, has been introduced to China. Its development in the past 30 years is described in detail. FANG greatly appreciates
such an ongoing process, which is contributing to the overcoming of cultural gap between China and the West.

Beginning with a general delineation of intercultural experience of today, KANDA Daisuke (The Intercultural Phenomenology Center, Japan) proceeds to explore the problematic of language in the intercultural situation. He bases his discussion on Husserl’s ideas and points out that both motivation and inducement are enlightening notions to work on.

KAMEI Daisuke (The Intercultural Phenomenology Center, Japan) asks the question whether it is possible to establish a “linguistic community” among different languages? He deals with such an important question for intercultural understanding in the frameworks of Husserl, Benjamin as well as Derrida. The “pure language” concept of Benjamin and the concepts of “survival” and “promise” in Derrida are particularly in focus.

b) Comparative Study of Husserl’s Phenomenology and Yogacara Buddhism

Besides determining the similarity between phenomenology and Yogacara Buddhism in regard to the conception of consciousness, NI Liangkang (The Chinese Society of Phenomenology, China) also refers to discrepancy between them. But he is more concerned with the question as to how both of them can complement each other. Remarkably NI holds that, by making the distinction between the deep and the superficial structure of consciousness, the Yogacara Buddhism helps to clarify the seeming contradiction of the unconsciousness of present flow, which is taken by Husserl to be the ultimate or absolute consciousness. By the way NI also considers the deep structure of consciousness comparable to the deep structure of language, both of which make up essential structures for all human beings.

ABE Jun (The Phenomenological Association of Japan, Japan) also makes a comparative study between phenomenology
and Yogacara Buddhism. But he focuses on the discussions of matter of consciousness, which is called hyle in Husserl and idana in Yogacara Buddhism respectively. He aims to work out a field that allows both the Eastern and Western to join together.

*c) The Study of Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology and its Implication*

After determining Merleau-Ponty's philosophy of vision and painting as the medium model in terms of Aristotle's distinction between contact model and medium model, MURATA Junichi (The Alfred Schutz Archive, Japan) proceeds to explicate the notion of illumination in Merleau-Ponty. MURATA holds that the illumination makes up what Merleau-Ponty portrays as the "flesh" of the world, which constitutes the ontology of vision, by way of "depth, space and color."

In the eyes of LEE Nam-In (Korean Society for Phenomenology, Korea), the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty can be characterized as phenomenological psychology, which constitutes one of the two pillars of phenomenology in Husserl. Whereas Merleau-Ponty's conception of phenomenological psychology incorporates also the ontology of lifeworld, LEE sees Merleau-Ponty's obvious deviation from the transcendental phenomenology which Husserl unfolded in *Ideen I*. LEE suggests a dialogue between these two philosophers to be promoted, even though he does not refer to any concrete steps.

Based on the phenomenological thinking of Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty as well as Derrida, LAU Kwok-ying (The Research Center for Phenomenology and the Human Sciences, Hong Kong) works on spatiality that is essential to the architecture. Four forms are referred to as of vital importance: a) the space of signification inaugurated by writing; b) cartographic space constitutive of the representation of the world and locality; c) oriented space and existential spatiality opened up by the
living-body; and d) the Earth as Ground-Ark which is the ultimate space of the human habit.

By raising the question of McDowell as regards the way the unconceptualized sense data, which inhabits the space of causes, becomes a resident of the space of reason, ZHENG Yujian (Philosophy Department, Lingnan University) refers to Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of perception in order to answer the question. Following Merleau-Ponty’s conception of the pre-rational realm to be the ground for rational accomplishments ZHENG holds that the intentionality of man is the epistemologically legislative condition for nature to be possessed of rational relations.

d) Research on Husserl’s Phenomenology

Beginning with Hanna Arendt’s conception of authentic culture, which is disclosed through politics and art, WANG Wen-Sheng (The Interdisciplinary Society of Phenomenology in Taiwan, Taiwan) argues that Husserl’s phenomenological method of epoche, in particular the “lifeworld epoche” is relevant to Arendt’s discourse.

In the article written by INAGAKI Satoshi (Japan Society for Husserlian Studies, Japan) the relation between transcendental I and passive synthesis in late Husserl in explored. As long as the transcendental I and the stream of consciousness is interwoven and the passive synthesis is based on the stream of consciousness, the relation between transcendental I and passive synthesis is clear. Such a relation is also what the genetic phenomenology is concerned with.

The paper of JUNG Tae-Chang (Korean Society for Phenomenology, Korea) deals with Husserl’s criticism on representationalism in *Logische Untersuchungen*. Representationalism, defined as image theory (*Bildtheorie*) of consciousness, denotes that the consciousness has relation to its object through the mediation of
image. Husserl denounces such a theory by refuting the assumption of duplication of object into the object itself and the image of it. As long the object itself is never accessible directly, such a distinction is implausible. Jung points out that Husserl’s refutation of representationalism is crucial to his notion of intentionality.

SHIN Ho Jae (Korean Society for Phenomenology, Korea). The paper of SHIN deals with the status of sensation in Husserl’s static phenomenology, in particular that in *Logical Investigations* V and VI. He focuses on the question: whether sensation is solely the constituent moment of the intended object? SHIN notifies that the fulfillment of intention by intuition is no other than the fulfillment by sensation according as Husserl unfolds in *Logical Investigations* VI. To conclude, SHIN refers to an activer role that sensation plays than commonly assumed.

e) On Heidegger

Jeff MALPAS (The Australian Phenomenology and Hermeneutics Association, Australia) works on the later Heidegger’s thinking, particularly that of the post-war period. MALPAS finds it extraordinarily important to work on it because on the one hand he sees only very few attention has been paid to this part of Heidegger in the English speaking world, on the other hand he sees this part enormously important to any adequate estimation of Heidegger’s philosophy. The author holds that throughout all his work Heidegger focuses on the essential problem as regards the “place” of being and it is in his later period that Heidegger provides a better explication.

The paper of KAGEYAMA Yohei (The Phenomenological Association of Japan, Japan) traces the development of fundamental ontology in the early Heidegger. He works on the notion of existence through three interrelated moments: a) the universal categorical structure of entity; b) the ontology of signification
and lived experience; c) the facticity revealed in religious experience.

In dealing with Heidegger’s treatment of time in *Being and Time*, WONG Yiu-Hong (The Archive for Phenomenology and Contemporary Philosophy, Hong Kong) refers to Husserl as the main source of Heidegger’s ideas. But of course Heidegger makes his contribution by dissolving the dimension of time into immanent sphere of subjectivity. The author holds that Heidegger’s notion of time still remains restricted to the metaphysical thinking. Not until the later period could Heidegger get rid of such a metaphysical assumption.

In the article of LEUNG Po-Shan (The Hong Kong Society of Phenomenology, Hong Kong) the way Heidegger deals with the question of “thing” is unfolded. Regardless of the famous concept of “readiness-to-hand” in *Being and Time*, Heidegger resumes such a question later in the 1940s by suggesting “change of attitude,” particularly that from the representative thinking to the pre-conceptual thinking, the latter of which assumes a movement of “step back and then forward.”

*f) On Scheler and Other Phenomenologists*

The philosophical anthropology in Scheler is under discussion in the paper of CHEUNG Ching-yuen (The Archive for Phenomenology and Contemporary Philosophy, Hong Kong). He exams how Scheler transforms his attention from phenomenology to philosophical anthropology and gives an evaluation to such a change.

Gnosticism, as Voegelin understands of it, is thematized by LUI Ping-keung (The Hong Kong Society of Phenomenology, Hong Kong). The theme is although ancient, but retains its impact even until modern age. Its transformation in politics and philosophy is although unacceptable to the author, its application in the theoretical sociology is however agreeable to him.
Lubica UCNIK (The Australian Phenomenology and Hermeneutics Association, Australia) discusses Patocka’s viewpoint of human nature, which is basically historical and situational. While she considers the origin of such a notion to be Husserl’s conception of lifeworld, Heidegger’s notion of Dasein as well as Arendt’s understanding of labor, she also stresses that we need to take up responsibility to confront the crisis that the modern sciences bring up. So long as sciences reduce life merely either to objective fact of biological body or to process of never-ending conception, it neglects the second aspect of animal rationale, that is, the reasoning and freedom that shape our existence and thus create the meaning of our lives.

The structure of subjective time, which is implicit in Schutz’s thinking, is explored in the paper of IIDA Suguru (The Alfred Schutz Archive, Japan). His discussion focuses on Schutz’s action theory, which is related to intentional experience as well as objective time, and ultimately the lifeworldly time.

The article submitted by HSIEH Sheng-Yu (The Interdisciplinary Society of Phenomenology in Taiwan, Taiwan) speaks of the seeming contrast between phenomenology and Marxism. The former is said to enhance the active role of the subjectivity of human being, whereas the latter regards the human being as trapped in material conditions. But by referring to Husserl’s text such as *Ideen II*, HSIEH points out that the passive aspect of human being may not have been neglected by Husserl, and a close examination of Marxism one may also never overlook the active aspect of human being. With such an observation, HSIEH proceeds to work out a reconciliation between these two influential schools in philosophy during the 20th century.