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SOME NECESSARY MODIFICATIONS IN THE APPLICATION OF THE

HUSSERLIAN METHOD IN THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF RELIGION

BARNABAS AHUNA OGUGUO, DIP (Phil.); BD; M.Th.

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ABSTRACT

The method of phenomenology has been applied successfully in many research fields, but not in the case of the investigation of religion. The application in this field has been inconsistent and inconclusive. This dissertation investigates the reason for this and seeks to discover how the method might be more fruitfully applied.

Chapter One deals with the principles of phenomenology through an exposition of the works of Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. In the early stages, differences emerge in their approaches to phenomenology, but there is a fundamental agreement amongst them on the need to establish the ground in knowledge which is certain. It is here that the phenomenon appears without prejudice. Phenomenology aims to describe this phenomenon which appears prior to its being clouded by our natural standpoint and prejudices. For Husserl, this phenomenon is a state of pure consciousness, which is arrived at by the process of transcendental epoché. Heidegger however, sees phenomenology as a method whose usefulness lies in our way of getting access to the phenomenon. The point of departure of this access to the phenomenon is in the interpretation of man in his historical existence. Merleau-Ponty on the other hand, sees perceptual consciousness as the starting point of phenomenology.

Chapter two deals with what is hitherto known as the phenomenology of religion to discover the way it has appropriated the method of phenomenology as advocated by Husserl or as understood by his successors. Critical expositions of the works of Rudolf Otto, Brede Kristensen, Gerardus van de Leeuw, and Mircea Eliade are undertaken. It emerges that the phenomenology of religion has completely ignored the method of phenomenology. The excursus is a prolepsis of the reason behind the failure of the phenomenology of religion to appropriate the phenomenological method.

Chapter Three leaves the field of the general history of religion to examine other fields that will suggest a better understanding of the nature of religion. Here the works of Ludwig Feuerbach, Thomas Luckmann and Peter Berger are examined. Though the investigation is suggestive, it does not pinpoint the phenomenon of religion nor is it able to describe it. Having failed to discover the nature of religion, chapter Four takes us back to the field of the general history of religion in which the works of Wilfred Cantwell Smith are examined. What emerges from this is that religion has been misconceived. The history of the word 'religion' reveals a misconception which could be said to be responsible for the apparent inconsistency in the study of religion. Smith begins to address the way in which religion can be understood if the

phenomenological method is to be applied. The misconception of religion is corrected and redirected ready for the phenomenology of religion.

Chapter Five examines the works of Karl Jaspers for an understanding of transcendence and its relationship to man. Here the way transcendence which is not objectifiable is made real is discussed with the aim of assisting the phenomenology of religion.

Chapter Six examines the modifications that are necessary in order to apply the phenomenological method to the phenomenology of religion. A modification is suggested from Husserl's understanding of the phenomenological method to that of his successors in the persons of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty.

A further modification is suggested by relating the concept of Dasein in Heidegger and the 'Encompassing we are' in Karl Jaspers. What emerges is the fact that religion seen correctly is similar to Jaspers' cipher of transcendence. The conclusion is that for the phenomenology of religion that applies the Husserlian method to be, it is necessary that these modifications are made. That taken care of the phenomenology of religion will be the phenomenology of a community's cipher of transcendence.

INTRODUCTION

Phenomenology as a method of research has been successful in many fields. In the field of religion, however, the application has been inconsistent and inconclusive. This dissertation aims to investigate the reasons behind the apparent failure of the phenomenological method when it comes to religion, and to suggest some modifications both in the understanding of religion and the phenomenological method to enable the phenomenology of religion to take its place among other disciplines.

At first, the dissertation sets out to understand the terms phenomenology and religion. In phenomenology, the works of Edmund Husserl, who brought phenomenology to prominence, are examined for an understanding of the phenomenological method. Following that, the works of two of his successors, Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, are discussed. Opinions vary as to whether these phenomenologists represent a true development of the works of Husserl. Though they all aim to get to the phenomenon without prejudice, it soon becomes clear from the early stages that there are differences among the phenomenologists as to the way to get to the phenomenon. That notwithstanding, it must be taken for granted that any field wishing to appropriate the phenomenological method as an instrument of research must either hold to the phenomenological method as seen by

Husserl or as modified by his successors. The first chapter sets out what is expected of phenomenology in any field. This in chapter two leads to our investigation of the field that is hitherto known as the phenomenology of religion to see in what way the discipline has been true to the phenomenological method. The works of Rudolf Otto, Brede Kristensen, Gerardus van der Leeuw and Mircea Eliade are critically examined. Though Otto does not regard himself as a phenomenologist, our reason for including him in the list is that Husserl indicated that his work is the beginning of the phenomenology of religion. Though he did not remain faithful to the phenomenological principle, the indication of Husserl to that fact is enough justification for including him among the phenomenologists. Even if Otto is excused because he did not set out to work on the phenomenology of religion, there are others however, who set out to do the phenomenology of religion. The phenomenology of religion as known can be said to be divided into two main branches with different emphasis which in a way overlap. One distinguishes itself by its focus on the classification of various types and structures that arise from the examination of the data, and the other by an attempt to bring to light the essence of the meaning residing tacitly within the situation of the phenomenon. The former is termed morphological phenomenology and the latter hermeneutical phenomenology of religion. Brede Kristensen can be seen as the clearest example of the morphological branch. In the introduction to The Meaning of Religion he suggest that the

phenomenological "task is to classify and group the numerous and widely divergent data in such a way that an overall view can be obtained of their religious content and the religious values they contain".¹ For him the phenomenology of religion clearly distinguishes itself by the attitude towards the data and not by the method of the organization employed. This attitude is open and self-reflective, consequently placing the interpreter in a position in which the phenomena studied become possibilities for him, possibilities not absolute values. Van der Leeuw, on the other hand, speaks of the phenomenological attitude as opening methodically and intentionally to the experience of what appears. He also speaks of the self-reflective nature of the attitude and the fact that by opening to the experience of the 'other' we discover that 'other' within ourselves. Like Kristensen, van der Leeuw sees the attitude of the interpreter as central to the enterprise of phenomenology. The phenomenological attitude according to Van der Leeuw, is man's true attitude, his original attitude and a vital activity consisting in losing himself neither in things nor in the ego². Eliade makes the self reflective dimension of the attitude of the phenomenologist of religion quite clear when he says "What is called the phenomenology and history of religions can be considered among the very few humanistic disciplines that are at the same time propaedeutic and spiritual techniques"³. He stresses that in the study of religious facts, we are dealing with phenomena that do not lend themselves to methods of ordinary analysis with its reliance upon the laws of the

verification through logic and non-contradiction. He states that hierarchies, that is the manifestation of the sacred expressed in symbols, myths, supernatural beings, are grasped as structures and constitutes a pre-reflective language that requires a special interpretation. An interpretation that is needed is such that is embodied in an attitude that refuses to demystify the religious worlds that present themselves to us in our study. The attitude of the phenomenologist then must enable him to take the fact as it is in its own world and not as it might be in our understanding. By not demystifying, the interpreter accepts the existence of the other world in its own situation and allows the mystery of that world to work what transformations it will on him and his world. This in effect is nearer to what the phenomenologists say, when they allow the phenomenon itself to appear without prejudices. Apart from this similarity in Eliade to the philosophical phenomenologists, it soon becomes clear that the phenomenologists of religion seem to completely ignore the application of the phenomenological method. The excursus examines the historical origin of the two phenomenologies and draws the conclusion that the phenomenology of religion as hitherto known has nothing to do with phenomenology as a method of research. The need to have a phenomenology of religion that appropriates the phenomenological method leads to the next chapter which raises the question of the nature of religion. If a phenomenology of religion in line with the phenomenological method as applied to other fields is to succeed, there is need to look for the essence or

the eidos of religion. Having encountered religion in the phenomenology of religion, we now step outside the field of the general history of religion to seek some indication which will be suggestive of the true nature of religion. The works of Ludwig Feuerbach, Thomas Luckmann and Peter Berger are examined. It emerges from these investigations that religion cannot be identical with its institutionalized form. The result however, falls short of telling us the true nature of religion. There are religious objects, religious actions, religious attitudes, but the nature of religion itself remains unclear. On account of this, no definition of religion can claim to reveal the nature of religion. For a phenomenology of religion to be as successful as in other fields, the need to know the nature cannot be overemphasised. It is this need that takes us to the works of Wilfred Canwell Smith. What emerges from his work is that the word 'religion' has been misconceived. The history of the concept, which he traces from its early use leaves us in no doubt that religion has shifted from being a form of consciousness of transcendence to being an object of consciousness. This shift in conception perhaps has been responsible for the difficulties that has characterized the study of religion. Religion seen as an object of consciousness, prompts scholars to look for the essence of religion. It is the search for this essence that has stalled the phenomenology of religion, for such a study cannot but be limited to yet another manifestation of religion. Seen as a form of consciousness of transcendence which it is however, the phenomenology of religion can move

further because it now looks beyond the manifestations of religion. Accepting religion as a form of consciousness of transcendence implies that our phenomenology of religion now becomes the application of the phenomenological method in the description of this form of consciousness of transcendence.

Having arrived at the idea of religion as a form of consciousness, we examine the concept of transcendence to see the direction in which phenomenology of religion should go. Already in the works of Thomas Luckmann and Peter Berger there is an indication that the root of religion might lie in transcendence. To understand transcendence then, we examine the works of Karl Jaspers. The reason for examining his work which is elaborately explained arises from his interest in phenomenology as a method, transcendence and religion. Having dealt with phenomenology religion and transcendence, chapter six explores the way in which the phenomenology of religion that appropriates the phenomenological principle can proceed. The application of the phenomenological method in the description of the form of consciousness of transcendence which religion is, implies that either the method as understood by Husserl or as understood by his successors is to be appropriated. Whichever one decides to apply will count for the application of the phenomenological method. Further implications in the acceptance of religion as a form of consciousness is that one cannot now be said to search

for the essence for that will be an exercise in futurity. Since this is the case, the phenomenological method that will be applied will not go on to look for the eidos or to describe the essence-intuition as Husserl will have us do. This implies that the method as understood by Husserl alone will be of little use. It is here that the first modification takes place. In Heidegger, phenomenology is our way of access to the phenomenon and the take off point of this phenomenology is Dasein. Since both Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty are taken to offer the natural development of Husserl's phenomenology, their understanding of phenomenology becomes our point of departure. This eliminates the need to look for the essence which would have been necessary in strictly Husserlian terms. Prior to the application of the method as understood by Heidegger, his relationship with Merleau-Ponty is established. This completes the link between Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. Since in Heidegger's phenomenology Dasein is the point of departure, we now examine the relationship between Dasein and the form of consciousness which religion is. The relationship establishes a link between Cantwell Smith and the phenomenologists. Examining the relationship between Heidegger's Dasein and the form of consciousness of transcendence leads to the understanding of the way in which transcendence can relate to this form of consciousness and Dasein. This leads to a second modification that is necessary for the phenomenology of religion. The modification puts or locates Dasein in Karl Jaspers' 'encompassing that we are'. A relationship between

Dasein and transcendence emerges. The relationship is discussed fully and in the last analysis, we come to the conclusion that our form of consciousness of transcendence is equivalent to our understanding of ciphers as treated by Jaspers. The phenomenology of religion then can be said to fit well into the phenomenology of ciphers, whose qualities are explained fully in the work.

In conclusion, we can say that the phenomenology of religion that appropriates the phenomenological method is possible under the following conditions:

- 1) The concept of religion should be changed from being an object of consciousness to the form of consciousness of transcendence. This will enable the phenomenologists to go beyond the manifestations of religion.
- 2) Since religion as a form of consciousness does not have any need for the essence intuition to be described, a modification is necessary whereby the phenomenological method as understood by Heidegger and others be applied to religion in place of the purely Husserlian understanding.

- 3) That in the application of the method, a further modification is necessary whereby the Dasein of Heidegger relates to the "encompassing that we are" of Karl Jaspers which in turn becomes a proper ground for the phenomenology of religion.

Seen in this way, the phenomenology of religion will take its place among other disciplines in the application of the method of phenomenology.

CHAPTER 1 FOUNDATIONS AND THE METHOD OF
PHENOMENOLOGY

Edmund Husserl and the Beginnings of phenomenology.

At the mention of the word phenomenology, what comes to mind immediately is the philosophical discipline associated with Edmund Husserl. Not that Husserl was the first person to use the word, but he was the one who made the term prominent. On this account, any work on phenomenology must begin with him.

In this chapter we shall deal with certain questions. How did Husserl come to his understanding of phenomenology? What methods did he use to arrive at his conclusions about phenomenology? How far did those who came after him apply his method? To understand the development of his thoughts, we begin with a brief biography.

Edmund Gustav Albrecht Husserl was born in the little Moravian town of Prossnitz in April , 1859. He was an Austrian by birth, as Moravia now part of Czechoslovakia, was then part of the Austrian empire. His parents, Adolf and Julie Husserl were of Jewish descent, and his father, a merchant in womens' dresses (Modewarehandler) died when he was still young.¹

At the age of ten, after his elementary education at Prossnitz, he was sent to Vienna to begin his secondary education. He spent three separate periods

there. The last period was to be the greatest influence in his career as a philosopher.

In 1876 Husserl entered the University of Leipzig and remained there until 1878. He attended lectures in physics and philosophy as well as in mathematics. His philosophy teacher was Wilhelm Wundt. Wundt was elected to the chair of philosophy of Leipzig in 1875. A year before his election to the chair, 1874, he had published his Principles of Physiological Psychology. The lectures in philosophy were of little use to Husserl because, at this time, he had not developed an interest in philosophy or psychology. Though he was interested in astronomy, mathematics provided to be his strongest subject. For this reason, he transferred to Fredrick Wilhelm's University of Berlin which at that time held an enviable reputation in the field of mathematics.

On the faculty of mathematics of the University of Berlin were the three most famous mathematicians of the day, Kronecker, Kummer and Weierstrass. Weierstrass influenced Husserl profoundly. This led Husserl to abandon his interest in astronomy to devote himself wholeheartedly to mathematics. Kummer did not seem to appeal to him greatly.

Kronecker on the other hand, was as influential as Weierstrass on Husserl. It was Kronecker's special field of study, the philosophy of mathematics, that

brought Husserl to appreciate the philosophic point of view. In the philosophy of mathematics, Husserl found a ready interest which was to prove vital in his interest in pure philosophy. It is likely that Husserl got his first interest in Descartes through Kronecker. While Kronecker was well read in the field of pure philosophy, he was especially fond of reading the works of Descartes². Although Husserl had dropped astronomy, the last part of his study in Berlin was not exclusively devoted to mathematics.

While from Kronecker, the first seed of philosophical understanding was being sowed in Husserl, another professor, Friedrich Paulsen, was gradually building up in the young mathematician an active desire to study philosophy for its own sake. Paulsen was greatly influenced by Wundt, Fechner and Spinoza. He was a very popular man. This popularity and his forcefulness seemed to come from his ability to express himself clearly to the point that his listeners would seem to say 'now I understand'. His readiness in a scientific age to link up philosophy with the sciences must have appealed to Husserl. Though Paulsen turned to biological rather than to mathematical sciences, he nevertheless, appealed to Husserl. Though Husserl's interest was steadily growing in philosophy, he decided to put an end to his formal studies. He left the University of Berlin in 1881, having decided to work for his doctorate at the University of Vienna where, if occasion permitted, he might hope to continue as a Privatdozent. On the direction of Konigsberger, he

concentrated on the calculus of variations. This was the topic on which he had heard Weierstrass lecture in the summer semester of 1879. He completed his doctoral dissertation, Contributions to the Theory of the Calculus of Variations (Beiträge zur Theorie der Variationsrechnung) in the winter semester of 1882/83 and received the degree of doctor of philosophy in January, 1883.

During his final mathematical studies in Vienna, Husserl went to hear Franz Brentano (a former priest) "Out of mere curiosity to hear for once the man about whom everyone in Vienna was talking so much"³. Such was Brentano's power of personality and teaching that before long, Husserl was won over, as he recounts. "It was from his lectures that I first derived the conviction that gave me the courage to choose philosophy as my life's vocation, that is, that philosophy also is a sphere of serious work, that it can also be treated in the spirit of the most exact science, and consequently that it should be so treated"⁴.

When Husserl finished his mathematical work, he served for sometime under Weierstrass in Berlin and returned to Vienna. From 1884, he studied in close contact with Brentano. As Ronald Bruzina puts it, "By his interest in logic and exactness of method of approaching a wide range of philosophical problems, Brentano provided an easy path for Husserl to move from the familiar area

of mathematics to the more comprehensive problems of philosophy⁵. Despite Brentano's book, Psychology from the Empirical Point of View⁶, for which he was best known, his interest had been occupied by psychology for only a few years before Husserl met him. Apart from Brentano's doctrine of Intentionality which was of major importance to Husserl's thinking, Husserl's acquaintance with psychology came mainly from Carl Stumpf in Halle, to whom Brentano advised Husserl to go for further work. Stumpf himself was a former student of Brentano⁷.

During the year of study at Halle with Stumpf, 1886-1887, Husserl prepared his inaugural address delivering it in July 1887. With that first lecture in Halle, Husserl's teaching career began. It continued uninterruptedly at Halle 1887-1901. At Gottingen 1901-1916 and at Freiburg in Breisgau 1916-1929. He retired in 1929, and died in April, 1938.

Publication

Although a lot of materials resulted from Husserl writing down his thoughts⁸, it is known that Husserl did not publish a lot in his lifetime. Whatever he published however, was of great significance. His first book was The Philosophy of Arithmetic⁹, in which he himself adhered to the doctrine of psychologism. In the book he discusses the mathematical notions of number,

plurality and unity, and claims that many of the conceptual difficulties involved are based on the 'psychological constitution' of these concepts. Husserl however, began to repudiate psychologism in a lecture in summer of 1896 in Halle. Four years later in 1900, he published this same material as the Prolegomena to Pure Logic. This was the first volume of the Logical investigations¹⁰. Ideas published in 1913 was a product of intense critical reassessment that followed Logical Investigations¹². Earlier in 1911, in an essay 'Philosophy as a Rigorous Science', Husserl had outlined his plan and scope for phenomenology, showing the part which he was to take. Along with the Ideas of 1913 came the second volume of the Logical Investigations. It was revised in many places to bring it to the level of maturity achieved in Ideas.

As phenomenology developed, different approaches complementing each other were taken. He however, did not lose sight of the initial or the original line of entry which was through logic. In 1920 Husserl undertook a renewed presentation of his original line of entry. This resulted in The Formal and Transcendental Logic which was published in 1921¹³. In the same year, Husserl delivered a set of lectures in Paris that tried to explain the third avenue into phenomenology. This was through a kind of apodeictic Cartesian reflection on self. Later this was elaborated fully. The result of this was the appearance of a French version under the title Cartesian Meditation¹⁴. This

completes the list of books that were published during Husserl's lifetime. There were articles that appeared here and there. Notable among the articles was the one that appeared in the 14th edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica¹⁵, which tried to summarize phenomenology, and also part of a series of lectures delivered in Prague in 1936 entitled, 'The Crises of European Science and Transcendental Phenomenology'¹⁶. 'The Crises of European Science and Transcendental Phenomenology' was partially published before Husserl's death. This introduced another approach mainly, through analysis of the primordial life-world (Lebenswelt) which underlies theoretical and technical interpretations of reality. Mention should also be made of two other works. These are studies which Husserl asked one or another of his assistants to prepare for publication. The introductory lectures on the Phenomenology of Internal Time Consciousness, published in 1928¹⁷, was originally a series of lectures from 1904-1910, on the elements that lie at the heart of phenomenology. Edith Stein, who was Husserl's personal research assistant elaborated the original text into a more complete form about the year 1918.

In 1927, Husserl entrusted their publication to Martin Heidegger and the complete work appeared in the volume IX of Husserl's year book¹⁸. Experience and Judgement similarly, was the result of the editing work of Ludwig Landgrebe, to whom Husserl in 1928 entrusted the preparation of a

series of manuscripts in logic and its sources.¹⁹

Phenomenology in Practice.

The first time the word phenomenology appeared in Husserl's independent writing was in a footnote of the first edition of Prolegomena (1900) where he spoke of descriptive phenomenology of inner experience as the basis for both empirical psychology and epistemology. In the second edition of the Logische Untersuchungen however, phenomenology made its appearance as a title for a new and important discipline. It is then safe to say that the beginning of phenomenology as seen by Husserl can be said to be the Logical - Investigations. As the need to go into detail about Husserl's understanding of phenomenology may not be necessary here, we shall point at the two major themes from his work which seems to be at the heart of his understanding of phenomenology.

They are the idea of pre-suppositionlessness (Voraussetzungslosigkeit) and the doctrine of intuition of essence (Wesensschau). In undertaking phenomenology, Husserl is dealing with knowledge and consciousness. He is well aware of the fact that both psychologism and empiricism also deal with the problem of knowledge. They however, falter in their not taking a clear look at the phenomena they are supposed to account for. They allow a

presupposed view of reality to determine their manner of interpreting what is studied. On account of this, Husserl intends to set aside all positions and viewpoints that derive from or is embodied in natural science of psychology. For him all such viewpoints are generated in consciousness. If they are to point to certainty, consciousness as such, then, must be studied in a neutrality antecedent to such already accepted or projected positions. Husserl's displeasure with psychologism is based on the thought that our thoughts have no guarantee of reaching "the facts themselves"²⁰ unless we achieve an absolutely original insight that fulfils two conditions.

Firstly, it must be independent of the fact that 'I', the knowing subject, is a psychological person, involved in social and historical conditions, and biologically determined. Secondly, it must not only reach 'facts' but give access to universal truth, which is to say, something that is not only here and now but reveals 'necessary' connections in the world. For him an investigation into knowledge and consciousness that intends to be self responsible, must adhere to the principles of the absence of pre-suppositions. It must not accept any ready-made result of science. No interpretative scheme must be allowed to operate beyond what scrupulous attention shows to be what is experientially given. One's investigation must therefore be, before all else, that of pure description. By this return to 'the facts themselves' Husserl sees the strict exclusion of any assertions that cannot be accounted

for phenomenologically. As Husserl's work progresses, pure description of the phenomena, a return to what gives itself in pre-suppositionless attention to experiences, becomes much clearer. For Husserl, naturalism and historicism are two objectionable obstacles to the progress of phenomenology. While naturalism regards consciousness as an object in the world to be investigated, historicism sees knowledge, or analyses knowledge, as a product of human history, as a set of facts of culture. Naturalism is the point that Husserl sees as the basis for psychologism and in the - Philosophy as a Rigorous Science, he attacks it.

In his own book Naturalism and Religion, Sterlin Lamprecht explains that "...Naturalism means a philosophical position, empirical in method, that regards everything that exists or occurs to be conditioned in its existence or occurrence by causal factors within one all-encompassing system of nature, however 'spiritual' or purposeful or rational some of these things and events may in their functions and values prove to be"²¹. The presuppositions, standpoint, methods, and categories implied in this position are mainly what Husserl wants to neutralize. This is in preparation for his reflective description of consciousness. This in the phenomenological literature is known as the natural attitude (Natürliche Einstellung)²².

Another obstacle to getting to 'the facts themselves' which Husserl sees is

Weltanschauungsphilosophie, which considers philosophy as "an expression of personal, social, or historical values, which are valid for a particular period or for a particular human community" - ²³. For this type of philosophy, nothing can be known to stand by itself. The place, the time and place stands or falls with the bases. For Husserl, the need to get to the method that would justify the claims of knowledge to a validity independent of history, persons, society, or biological circumstances leads to the search for the phenomenological method. At sometime in this work we shall come to ask if there can be a phenomenon of religion that fulfils the needs mentioned above.

If philosophy is to achieve this aim, it has to reject the existing body of knowledge as a whole. Whatever science presents is mediated through theories or is known as a stream of subjective perceptions. Psychology is a typical example of this sort of view of science. If one is to get to the root of knowledge, philosophy must reject or neglect the evidence of daily life. That is to say that it must reject the unquestioned acceptable view of the world.

Intuition of Essence.

Husserl's aim in phenomenology is the elimination of the pre-suppositions that clouds our knowledge. For this he insists contrary to what empiricists or

naturalists believe that one recognizes the descriptively valid status of general meanings (essences, universals) as genuine objects of consideration and a mode of consciousness that directs itself to this kind of thematic material.

There is an original insight where things reveal themselves to the consciousness directly undistorted. This is neither common perception with its underlying beliefs, nor analytical knowledge. Phenomenology wants to offer us access to such an insight, to investigate essential significant structures, that is to say, connections in the world which are not simply empirically perceived but are apodictically necessary irrespective of actual experience. For Husserl, the achievement of knowledge is simply, the accomplishing of a clear and firm grasp of some general meaning in whatever is under consideration. The accomplishment can take place in a variety of orders one which is logical. This notwithstanding, there are important realms of material sense, especially in perceptual order. To bring the matter home, grasp of meaning could be said to be essential knowledge. The grasping of meaning is knowledge of essence in so far as that meaning is grasped, analyzed, clarified and so on, and given some kind of determination on a general level. Husserl does not limit intuition only to that of essence. He is aware of the confusion that could arise in the analogy but takes his time to explain. It is likely that what Husserl tries to bring to the force is that there is in operation here, a proper and distinct mode of consciousness that has analogical

similarity to perceptual acts. There are two levels on which comparison between the essence intuition and perceptual intuition can be made. Firstly, on the act itself, and secondly, the object to which it is directed. The differences notwithstanding, a fundamental correspondence still exist and for that Husserl says "...we have not a mere superficial analogy, but a radical community of nature. Essential insight is still intuition, just as the eidetic object is still an object"²⁴. Between them each has a specific type of genuine object, which is genuinely given as an object to a specific act of attending grasp.

What type of object is this essence? Husserl answers "The essence (eidos) is an object of a new type. Just as the datum of individual or empirical intuition is an individual object, so the datum of essential intuition is a pure essence"²⁵

Object (Gegenstand) should be differentiated from just a thing (Ding), that is an object in the world of nature. Object (Gegenstand) means what is confronted in cognitive grasp. In both essence intuition and perceptual intuition, there is a true object and there is a true grasp of it in each case. "Empirical intuition, more specifically sense-experience, is consciousness of an individual object, and as an intuition agency 'brings it to givenness': as perception, to primordial givenness, to the consciousness of grasping the

object in 'a primordial way', in its 'bodily' selfhood. On quite similar lines, essential intuition is consciousness of something, of an 'object', a something towards which its glance is directed, a something 'self-given' within it; but which can then be 'presented' in other acts, vaguely or distinctly thought, made the subject of true and false predication - as is the case indeed with every 'object' in the necessarily extended sense proper to the formal - Logic'.²⁶ All said and done, this is not to say that there is no difference in the two intuitions mentioned. The difference lies in the fact that in the two intuitions mentioned, there is a grasp of individual concrete sensible object. The second on the other hand gives the general meaning as the object of attentive grasp. Here it is not difficult to see that the validity of the analogy does not lie in the visual aspect of the word 'intuition', but in the character of genuine givenness for an object as a genuine object that is implied in the notion of visual grasp.

For Husserl, no amount of theories can mislead us from what he calls the 'principle of principles' which states "that every primordial dator intuition is a source of authority (Rechtsquelle) for knowledge, that whatever presented itself in 'intuition' in primordial form (as it were in its bodily reality), is simply to be accepted as it gives itself out to be, though only within the limits in which it then presents itself".²⁷

Apart from the similarity which the analogy conveys, Husserl finds the ground for the intuition of essence in the intuition of the individual. This is made clear in the following sentences. "At first 'essence' indicated that which in the intimate self-being of an individual discloses to us 'what' it is. But every such what can be 'set out as idea'. Empirical of individual intuition can be transformed into essential insight (ideation) ... The object of each such insight is then the corresponding pure essence of eidos, whether it be the highest category of one of its specializations, right down to the fully 'concrete'²⁸.

For Husserl then, essence-intuition is founded on the intuition of the individual. "It lies undoubtedly in the intrinsic nature of essential intuition that it should rest on what is a chief factor of individual intuition, namely, the striving for this, the visible presence of individual fact, though it does not, to be sure, presuppose any apprehension of the individual or any recognition of its reality. Consequently, it is certain that no essential intuition is possible without the free possible of directing one's glance to an individual counterpart and of shaping an illustration; just as contrariwise no individual is possible without the free possibility of carrying out an act of ideation and therein directing one's glance upon the corresponding essence which exemplifies itself in something individually visible"²⁹. An individual then is not a singularity, a pure this or that. It possesses a what, a set of essential predicates that determine its density. For a name for this characteristic general structure any object

possesses, Husserl has this to say, "I therefore make use, as a foreign expression, of the terminologically unspent Eidos, and as a German expression of a term whose equivocations are harmless, though at times vexations, the word Wesen (Essence or Essential Being)"³⁰.

Husserl is insisting that the general invariance, or relatively invariant structures of an object, its eidos can be a matter for investigation. This arises from the fact that objects are grasped in some kind of generality in their 'what' whenever, for it to be understood and known with certainty in spontaneous learning. Consequently, deliberate eidetic clarification, the methodical attempt at the fullest possible evidentness for the eidos, the essential general meaning, is the aim of phenomenology.

The Phenomenological Method

The aim of phenomenology is the clarification of the essential structures or what Husserl calls 'eidetic elucidation'. Husserl is not only interested in conducting specific investigations in eidetic science. He wants to show the ground for such project. If this is true, the method must be dependent on the understanding of eidetic consciousness. This is the Programme of Logical Investigations. For Husserl pre-suppositionless, descriptive clarification of the essential structure of consciousness or the eidetic clarification of consciousness in all its forms, leads to the grasp of the eidetic structure

which is the essence - intuition.

"Every investigation in knowledge theory must be carried out upon a purely phenomenological base. The 'theoria' to which it aspires is nothing other than the reflective grasp and reaching of an understanding in the evidentness regarding what the act of thinking and knowing in general is, ie. according to its generic pure essence; what the modifications and forms are to which its essence is bound; what is implied with regard to these structures by such ideas as validity, justification, unmediated and mediated evidence and their opposites ... If this reflection on the meaning of knowledge is to yield not simply an opinion but, as is rigorously demanded here, a knowing insight, it must be carried out as a pure essence-intuition on the exemplar base of given experiences of thought and knowledge¹³¹.

For this objective to be achieved, recourse has to be made to two terms which acquire special meaning in Husserl's work. They are Besinnung and Erlebnis. The process of making evident, of clarifying and making genuinely self-present, is what Husserl calls Besinnung. This could mean realization. The effort to achieve cognitive realization is now directed towards one's experiencing of various acts and modes of consciousness, in the very living (erleben) of them. For Husserl "The whole stream of experience with its experiences lived after the mode of unreflecting consciousness can be made

the subject of a scientific study of the nature of the essence which should aim at systematic completeness, with reference, moreover, of all the possibilities of intentional aspects included in them, with reference also more specifically to the experiences of modified consciousness which may be in them and their intentional aspects"³². One can then talk of consciousness of Erlebnis, - experience in the living of it. Putting the two terms together, phenomenology can be said to be Besinnung der Erlebnis, that is to say, a cognitive realization of lived consciousness. Husserl designates the ideal term of process in which objects are brought to the point at which they stand as fully given as possible. Put in Lauer's words "If essences are to present themselves immediately to consciousness, they can do so only as ideal, since immediacy to consciousness and ideality are inseparable"³³. The achievement of this however, will depend on the application of the phenomenological method proper.

Eidetic Reduction

The objective of phenomenology as seen in the work of Husserl is the clarification of necessary eidetic structures. As this is the case, certain things follow. In the first place, the individual which forms the starting point for eidetic search is attended to as an instant of. This allows for the discernment of the base of the structure.

While it is true that perceptual intuiting of a real individual holds a privileged advantage, it is not by simple staring at some individuals that insight into essence comes. For Husserl "free fancies, assume a privileged position over and against perceptions, and that, even in the phenomenology of perception itself, excepting of course that of the sensory data"³⁴. While perception restricts, in fantasy, free imagination has not that restriction. Giving the example of a geometer when he is thinking geometrically, Husserl has this to say about fancy and actual facts, "But in actual drawing and modelling he is restricted; in fancy he has perfect freedom in the arbitrary recasting of figures he has imagined, in running over continuous series of possible shapes, in the production therefore of an infinite number of new creations; a freedom which opens up to him for the first time an entry into the spacious realms of essential possibility with their infinite horizons of essential knowledge"³⁵. By freely but systematically varying in imagination, the characteristics of the object meaning in question, certain necessary elements will become evident, owing to the fact that some variations cannot be pursued without radically changing that object meaning. Certain structures of meaning will define limits for free variation. This enables the object meaning to retain its identity within the order of generality. This identity retained so to say becomes the eidos that is being sought. As Husserl puts it, "The Eidos, the pure essence can be exemplified intuitively in the data of experience, data of perception, memory and so forth, but just as readily also in the mere data of fancy

(Phantasie). Hence, with the aim of grasping an essence itself in its primordial form, we can set out from corresponding empirical intuition, but we can also set out just as well from non-empirical intuitions, intuitions that do not apprehend sensory existence, intuitions rather 'of a merely imaginative order'³⁶. It then follows that it is not a matter of facts or any assertion about empirical fact as such. It is rather a matter for general meaning. It then means that as far as essence is concerned, the individual does not play a major role. Pure essence according to Husserl does not in the least comprise an assertion concerning the individual. For him it is a question of 'reduction' a reduction from particularity and individuality, from any kind of empirical condition, existence included to pure essence generality. This is the eidetic reduction. This forms the step that makes for an understanding of the full area of phenomenology. The field of pure phenomena. The next step for getting to pure phenomena is what Husserl calls the phenomenological reduction.

Phenomenological Reduction

The method was first presented by Husserl in a series of lectures in 1907. Extensive use of it was made in his Ideas for a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy of 1913. Generally speaking, this is a means of detecting the essential constitutive elements in our relationship with the world. It is a way of discovering the basic phenomenological facts that make

knowledge possible. The idea behind Husserl's phenomenological reduction is that we should concentrate on what is immanently given in our own stream of experience not as an empirical event in a natural world. It should be seen as an intentional structure to be clarified in a phenomenological reflection. It is Husserl's view that we go back to what is essential, basic and irreducible in our experiences. The phenomenological reduction is designed to help us in this. Its effect according to Husserl is to transform the consciousness into a transcendental consciousness. This transcendental consciousness he maintains remains as a phenomenological residuum after the reduction and according to him, it is here in the region of our transcendental subjectivity that a genuine phenomenological constitution of the world must begin. Husserl's concern for the status of 'objectivity' proper to eide (essences) of any kind leads to the necessity of knowing the basis for which it originates. Eidetic meaning arises within consciousness. Essences therefore are objects for consciousness and it is only in that way they can be. If its origin is to be discovered at all, it has to be in consciousness. It can then be said that it is in the realm, of our experience of attending to meaning that one can find the operations that lead to the setting up of general meanings as specific thematic materials for consideration and grasp. For any headway to be made here we have to ask what the essential structure of essence-intuition is. How do essences come to be objects? If the origin of the essence information is in consciousness, how can we come to a clear understanding of

consciousness as a whole, in its various modes of operation? Here the tendency is for Husserl to go the way of arriving at essence intuition itself. One must disregard any factors that are either contingent and non-essential or anything that is detrimental to achieving real or pure givenness. This for Husserl means overcoming the tendency to approach consciousness within the framework of the 'natural attitude'.

From the following quotation, the limit of the natural attitude can be clear "Natural knowledge begins with experience (Erfahrung) and remains within experience. Thus in that theoretical position which we call the 'natural' standpoint, the total field of possible research is indicated by a single word: this is , the World. The sciences proper to this original 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 (wirkliches) Being', ie., real empirical (reales) Being, and - since all that is real comes to self - concentration in the form of a cosmic unity - 'Being in the World' are meanings that coincide"³⁷.

The process of reduction to the phenomenologically essential can however begin at this natural level that is to say at the level of most ordinary experiences. An example could be given with a single chair in front of me. For this chair in front of me, I assume that there is something 'out there', an

object called chair which I can see and touch. I can also use it for certain purposes. But suppose I now disregard the transcendental object and concentrate on what is immediately given in my experiences of seeing a chair. I find myself now at a different level and my attitude changes. I am no longer looking at the chair as an objective 'out there' on which I can sit. I become aware of may having something as an object which I recognise as a chair. I do not merely have a chair percept. My experience does not consist merely of certain sensations. I become aware of what the percept means. I can distinguish in my experience between a sense context and a noematic content. This distinction remains preserved no matter whether the perceived chair is real or imaginary. I am now free to posit the noematic content at what I see as an ideal, ideal essence. This is because, by drawing this distinction, I am, as it were, stepping out of the immediate existential context and entering into

a relationship with the world around me. By the same token, I am now free, according to Husserl to posit an ego as an idealized projection of my own self. By doing all these, I am only suspending existential consideration about objects transcending experience for the time being. This is precisely what phenomenological reduction is all about.

From all that has been said, it is clear that Husserl's insistence on the suspension of existential empirical consideration as a first step towards

discovering the essential structures of intentional experiences and making clear the presuppositions of knowledge in general, commits him not only to a rejection of phenomenalism, it also commits him to a rejection of all theories which make assumption of a physical reality independent of ourselves the basis of an explanation of meaning and truth.

Transcendental Epoche

Talking about reduction in transcendental sense, Husserl uses the Greek word epoche to discuss the positive function of reduction leading us to discover the field of pure phenomena, the field of pure consciousness. The phenomenological epoche means the suspension of all judgment concerning the spatio-temporal existence of things which are assumed to be "out there". It involves a suspension or perhaps we should say a radical modification of what Husserl calls the 'natural standpoint'. The essence of the 'natural standpoint' is that it takes the world for granted.

For Husserl, the only problems we encounter from the natural standpoint are those of finding adequate methods for the establishing causal relationship within the world and for organising facts in their various regions. The natural sciences do exactly this work. While natural scientists automatically assume the existence of an objective world out there, the philosopher asks how such

a world is possible. The task of philosophy according to Husserl is to try to explain what is basically involved in our relationship with the world, how the world comes into being as it were. This requires that we should radically alter our attitude. For Husserl, the thesis of the natural standpoint must be disconnected or to put it in Husserl's favourite term, it must be put into brackets. This is not to say that the existence of the world is denied. What is at issue is the fact that no judgement is made about things out there in their spatio-temporal existence. On the brackets, Husserl has this to say "If I do this, as I am fully free to do, I do not then deny this 'world', as though I were a sophist, I do not doubt that it is there as though I were a sceptic; but I use the 'phenomenological', which completely bars me from using any judgement that concerns spatio-temporal existence (Dasein)"³⁸.

Husserl's aim is the clarification of what is involved in our relationship with the objective world through the analysis of the noetic-noemata structure of experiences. These structures are obscured from our natural standpoint. These must be brought out of these obscurities and elucidated. This according to him, is possible if we are to understand how we know what we know, and how the knowledge of the world is possible at all. For Husserl, phenomenological reduction is the key to understanding. It makes it possible for us to describe the 'pure facts' of a meta-empirical level. Husserl wants us to get back to the level that is unbiased by any theories of prejudices. Only

at this stage is knowledge possible. Husserl's concern is the need for "a science of true beginnings, or origins, of rizomata panton³⁹.

As universal epoche, the phenomenological reduction takes us back to absolute beginning. It takes us into the region of transcendental consciousness, the region, that is of transcendently purified experiences, and the transcendental ego as the unity of these experiences.

Similar philosophical experiment was made by Descartes and Husserl draws attention to this. He also pointed out the important difference between his and Descartes' position. Descartes' main concern was to establish what we can truly say we know for certain, and he used doubt as a methodical device in trying to discover this certainty. If we try to doubt everything, including existence of the world 'out there', we shall, on account of this, discover our doubting ego as something whose existence cannot be doubted. This is something that indubitably exists. It cannot be eliminated with the function as Descartes methodical doubts.

"Epoche does not provisionally 'eliminate' the world of things as Cartesian doubt does; it only changes our viewpoint and makes it possible to regard our experiences in a different light. The Cartesian doubt, according to Husserl, is 'one attempt at universal denial'; the epoche on the other hand, implies

merely the setting aside of the thesis of the 'natural standpoint', rendering this thesis inoperative, so that we may concentrate on the analysis of what is essentially involved in intentional experiences and explain what Husserl calls the 'meaning' of the world by clarifying this world's 'transcendental origins'⁴⁰.

The implications of epoche have far reaching consequences. By rendering this thesis of the natural standpoint inoperative or by putting it 'out of action' so to say, it follows that the natural sciences are ruled out in the philosophical realm. This is exactly what Husserl has in mind when he says "...all sciences which relate to this natural world, though they stand over so firm to me, though they fill me with wondering admiration, though I am far from any thought of objecting to them in the least degree, I disconnect them all, I make absolutely no use of their standards, I do not appropriate a single one of the propositions that enter into their systems, even though their evidential value is perfect, I take none of them, no one of them serves me for a foundation - so long, that is, as it is understood, in the way these sciences themselves understand it, as a truth concerning the realities of this world".⁴¹ As it stands, Husserl does not doubt the value of the natural sciences, he doubts the ability of these sciences, since they are the sciences of the natural standpoint, to help us to understand the world philosophically. The task of the epoche is to open up a 'new region of being' which is not empirical but transcendental. It can be said that for Husserl, the suspension of the

existential assumptions about the natural world does not only affect the natural sciences. It also affects what Husserl calls the 'eidetic sciences' such as logic and pure mathematics. Their deductive method cannot be used in our transcendental analysis.

The transcendental epoche or the phenomenological reduction is supposed to aid us in the revelation of the essential and irreducible presuppositions of knowledge. This it does by providing an access to the essential structures of experiences and the basic patterns of interrelationships obtaining between these experiences. For Husserl, this is possible only if all empirical existential assumptions are put in 'brackets'. As soon as this is done, it is Husserl's view that intentional experiences become describable in their 'eidetic purity'. Within the transcendental reduction, everything gets a meaning emanating from consciousness, but the difference between act and content (noesis and noema), like the difference between the subject and object, is not abrogated. On the contrary, an essential property of conscious act is their intentionality.

Intentionality

In line with the point of view reached through the phenomenological reduction, what has to be clear to us is the intentional structure of consciousness. This is what Husserl calls intentionality. For Husserl every

experience in one way or another participates in intentionality. "It is intentionality which characterizes consciousness in the pregnant sense of the term, and justifies us in describing the whole stream of experience as at once a stream of consciousness and unity of one consciousness"⁴². It follows that in as much as any phenomenon, any object appears, it appears object for subject. It appears as object Meant or 'intended' by a subject. An object has the meaning it has because it is attended to in such-and-such a way, or because it is 'intended' in such-and-such a way. Attending subject, and the object attended to, are inseparable correlates. This means that any act of attending to, or grasping an object is precisely an act of consciousness of object. Its whole identity is that of being an intending of subject, just as the object is necessarily an object for subject, just as the object is the object only as object-intended by subject⁴³. For Husserl, every experience in one way or the other participates in intentionality. It "signifies" according to him "nothing else than this universal fundamental property of consciousness to be consciousness of something"⁴⁴. Husserl also uses another formula that is reminiscent of Descartes, to indicate the nature of intentionality. This is the ego cogito cognitum. He goes on to say that "The transcendental heading, ego cogito, must therefore be broadened by adding one more number. Each cogito, each conscious process, we may also say, 'means something or other and bears in itself, in this manner peculiar to the meant its particular cogitatum. Each does this, moreover, in its own fashion"⁴⁵. This goes to say

that Intentionality is a descriptive characterization of the basic situation in consciousness in which there is attentiveness to a meaning on the part of a subject. Husserl's view is that it does not really matter whether the object so concerned is real or imagined. On this account he says, "The house-perception means a house - more precisely, as the individual house - and means in the fashion peculiar to perception; a house-memory means a house in the fashion peculiar to memory; a house-fantasy, in the fashion peculiar to fantasy"⁴⁶. This means that the phenomenon can be effectively described purely without the implication of a quantitative or metaphysical relationship. All said and done, the role of the subject in its attentiveness, and object under the aspect in which it is under attention cannot be ignored. It can be said that a phenomenological study of consciousness will consider subjective pole under the aspect of the particular intending action that may be concerned. Object on the other hand, will be considered according to the particular sense or meaning-aspect within which it is showing itself.

It then follows that the two correlative avenues are involved in phenomenological description of an act of intending consciousness. One concerns the attending or intending actions. The other concerns the attended or the intended sense or meaning through which an object is attained. The first of this is Husserl's noetic analysis, dealing with the noesis involved. He calls the second noematic analysis, dealing with the noema or noematic sense

involved. On the correlates just discussed, Husserl has this to say "on the one hand, the descriptions of intentional objects as such, with regard to the determinations attributed to it in the modes of consciousness concerned...is called noematic. Its counterpart is noetic description, which concerns the modes of the cogito/itself, the modes of consciousness (for example: perception recollection, retention), which the modal difference inherent in them (for example: differences in clarity and distinctness)"⁴⁷. It can be said that it is only in condition of phenomenologically an object for and within consciousness that anything could possess meaning-fullness. It follows that an object for perceptual consciousness, grasped as really existing autonomously, is meaningful in that way precisely in being phenomenologically an object of that character within intentional consciousness. This however, is not to say that a knowing substance possesses the thing known out of its own substance. As he puts it, "Just as the reduced Ego is not a piece of the world, so, conversely, neither the worldly nor any worldly object is a piece of my Ego...This 'transcendence' is part of the intrinsic sense of anything worldly, despite the fact that anything worldly necessarily acquires all sense determining it, along with its existential status, exclusively from my experiencing..."⁴⁸. It then follows that anything that makes its appearance does so in my consciousness, in my experiencing it.

It is in virtue of my radiating an act of attention - intention - that an object will

be an object phenomenologically. As meaningful, as appearing in this or that fashion depends on my intentional act. Upon my activation of the field in grasping of this object. For Husserl, an object, in whatever noematic sense it has, is 'constituted' by my noetic act.

This is to say that the meaning is set up or formulated in my attention to it. Its unity and identity as a phenomenon is such that it is by the virtue of its inseparable correlate, the act of intending it.

As a phenomenological subject, I notice that "a basic and essential difference arises between Being as Experience and Being as a thing"⁴⁹, between "Being as Consciousness and Being as 'declaring' itself in consciousness, or as 'transcendent' Being"⁵⁰ between "transcendental and transcendent Being"⁵¹. In all these I realise the phenomenological dependence of the second upon the first because "The realm of transcendental consciousness had proved, as a result of phenomenological reduction, to be, in a certain sense, a realm of 'absolute' Being. It is the original category of Being generally (or, as we would put it, the original region), in which all other regions of Being have their root, to which they are essentially related, on which they have therefore one and all dependent in an essential way"⁵².

It can be said that "Intentional constitution and the transcendent as appearing

in the transcendental are, then, two basic points that must be understood clearly...Simply put, the phenomenologically transcendent is what appears in consciousness as essentially other than consciousness, while consciousness itself and all its functioning and factors is the phenomenologically transcendental, in as much as it is the activator of the transcendental field laid open by the phenomenological or transcendental reduction"⁵³. Objects of a formal type "are in a certain way" 'transcendent' to pure consciousness, and not to be really found in it"⁵⁴. Although Husserl sees logic as quite a possible way into transcendental phenomenology, on account of the fact that the phenomenologist has to accept the concept and propositions which formal logic has decreed concerning meanings in general, there is a possibility on close examination, certain provisional conditions for placing formal logic under 'brackets'. Not only formal logic but all the disciplines of formal mathesis (algebra, theory of numbers, theory of manifolds, and so on). This is clear when he says, "if we may take for granted that the inquiry of phenomenology into Pure Consciousness sets itself and needs set itself no other task than that of making such descriptive analyses can be resolved into pure intuition, the theoretical framework of the mathematical disciplines and all the theorems which develop within it cannot be of any service"⁵⁵. Having said this, it does not mean that phenomenology has nothing to do with formal logic however, the "logical propositions to which it might find occasion to refer would throughout be logical axioms such as the principle of contradiction, whose

universal and absolute validity, however, it could make transparent by the help of the examples taken from the data of its own domain⁵⁶. With regard to the intentional presentation of objects or constitution properly speaking, phenomenological reflection shows that for an object to be given, does not mean a passive receiving of object data, it rather means that an object comes to definiteness and unity in the complexity of its aspects and ways of appearing only in virtue of attending - intending - action of a subject. To be given therefore means to be constituted. Intuiting of an individual is a constituting of it as that individual, a bringing of that kind of meaning to definiteness and givenness. Intuiting an eidōs, an essence, is a constituting of it as that eidōs. Bringing eidetic structure to intuitional evidentness could be said to mean accomplishing, by appropriate method the realization of a certain meaning in its essentials. To be able to do this is what Husserl calls 'first hand giving intuition'. In a word, it could be said that constitution is the action of meaning giving consciousness, of noetic intentionality, by which an object becomes a phenomenon in some noematic sense.

Having said this much, we can define phenomenology according to Husserl as "a pure descriptive discipline which studies the whole field of pure transcendental consciousness in the light of pure intuition"⁵⁷. What should the actions of the phenomenologist be? Husserl speaking for the rest says "To claim nothing that we cannot make essentially transparent to ourselves by

reference to Consciousness and on purely immanent lines⁵⁸.

Philosophical phenomenology did not end with Husserl, after him, others followed in his footsteps. What contributions did they make to Husserl's original ideas. How did they apply the phenomenological method? This we shall find out in looking at the works of some of his successors. For that we shall look at the works of Martin Heidegger and the works of Maurice Merleau-Ponty.

Martin Heidegger's Understanding of Phenomenology.

Phenomenology did not begin and end with the works of Edmund Husserl. Having paid so much attention to his work, we now turn to other scholars to see how far their idea of phenomenology is in keeping with Husserl's. We begin with the work of Martin Heidegger. The justification for choosing of Martin Heidegger can be seen in the following quotation from Spiegelberg, "The accepted story, especially among outsiders, says that Heidegger is Husserl's legitimate heir, as evidenced by his succession to Husserl's chair in Freiburg; that consequently Heidegger's philosophy represents the rightful development of Husserl's phenomenology; and that the case for or against phenomenology can be settled by looking at its logical outcome in Heidegger's work"⁵⁹.

The truth and the falsity of this statement notwithstanding, we shall try to find out what Heidegger means by phenomenology and how far he did agree or disagree with Husserl.

Born at Messkirch, Baden in 1889 of Catholic parents, Heidegger was sent as a boarder to a Catholic gymnasium in 1903 under the Rectorship of Conrad Grober. In 1907 Grober gave Heidegger a copy of Franz Brentano's dissertation Von der Mannig - fachen Bedeutung des Seienden bei Aristotle

(on the Manifold Sense of Being according to Aristotle). This initiated his life-long fascination with Aristotle and the meaning of Being. At the age of seventeen, Heidegger proceeded to the Jesuit seminary in Freiburg. Having already been initiated into the rudiments of the Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy, he found himself prepared for his work in philosophy. He left the seminary after one year. By the time he was twenty years old, he had given up the idea of becoming a priest. From 1909 to 1917 when he went into military service, he broke out of his Catholic background and read widely, including the works of Hegel, Schelling, Holderlin, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, and Dostoevsky. Heidegger studied under Heinrich Rickert whose main interest was the methodology of the historical sciences. He also read Husserl's Logical Investigations. His doctoral dissertation Die Lehre vom Urteil in Psychologismus (The Doctrine of Judgement in Psychologism) presented in 1914 showed the influence of both Rickert and Husserl.

When Husserl arrived in Freiburg in 1916. Heidegger had not only completed his studies under Heinrich Rickert, but had been admitted as a Privatdozent. His inaugural lectures on July 27, 1915 dealt with the 'Concept of Time in Historiography'.

When Husserl came to Freiburg, he made Heidegger one of his assistants, and soon discovered the originality and vigour of his new colleague.

Heidegger's lively interest in phenomenology - made Husserl hope that his own phenomenology would be developed. Heidegger's identification with phenomenology is evidenced by the titles of the series of lectures he gave from 1919, 'Phenomenology and Transcendental Philosophy of Value'. From then on until his transfer to Marburg as a full professor in 1923, Heidegger offered courses and seminars every semester in the titles of which the word 'phenomenology' always occurred. This continued even at Marburg where he was independent of Husserl. In 1928 when Heidegger was invited back to Freiburg to succeed Husserl, it was as a faithful disciple. Though his first semester courses were announced as 'Phenomenology', he was now nearly forty and had discovered his own way which was rapidly to lead him away from anything that might be labelled phenomenology as known to Husserl.

Though Heidegger published profusely, what he understands as phenomenology is spelt out in his major work Sein and Zeit⁶⁰. This treatise first appeared in the Spring of 1927 in the Jahrbuch fur Phanomenologie und phanomenologische Forschung edited by Edmund Husserl and was published simultaneously in a special printing⁶¹. In this book, Heidegger carefully explains the sense in which he wishes to employ the phenomenological method. In Husserl's phenomenology the concept of phenomenology was not clear from the start. When he took up phenomenology, he did not explain what he meant by the word. It was as

his idea matured into something distinctive and fundamental for philosophy that he felt the need for a redefinition. After abandoning Brentano's idea of phenomenology in his Logical Investigations, he produces a precise meaning first in his lectures on the Idea of Phenomenology of 1907 and in the introduction to the Ideen. Here as already discussed in the section on Husserl, the pure phenomena of the new phenomenology are non-individual. It is the general essence of empirical phenomena obtained by eidetic reduction. In addition to that, they are as non-real refined by what he calls the phenomenological reduction which has bracketed their reality. Consequently, their ontological or metaphysical status was deliberately left undecided while the final word was that they owed their being to consciousness.

What does Heidegger understand as phenomenology? It can be seen that Heidegger decides to say what he has to say about phenomenology in his treatment of the meaning of 'Being'. "With the question of the meaning of Being, our investigations comes up against the fundamental question of philosophy. This is the one that must be treated phenomenologically"¹⁶². Heidegger does not see the question of the approach phenomenologically as something that represents a 'standpoint' or special 'direction'. For him it does not constitute the 'what' of the research but the 'how'. This is to say that 'phenomenology' for him "signifies primarily a methodological conception"¹⁶³. In line with Husserl who sees the progress of phenomenology as lying in

presuppositionlessness, Heidegger says "the term 'phenomenology' expresses a maxim which can be formulated as 'To the things themselves'. It is opposed to all free-floating constructions and accidental findings; it is opposed to taking over any conceptions which only seem to have been demonstrated; it is opposed to those pseudo-questions which parade themselves as 'problems', often for generations at a time"⁶⁴. By the phrase 'back to the things themselves', Heidegger does not mean to that stage in consciousness. Already here the difference between him and Husserl is evident. His concept of phenomenon is "that which shows itself in itself" or that which is manifested. This does not remove from the fact that phenomena sometimes hides behind a deceptive or misleading appearance. It is also clear, however, that it is not the distillate of special reductive operations. It is rather an autonomous entity with power of its own, independent of, and prior to our thinking. Heidegger is well aware of the common use of the word as applied to the empirical world which is also the phenomena of the natural sciences.

Heidegger goes further to analyze the word phenomenology and comes to the conclusion that phenomenology in the last analyses is "the science of phenomena"⁶⁵. Heidegger distinguishes the formal concept of phenomena from the phenomenological concept. For him the phenomenological phenomenon is distinctive. He poses several questions. He answers his questions by stating that phenomenological phenomenon as "something that

proximally and for the most part does not show itself at all: it is something that lies hidden, in contrast to that which proximally and for the most part does show itself, but at the same time is something that belongs to what shows itself, and it belongs to it so essentially as to constitute its meaning and its ground"⁶⁶.

For Heidegger, that which remains 'hidden' as such is not an entity but the Being of a thing itself. The covering up or the hiddenness sometimes results in its getting lost. It is then the work of phenomenology to make it appear. The demand of phenomenology is for this distinctive quality of a thing to appear. It becomes our only way to get access to this ground. Heidegger sees phenomenology as "our way of access to what is to be the theme of ontology, and it is our way of giving it demonstrative precision. Only as phenomenology is ontology possible"⁶⁷. For him the phenomenological phenomena is that behind which nothing else appears. In Being and Time Heidegger defines philosophy as a "universal phenomenological ontology, and takes its departure from the hermeneutic of Dasein, which, as an analytic of existence, has made fast the guiding-line for all philosophical inquiry at the point where it arises and to which it returns"⁶⁸. For Heidegger, the primary consideration which defines the philosophical task is the problem of Being. The proper method of a philosophical analysis which seeks to delineate the structures and explicate the meaning of Being is phenomenology. The point

of departure of such an ontological analysis which employs the phenomenological method is hermeneutics or the historical interpretation of existence. The philosopher as an ontologist seeks to delineate the character and the universal structure of Being as they manifest themselves in phenomena. The discernment of Being (Sein) in which is (Seienden) and the explication of Being is the task of ontology.

Here, Heidegger is in accord with the traditional philosophers whose question has been, what is the nature of Being? This is the question he shares with Anaximander, Parmenides, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Duns, Scotus, Spinoza and Hegel. The essence of truth as Heidegger wrote in one of his essays is the disclosing of meaning of Being⁶⁹. The proper method of an ontological analysis which seeks to explicate the meaning is the method of descriptive phenomenology. Since this is the case, philosophy must be understood as a phenomenological ontology. The phenomenological method as we know from Husserl has for its guiding principles, 'back to the data themselves'. Only by strict adherence to this phenomenological formula, argues Heidegger, are we able to remove all abstract constructions and formulations and other presuppositions that prevent us from getting to the real phenomenon.

Heidegger sees the task of the phenomenologist as being able to describe, analyze and interpret the data of immediate experience. Any ontological

description which remains true to the phenomenological method can never cut itself off from the original data. Heidegger rejects without qualification any rationalistic metaphysical speculations and a priori epistemological constructions which focus their attention upon mental and cognitive processes to the neglect of the phenomena themselves. Heidegger is in agreement with Husserl in their criticism of the way in which philosophy and even metaphysics and the natural sciences have diverted man's attention away from the real phenomena. He accuses philosophers of being unable to separate Being from the things-in-Being. By this, they have even deviated from original Greek thought. Heidegger intends to study Being by taking a specific thing in Being, Dasein. This reason for choosing Dasein as the starting point of his ontology which is only possible phenomenologically is that "Dasein is an entity which does not just occur among other entities. Rather it is ontically distinguished by the fact that, in its very Being, that Being is an issue for it. But in that case, this is a constitutive state of Dasein's Being, and this implies that Dasein, in its Being, has a relationship towards that Being - a relationship which itself is one of Being"⁷⁰. Why start from Dasein as the basis of the ontology. In this Heidegger justifies himself by saying that "Basically, all ontology, no matter how rich and firmly compacted a system of categories it has at its disposal, remains blind and perverted from its own most aim, if it has not first adequately clarified the meaning of Being, and conceived this clarification as its fundamental task"⁷¹. If the phenomenon

of Being is to be arrived at, that will disclose Being itself, there has to be some act of purification, Being has to be made to have its own history free from any other conceptual interpretations. If this is to be achieved, Heidegger says, "we are to destroy the traditional content of ancient ontology until we arrive at those primordial experiences in which we achieved our first ways of determining the nature of being"...⁷².

The phenomenological procedure of 'destruction' involves an emancipation from any possible epistemological prejudgments and a priori limitations which can only distort the original phenomena in question or indeed prevent their manifestation. The data or the phenomena are always prior to man's logical and epistemological theories about them. If the aim of the phenomenological method is to return to the primary data as they are given, and Heidegger's phenomenology signifies primarily a methodological conception, it then follows that phenomenology so understood provides the appropriate mode of access to that which constitutes the subject matter of ontological investigation-Being.

In Heidegger's phenomenological method can also be found a radical doctrine of intentionality. Though its roots can be traced back to medieval philosophy, Husserl and Brentano are clearly in the background. He is with them in his view that intentionality is one presupposition of the phenomenological method. In his *Ideas*, Husserl made the notion of

intentionality a fundamental theme of his philosophy. Intentionality for Husserl as we saw in the section on Husserl is the basic structure of consciousness. The act of consciousness (noesis) is always directed towards the intentional object (noema). Heidegger follows Husserl in the accentuation of the theme of intentionality but he regards as more inclusive the framework in which intentionality really functions. For Husserl, the intentional relation of the act of knowing and the thing as known as primarily a cognitive or theoretical operation which he calls 'pure consciousness'.

For Heidegger, the intentional structure is the present. It is not only in the realm of consciousness understood in terms of man's precognitive awareness. In Being and Time Heidegger avoids the traditional way of speaking about man in terms of the conscious subject, I and the like. In its place he uses the word Dasein which is to say being-there. Heidegger then finds the starting point of the analysis of the Dasein in averageness and everydayness. In the mode of being which we come across in the first instance, in the mode of being in which we ourselves are. "Dasein exists. Furthermore, Dasein is an entity which in each case I myself am. Mineness belongs to any existent Dasein, and belongs to it as the condition which makes authenticity and inauthenticity possible. In each case Dasein exists in one or other of these two modes, or else it is modally undifferentiated"⁷³. The main characteristic of Dasein however, is that of 'Being-in-the-world'. Heidegger tries to explain

what he means by 'Being-in-the-world' by first analyzing Being in which cannot be thought of "as the Being-present-at-hand of some corporal Thing (such as a human body) 'in' an entity which is present-at-hand. Nor does the term 'Being-in' mean a spatial in-one-anotherness' of things present-at-hand, any more than the word 'in' primordially signifies a spatial relationship of this kind..." 'Being-in' is thus the formal existential expression for the Being of Dasein which has Being-in-the-world as its essential state"⁷⁴. In distinguishing Being-in as an existential and thing like entity or as something present-at-hand, we are however not saying that Being-in has no relation to space.

However, this is a relation to which we cannot gain access so long as we approach it in terms of the spatial relation of one thing being contained in another. Heidegger puts it this way "On the contrary, Dasein itself has a 'Being-in-space' of its own; but this in turn is possible only on the basis of Being-in the world in general"⁷⁵.

By the 'world' Heidegger does not mean entities into which various categories are classified. Man, things made by man, natural things. By putting these things together, we cannot arrive at the world. The fact that these things can be traced to their ultimate foundation in nature does not make them constitute the world. In a way the enumeration of things in the world would be said to pre-phenomenological. "Ontologically, 'world' is not a way of characterizing

those entities which Dasein essentially is not; it is rather a characteristic of Dasein itself"⁷⁶.

Man intends his world. So it is an ontological feature of human intentionality. This is because the 'world' from the beginning is determined as an element in Being-in-the-world which is the basic structure of man relating himself to reality. We are not unfamiliar with the use of the world 'world' in this way. As Bernsen puts it, "We speak of the 'world of the schizophrenic' or we ask if the natives of the Bellona Islands do not (or did not) decidedly live in another 'world' than does today's European, and the answers are left to some of the hermeneutic sciences, in casu psychiatry and ethnography of anthropology"⁷⁷. man not only intends his world in perceiving and judging but also in the use of tools or utensils (Zeug) in his daily practical concern (Besorgen) and his encounter and response to other selves who share his world which Heidegger calls solitude. "Being-in-the-world, as concern, is fascinated by the world with which it is concerned"⁷⁸. In Dasein there is no real dichotomy when it comes to intentionality. It is not to say that Dasein is the subject that stands out to grasp a particular tool. On the other hand, "when Dasein directs itself towards something and grasps it, it does not somehow first get out of an inner sphere in which it has proximally encapsulated, but its primary kind of Being is such that it is always 'outside' alongside entities which it encounters and which belong to a world already discovered. Nor is any inner sphere

abandoned when Dasein dwells alongside the entity to be known, and determines its character; but even in this 'Being-outside' alongside the object, Dasein is still 'inside', if we understand this in the correct sense; that is to say, it is itself 'inside' as a Being-in-the-world which knows"⁷⁹.

Prior to any cognitive reflection, there is primordial, pre-conceptual awareness through which man already understands himself fundamentally related to this world. For Heidegger, human being or Dasein has a pre-conceptual understanding of Being in which the intentional experience is already operative.

A similar attempt is made by Sartre in the development of his notion of cogito prereflexi to reach preconceived level of experience. The primacy of cognitive knowledge is abandoned. The world is disclosed through man's prereflective acts⁸⁰. Mood in its various forms or modifications of melancholy, boredom, fear and despair discloses possible modes of Dasein's Being-in-the-world. For Heidegger, "The mood has already disclosed, in every case, Being-in-the-world as a whole, and makes it possible first of all to direct oneself towards something. Having a mood is not related to the physical in the first instance, and is not itself an inner condition which then reaches forth in an enigmatical way and puts its mark on Things and persons. It is in this that the second essential characteristic of states-of-mind shows itself. We have seen that the

World, Dasein - with and existence are equiprimordially disclosed; and state-of-mind is a basic existential species of their disclosedness, because this disclosedness itself is essentially Being-in-the-world"⁸¹.

For Heidegger, attunement or mood has in addition the function of giving to Dasein itself access to its aspect thrownness. "The expression 'thrownness'; is meant to suggest the facility of its being delivered over. The 'that it is and has to be' which is disclosed in Dasein's state-of-mind is not the same 'that-it-is' which expresses ontologico-categorically the factuality belonging to presence-at-hand... Facticity is not the factuality of the factum brutum of something present-at-hand, but a characteristic of Dasein's Being - one which has been taken up into existence, even if proximally it has been thrust aside. That 'that-it-is' of facticity never becomes something that we can come across by beholding it"⁸². It then follows that "Dasein's openness to the world is constituted existentially by the attunement of a state-of-mind"⁸³. From this it can be seen that attunement is by no means a phenomenon that is limited merely to the subject and his perceptions. It is rather a mode of being open by which the world can become accessible in various ways. Here mode is understood as an intentional determinant. To say that Dasein is in the world, is to say that he lives, dwells and sojourns in the world.

Heidegger's accentuation of the pre-conceptual understanding of Being

constitutes an explicit rejection of the epistemological subject or the res cogitans as formulated in the Cartesian tradition. There is never an isolated 'I' given without a world, which is then confronted with the task of formulating a theory of knowledge to account for both its own existence and that of an 'external world' prior to the epistemological question. There is a pre-conceptual disclosure of man's relation to his world. For Heidegger, the mistake of Descartes was that he never accounted for the understanding of the 'sum' which is presupposed by the cogito. With the cogito sum Descartes claimed to provide philosophy with a new and certain foundation. However, what he leaves as undetermined is the kind of Being characterised the res cogitans, that is to say, the meaning of the sum.

For Heidegger in line with Kierkegaard, the primary datum is not the thinking subject of the Cartesian cogito, but the sum or the act of existing, and this in a sense of already Being-in-the-world. In all man's practical and personal concerns, a world is pre-supposed. To exist is to find oneself in a world which one is related to in one or several manifestations of care (Sorge). In one's construction and use of tools, one encounters and deals with others.

More could be said on the general development of Being and Time, but we conclude this section with a summary of Heidegger's view of phenomenology.

The distinctive character of Heidegger's phenomenological ontology is that it is an ontology of Dasein or human existence. For this reason it is sometimes mistaken for an existentialist ontology. The point of departure is the hermeneutics of concrete experience of the historically existing self. Here it can be seen that such phenomenological ontology contrasts with Husserl's conception. For Husserl, at least at the time of his 'Writings' the name 'ontology' stood not for science of the Being of things, in Being. Primarily, it stood for a branch of pure logic, that is the eidetic science of the pervasive category of all things in Being (formal ontology). This was followed by regional ontologies dealing with supreme categories of each science in their different essential natures. The difference between Husserl and Heidegger is clear here. Heidegger's philosophical intention is to delineate the universal structure of human beings as they show themselves in the actualization of existence. Man, in his historical existence, provides the gateway to the understanding of Being⁸⁴. Historical existence itself becomes the subject of a hermeneutic interpretation and phenomenological description. Man is indelibly historical. History is a fundamental determinant of his nature. This Being (Dasein) is in himself historical, thus unique. Ontological illumination of this Being necessarily becomes an historical interpretation.

It is clear from the work of Heidegger that even at the time when Husserl was still proposing his idea of phenomenology, difference was already

conspicuous.

We shall now look at the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty to conclude our investigation of the phenomenological method.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty and the Phenomenological Method

Born in Normandy (La Rochelle) in 1908, Maurice Merleau-Ponty graduated from L'École Normale in 1930. After teaching in several lycées, he returned there as an agrégé répétiteur in 1935.⁸⁵ After demobilization from the army in 1940, he resumed his lycée teaching. During this time he was associated with the resistance movement. After the war, he became master of conference and later professor at the University of Lyon. From 1949 to 1952, he was professor of child psychology and pedagogy at the Sorbonne from where he was called to Collège de France where he was to assume the chair previously held by Bergson, Leroy, Gilson and Lavell, a position he held until his death in 1961.

The justification on examining the work of Merleau-Ponty can be seen in the fact that he was the author of the first French work which displays the word 'phénoménologie' in its main title⁸⁶, The Phenomenology of Perception⁸⁷.

It was Merleau-Ponty's ambition to develop a non-Cartesian phenomenology which would preserve the basic intention of Husserl's transcendental phenomenology. Merleau-Ponty was first introduced to Husserl's writing in 1935 by Jean Paul Sartre who recommended that he read Husserl's Ideas⁸⁸. He did that and read other works of Husserl as well, but before long, he

found that his interest in Husserl lay in the themes of the then unpublished and inaccessible works of Husserl's later thinking. These were available to him solely from the published first half of the Crisis lectures of 1936. He saw these themes as dominant in his later thinking. This is particularly true of the life and the perceptual consciousness because these coincided with his main concerns. From 1944-1948 Merleau-Ponty had access to some of the most important studies of the unpublished Husserlian legacy⁸⁹ Taking into account other texts which he was able to consult from 1950-1960, he became acquainted with both the published and unpublished works of Husserl. He placed much emphasis on the unpublished texts. This was because, for him, all Husserl's philosophy is almost entirely contained in the unpublished writing⁹⁰. For Merleau-Ponty, the essence of Husserl's thought was the phenomenology of his later thinking, the phenomenology of the life-world and perceptual consciousness.

Merleau-Ponty is not interested in merely explicating Husserl. For him phenomenology is meant to be a science that describes what appears and he continues the movement on his own account without regard to orthodoxy⁹¹. This is evident from Merleau-Ponty's own writings. The opening sentence in his first major work, The Structure of Behaviour⁹² which appeared in 1942 is an indicator of what he has to say about philosophy "Our goal is to understand the relations of consciousness and nature, organic,

psychological or even social"⁹³ This implies that for him, biology, psychology and indeed all we term objective sciences are unable to account for these relations. This is followed by the main book for which he consulted the Husserlian texts at Louvain. After the Phenomenology of Perception most of his philosophical thoughts were expressed in the form of articles or addresses. From time to time, collections of those shorter pieces were published. Humanism and Terror, 1947, Sense and Non Sense in 1948, The Adventures of Dialectics in 1955, and the Signs in 1960⁹⁴. Attention should also be drawn to two writings. The first is the study of Husserl's position on the relation between phenomenology and certain sciences dealing with man, psychology, linguistics and history in particular. These were given in a series of lectures in Sorbonne between 1950-1951 under the title The Science of Man and Phenomenology⁹⁵ Here Merleau-Ponty interprets Husserl's phenomenology particularly the essence-intuition of Husserl. Mention must also be made of The Visible and the Invisible which was published posthumously. It contains the materials Merleau-Ponty was working on before his death in 1961 and shows the position he had reached as regards phenomenology.

What Merleau-Ponty has to say about phenomenology is set out in the Phenomenology of Perception particularly in the Introduction. He begins by asking the question 'What is Phenomenology?' Although to him the posing

of such a question seems strange after the long history of phenomenology has had since the turn of the century due to the work of Husserl, he provides an answer. Phenomenology "is the study of essences". But phenomenology is also a philosophy which puts essences back into existence, and does not expect to arrive at an understanding of man and the world from any starting point other than that of their 'facticity'"⁹⁶ Having said this, he follows most of the themes in Husserl, making them the central concern of his phenomenology. When he talks of phenomenology as "a transcendental philosophy which places in abeyance the assertions arising out of the natural attitude, the better to understand them,"⁹⁷, he is not saying anything other than what Husserl said as regards bracketing the natural world to get to the essence intuition. In saying that "it is also a philosophy for which the world is always 'already there' before reflection begins - as an inalienable presence"⁹⁸, he is almost echoing Heidegger. Merleau-Ponty made the non Cartesian Husserl and the Husserl of later life and the later philosophy his starting point. It was with this other phenomenology, the phenomenology towards which Husserl moved as he advanced from the 'eidetic' method or logicism of his earlier stage to the existentialism of the last period that Merleau-Ponty cast his lot. Whether Merleau-Ponty identified with the latter or earlier Husserl, it is obvious that both he and Husserl aim to achieve as purely as possible an uncovering of the phenomenal field. For Merleau-Ponty the "phenomenal field is not an 'inner world', the 'phenomenon' is not

"a state of consciousness", or a 'mental fact' and the experience of phenomena is not an act of introspection or an intuition in Bergson's sense"⁹⁹.

At this stage, it is easy to see the difference between the work of Merleau-Ponty and that of Husserl. If for Merleau-Ponty what matters is the perceptual field of consciousness, it means that this situation is not reached out of the objective defense of essences. Neither is it out of the procedure for clarifying essence with the movement that begins in logic and proceeds to perceptual consciousness. Instead, he begins with consciousness as conducted in psychology in order to move directly into an attitude and approach to experience on a perceptual level, unmodified by specific exigencies of natural sciences. To come to this perceptual experience, a sifting will be done. In Husserl's term this will be the *epoché* which corresponds to Merleau-Ponty's setting aside of the 'préjude du monde' of the implicit or explicit notion of the world as an itself objective world. He finds such presuppositions operating in the scientific studies of perception. "Scientific points of view, according to which my existence is a moment of the world's, are always both naive and at the same time dishonest, because they take for granted, without explicitly mentioning, the other point of view, namely that of consciousness, through which from the outset a world forms itself around me and begins to exist for me"¹⁰⁰ In the Phenomenology of Perception he attacks this attitude of the

sciences and sees the attitude as an obstacle to getting to the lived experience. This having been done, Merleau-Ponty invites us again to find a direct experience that has to be at least provisionally in relation to scientific knowledge, psychology reflection. "The sensible configuration of an object or a gesture which the criticism of the constancy hypothesis brings before our eyes, is not grasped in some inexpressible coincidence, it is understood through a sort of act of appropriation which we call experience when we say we have 'found' the rabbit in the foliage of a puzzle ... once the prejudice of sensation has been banished, a face, a signature, a form of behaviour cease to be mere visual data whose psychological meaning is to be sought in our inner experience, and the mental life of others becomes an immediate object, a whole charged with immanent meaning"¹⁰¹. In pursuit of this objective Merleau-Ponty works out a detailed criticism of psychology, uncovering inherent difficulties and inconsistencies. At the same time he finds and follows leads towards that new type of analysis which he then enters directly, namely, analysis of the phenomenal field as it is discovered lying under, and within our natural point of view, scientific construction, explanation and the reflective procedure of traditional philosophies. "Psychological reflection, once begun, then, outruns itself through its own momentum. Having recognized the originality of phenomena in relation to the objective world..., it is led to integrate with them every possible object and to try to find out how that object is constituted through them. At the same time the phenomenal field

becomes a transcendental field. Since it is now the universal focus of knowledge, consciousness definitely ceases to be a particular region of being, a certain collection of 'mental' contents; it no longer resides of and is no longer confined within the domain of 'forms', like all things, exist for it. It can no longer be a question of describing the world of living experience which it carried within itself like some opaque datum, it has to be constituted"¹⁰² For Merleau-Ponty the first philosophical task is to return to the world as lived in experience, to find again the phenomena, the living experience layer through which other things are first given, the system in 'Self-others-world'. "The system 'Self-others-world' is in its turn taken as an object of analysis and it is now a matter of awakening the thoughts which constitute other people, myself as individual subject and the world as a pole of my perception".¹⁰³ This act is what Merleau-Ponty describes as the phenomenological reduction in the sense given to it by Husserl. The reduction by Merleau-Ponty as pointed out here can be seen to be in contrast to Husserl's idea of arriving at reductions. As Schmidt puts it "With this interpretation of the goal of the phenomenological reduction, all the distinctions Husserl had so laboriously drawn between the natural and the transcendental attitudes crumbled".¹⁰⁴

For Merleau-Ponty the phenomenon is seen as the function of expressing between the objects and the subjects and the presence of solid structure in both which distinguishes phenomena from mere appearing. About phenomena

Merleau-Ponty says "Their appearance is not the external unfolding of a pre-existing reason. It is not because the 'form' produces a certain state of equilibrium, solving a problem of maximum coherence and, in the Kantian sense, making a world possible, that it enjoys a privileged place in our perception; it is the very appearance of the world and not the condition of its possibility; it is the birth of a norm and is not realized according to a norm; it is the identity of the external and the internal and not the projection of the internal in the external."¹⁰⁵

It is at the same time not an outcome of the circulation of some mental state, nor is it an idea. For Merleau-Ponty, there is nothing like a universal constituting consciousness. For a reflection to maintain in the object in which it bears, its descriptive characteristics, it must not be seen as a return to a universal reason. Rather "we must regard it as a creative operation which itself participated in the facticity of that experience. That is why phenomenology, alone of all philosophies talks about a transcendental field. This word indicates that reflection never holds, arrayed and objectified before its gaze, the whole world and the plurality of monads, and this view is never other than partial and limited power"¹⁰⁶ A discipline devoted to the study of these phenomena become phenomenology. Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology has to contend itself with the rejection of certain positions and conceptions in order to let the phenomenon in question be seen purely as it is

primordially. He sees two positions as obstacles to getting to the primordial phenomena. The first he calls the empiricist, the second he calls intellectualist. The former accords primacy to nature and the latter to consciousness. The difference between 'empiricist approach and the intellectualist is that the first sees the fully determined universe as all given in itself, while the second sees pure thought on the part of the subject to be the basis of reality.

In the Phenomenology of Perception, Merleau-Ponty sees the frame of mind held by both the empiricist and the intellectualist positions as beginning with the idea of perception and not with the phenomenon of perception itself. It is to detach oneself from the experience of perception only to attend to the idealized concept of it. Consequently, the primary task of reflection is to reverse this disorientation and to recover the basic phenomenon in its authenticity as the starting point of philosophy. One has to replace ideas, meanings previously taken to be evident and assure, 'objective' and determinate, in the matrix from which they take their origin. For Merleau-Ponty a return to the phenomenon is a return to a type of reality anterior to the dichotomous terms within which the two classical terms move. Beyond the en-soi and the pour-soi, the phenomenon of perception manifest a type of event in which meaning is neither fixed nor utterly random or absent. Merleau-Ponty's centre of phenomenology is perception as primarily the phenomenon of passive constitution, passive genesis of meaning, what he

calls 'operative intentionality'. This "operative intentionality already at work before any positioning or any judgement, a 'Logos of aesthetic world;, an 'art hidden in the depths of the human soul', one which, like my art, is known only in its result."¹⁰⁷ It is continually at work as the basis out of which definite meaning develops, comes to be posited and comes to be assumed. It is this phenomenon that phenomenology is all about, that phenomenon beyond which it is meaningless to look. Merleau-Ponty goes further to explain the task of the radical reflection as consisting in the rediscovering the unreflective experience of the world. It takes hold of one while still in the course of forming and formulating the ideas of subject and objects. It brings to light the source of these two ideas. It is reflection not only in operation but as well conscious of itself in its operation. What is given is neither (pure) consciousness nor (pure) Being but experience. The phenomenon being described is not only put by Merleau-Ponty as the primordial foundations phenomenon, it is identified by him as the primordial 'kind of Being' for man. Human being is at the bottom of this stratum of meaning giving. To name man Being-in-the world is for Merleau-Ponty to give a metaphysical definition of human being. It now follows that Merleau-Ponty has given phenomenology a metaphysical significance. With phenomenology having now reached the stage in which its principle task is the explanation of the life-world, phenomenology for him becomes explicitly philosophical.¹⁰⁸ For Merleau-Ponty, the phenomenon of perception reveals a mode of being which is

neither that of a pure thing nor a pure thinking. It reveals a third gender of being in which body and consciousness are one and the same phenomenon. An example is given with one's body which reveals to one an ambiguous mode of existence. The body is not an object and the consciousness I have of it is not a thought. I have no other way of knowing the human body other than by living it. The body belongs to both subject and object at the same time. "The body, together with the objects perceived, constitutes the entire 'field' of perception. But the body is not identifiable with the objects it perceives. There is a unity of perception but also a distinction between the body and the perceived objects, in as much as I can never take a distance from my body as I can take from other objects"¹⁰⁹.

We find anterior to the objective body, the phenomenal body, a knower. Giving an example Merleau-Ponty says, "If I stand holding my pipe in my closed hand, the position of my hand is not determined discursively by the angle which it makes with my forearm, and my forearm with my upper arm...I know indubitably where my pipe is, and thereby I know where my hand and my body are".¹¹⁰ We can see here that the subject agent of perception is not a transcendently pure thinking but a being-present-within-the world, though in, and as bodily being. The two are one and that one Being-present-within-the world (être-au-monde) can be called existence. As Merleau-Ponty puts it, "if my body can be a 'form' and if there can be, in front of it, important

figures against indifferent backgrounds, this occurs in virtue of being polarized by its tasks, of its existence towards them, of its collecting together of itself in its pursuit of its aims; the body image is finally a way of stating that my body is in the world".¹¹¹ At this primary level consciousness is experience precisely as experiencing in or of the world. This experiencing is bodily perception as the genesis of meaning at the grips of the world. It is at this level that reflection itself becomes possible as a second level and comes to recognize its own level.

In summing up Merleau-Ponty's view, one would say that for him, phenomenology of perception is primarily an attempt at exploring the basic stratum in our experience of the world as given prior to all scientific interpretation. Perception is simply our privileged access to this stratum. It is not the essence that he describes but experience in the fullest sense. This said, it can then be said that the phenomenology of perception is actually the phenomenology of the world as perceived rather than the perceiving act. The three phenomenologists treated here are not the only names in phenomenology. There are many other great names. However, what seems to be the driving force in anything that has to do with phenomenology is the need to go 'back to the phenomenon themselves'. Back to the preconceptual period. In trying to do this, the phenomenologists have tended to disagree on how to get there. With these in mind and what we have learnt from the

phenomenologists, we proceed to examine the phenomenology of religion to see whether it has made use of the insights and methods of these philosophers.

NOTES

1. Osborn A.D. Edmund Husserl and His Logical Investigations Edited by Natanson Maurice (Garland Publishing Inc, New York and London 1980) p.10.
2. Adolf Kneser's Reminiscences of Kroncker, Jahresbericht der deutschen mathematiker-vereinigung 33(1925) pp. 213-214.
3. Husserl Edmund's Recollections of Franz Brentano quoted by Osborn A.D. in Edmund Husserl and His Logical Investigations, Op. cit. p.16.
4. Ibid pp.16-17.
5. Bruzina Ronald Logos and Eidos. The Concept in Phenomenology (Mouton: The Hague Paris, 1970), p.17.
6. Brantano Franz Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt (Leipzig 1874).
7. Spiegelberg Herbert The Phenomenological Movement vol.1., pp.54-69.

8. H.L. Breda notes that after 1900 Husserl was unable to think without writing, sometimes working from seven to ten hours at his desk. Even in the last years of his life, he would put several hours of writing daily. cf Schutz ed. Notizen sur Raumkonstitution (Husserl) *Philosophy and Phenomenological research* 1:21. Spiegelberg The Phenomenological Movement vol. 1. p. 155.
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11. Ideen zu einer reinen Phanomenologie und phanomenologischen philosophie ed. Walter Biemel (Husserliana 111 the Hague 1950). Ideen originally appeared in the first volume of Jahrbuch fur Philosophie und phanomenologische Forschung (Halle 1913). It was published separately in an unchanged second edition in 1922 and third edition in 1928.

12. On Husserl's labours during these years see Biemel's preface to Husserl's Die Idee der Phanomenologie. (Husserliana it was published separately in an unchanged second edition in 1922 and third edition in 1928, the Hague 1958).
13. Formale und Transzendente Logik. Originally published in Husserl's Jahrbuch X (Halle 1929) and separately in the same year.
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15. 'Phenomenology' Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th edition. (London 1927) volume XVII pages 699-702.
16. The texts of part I and II appeared in the opening number of Journals Philosophia 1:77-176 (Belgrade 1936) part III containing the most important sections and twice as long as the first two parts combined was also to have been published. It was however not published due to his ill-health in 1937. These writings are now published in complete form in volume VI of Husserliana series, Die Krisis der Europaischen Wissenschaft und die Transzendente Phanomenologie ed. Walter Biemel (The Hague 1954).

17. Vorlesungen zur Phanomenologie des Inneren Zeitbewusstseins appeared originally in volume IX of Husserl's Jahrbuch 1928 pp. 367-495, it was printed separately in Halle in 1938, and is now published in Husserliana X.
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19. Erfahrung und Urteil (Prague 1939) a second and third edition unchanged have been printed in Hamburg 1948 and 1964 on the origin of the text of Landgrebe's preface pp. v-xii.
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26. loc. cit.
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31. Translation of Logische Untersuchungen Op. Cit. p.19. taken from Bruzina Ronald, Op. cit. p.44.
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37. Ibid, p. 51.
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39. Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy p.146.
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46. Loc. cit.
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48. Ibid, p.28.
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50. Ibid, p.212.
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89. Van Breda 'Maurice Merleau-Ponty et les Archives Husserl a Louvain' Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale 67:(1962), p.412.

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91. "Mais il n'effaçait pas la phénoménologie, qui voulut être une descriptive de ce qui apparaît, dans un archeologie où un Husserliennes il continuait: le mouvement pur soi propre compte sans souci d'orthodoxie" Paul Ricoeur Les Nouvelles Littéraires, no. 1758, p.4 (May 11, 1961).
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CHAPTER 2 WORKS HITHERTO TAKEN TO REPRESENT THE
PHENOMENOLOGY OF RELIGION.

Rudolf Otto: The Numinous Experience as the Basis for Religion.

In the last chapter we dealt with the origins of Phenomenology and development of the phenomenological method. The method has been applied in various fields of study, but has it been applied successfully in the study of religion? Has the phenomenology of religion, as hitherto known, anything to do with the phenomenological method proposed by Husserl and continued by his successors, or is the similarity only in name? How far has the phenomenology of religion been able to clarify the phenomenon of religion? To find the answers to these questions, an attempt will be made in this chapter to study the works of outstanding scholars in the field of religion and particularly those who set out to solve the problem of phenomenon of religion. We shall examine the works of four prominent scholars, Otto, Kirstensen, van der Leeuw and Eliade. We begin our quest with Otto.

The question that one encounters immediately is, why begin with Otto in a work that has to do with the phenomenology of religion, when he did not regard himself as a phenomenologist? After his discussion of the numinous experience, he said, "Here I do not find but I have been found, I do not seek but I have been sought after, I do not discover, but I become enlightened. Here, I stand farthest removed from phenomenology all phenomenology."¹

Despite Otto's claim it would be impossible to avoid including Otto among the phenomenologists in view of the following words of Husserl: "Das Heilige, has impressed me greatly as hardly any other book has for years...It is first a beginning for a phenomenology of religion...".²

Born in Peine, Germany in 1869, Louis Karl Rudolf Otto was the twelfth of the thirteen children of Wilhelm Otto, a manufacturer who owned factories in Peine and later in Hildesheim, and Katherine Karoline Henriette nee Reupke. He received both his primary and secondary education at Peine and Hildesheim. When in 1880, the family moved to Hildesheim, Otto enrolled in the Andreanum, a grammar school. His father died shortly after. From 1888 to 1898, Otto studied theology at the Universities of Erlangen and Göttingen. In 1898, Otto presented the first of his major works; Geist und Wort nach Luther (Spirit and Word Accounting to Luther) for which he received the Licentiate of Theology of the University of Göttingen. In the same year, 1898, the work was published under the title Die Anschauung Vom Heiligen Geiste Bei Luther (Luther's Conception of the Holy Spirit).³ In 1899, Otto was made a Privatdozent in the University of Göttingen, and in the same year, 1899, he published a new edition of Über die Religion: Reden an die Gebildeten unter Ihren Verachtern, Schleiermacher's Speeches on Religion.⁴ In 1903 he wrote an essay on Schleiermacher's discovery of the essence of Religion.⁵ In 1904, he became an Extraordinarius, and in 1907 he obtained his Ph.D at the

University of Tübingen, and a Th.D honoris causa at the University of Gießen. From 1914 to 1917, he was Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of Breslau; from 1913 to 1918, a member of the Prussian Diet; from 1917 to his retirement in 1929, he taught at the University of Marburg, where he died in 1937.⁶

Otto was a prolific scholar. Apart from the influence of Luther and Schleiermacher as shown in the works already cited, Otto was indebted to several writers, as indicated by Darwinismus und Religion⁷ and Kantisch-Fries'sche Religionsphilosophie.⁸ The main idea in what was to be his major work Das Heilige,⁹ appeared in 1910 when Otto in an article in Theologische Rundschau¹⁰ on 'Myth and Religion' in Wundt's Volkerpsychologie considered the Sensus Numinis as a historical origin of religion.

Other influences in Otto's career began in 1911-12 when he went to India to begin studies in Sanskrit. This led him to the study of various religions of the East with particular emphasis on Hinduism. The fruits of his study was made manifest in 1916, when he published Dipika des Nivasa: Eine indische Heilslehre.¹¹ In 1923 Otto was invited to give the Haskell lectures at Oberlin College in the United States. He took for his theme the comparison of Eastern and Western mysticism, and from these lectures arose his comparison of Meister Eckhart and Shankara. His book West-östliche

Mystik¹² was published in 1926. He further explored the convergences and divergences between Christianity and Hinduism in 'Die Gnadenreligion Indiens und das Christentum'¹³ published in 1930. Having been familiar with religion East and West, he began to look for a ground that was common to all religions. This was the background that led to the writing of Das Heilige.

In Das Heilige, Otto attempted to clarify the distinctively religious element in religions by attending to the specifically non-rational factor. He began his work by distinguishing between the rational and the non-rational. "It is essential to every theistic conception of God, and most of all to the Christian, that it designates and precisely characterizes Deity by the attributes Spirit, Reason, Purpose, Good Will, Supreme Power, Unity, Selfhood. The nature of God is thus thought of by analogy with our human nature of reason and personality; only, whereas in ourselves we are aware of this as qualified by restriction and limitation, as applied to God the attributes we use are 'completed', ie. thought as absolute and unqualified. Now all these attributes constitute clear and definite concepts. They can be grasped by the intellect; they can be analysed by thought; they even can admit of definition. An object that can thus be thought conceptually may be termed rational. The nature of deity described in the attributes above mentioned is, then, a rational nature; and a religion which recognises and maintains such a view of God is in so far a 'rational' religion. Only on such terms is belief possible in contrast

to mere feeling".¹⁴ Having said this, Otto goes on to say that we must be on our guard against regarding the rational element as the only side to religion, for this will make religion a 'one-sided' affair.

Otto seems to see everything in religion as being attributed to the rational aspect. This according to him does not take away from its misleading nature. The rational aspect is an aspect of the non-rational nature. The rational aspect does not tell all the story. "For so far are these 'rational' attributes from exhausting the idea of deity, that they in fact imply a non-rational or supra-rational Subject of which they are predicates".¹⁵ Otto goes on to accuse Orthodoxy of being responsible for this misinterpretation that has been a common phenomenon in dealing with God and religion. "It is not simply that Orthodoxy was preoccupied with the doctrine and the framing of dogma, for these have been no less a concern of the oldest mystics. It is rather that Orthodoxy found in the construction of dogma and doctrine no way to do justice to the non-rational aspect of its subject. So far from keeping the non-rational element in religion alive in the heart of the religious experience, orthodox Christianity manifestly failed to recognise its value, and by this failure gave to the idea of God a one-sidedly intellectualistic and rationalistic interpretation".¹⁶ For Otto, religion does not only contain a rational aspect, both rational and non-rational go together.

Otto sees 'Holiness' as a category of interpretation that is peculiar to the sphere of religion. He however, does not see this category as merely rationalistic. The word 'holy' has acquired several meanings and as soon as it is mentioned, the real meaning tends to get lost. "The fact is we have come to use the words holy, sacred in an entirely derivative sense, quite different from that which they originally bore. We generally take 'holy' as meaning 'completely good'; it is the absolute moral attribute, denoting the consummation of moral goodness".¹⁷ Otto sees this overemphasis on the word as the basis for all the misconceptions about the word 'holy' and continues "In this sense Kant calls the will which remains unwaveringly obedient to the moral law from the motive of duty a 'holy' will; here clearly we have simple the perfectly moral will".¹⁸ The same could be said of other things for example; "the holiness of sanctity of Duty or Law, meaning merely that they are imperative upon conduct and universally obligatory".¹⁹ The use of the word 'holy' in the sense that has just been described is seen by Otto as inaccurate. For him the word does not only contain the moral significance but something more than that. "It is true that all this moral significance is contained in the word 'holy', but it includes in addition - as even we cannot but feel - a clear overplus of meaning, and this it is now our task to isolate".²⁰ Otto saw this overplus of meaning in the 'holy' as primarily concerned with religion. On account of the fact that this word that should designate the special religious dimension has lost its meaning, and has come to designate

ethical and moral self-righteousness. Otto wants to retrieve its meaning. He draws attention to the use of the word 'holy' in Latin, Greek and other ancient languages to make his point clear: "'holy' or at least the equivalent words in Latin and Greek, in Semantic and other ancient languages, denoted first and foremost only this overplus: if the ethical element was present at all, at any rate it was not original and never constituted the whole meaning of the word".²¹ Otto intends to use this overplus, that is the 'holy' minus its rational aspect in describing religion. However, in doing so, he does not intend to deny the rational aspect.

To refer to holiness without the moral factor he has to devise a new term. "For this purpose I adopt a word coined from the Latin numen. Omen has given us ominous, and there is no reason why from numen we should not similarly form a word 'numinous'".²² The numinous indicates the special religious overplus of meaning. He then tries to describe this state which is sui generis. "I shall speak then of a unique 'numinous' category of value and of a definitely 'numinous' state of mind, which is always found wherever the category is applied. This mental state is perfectly sui generis and irreducible to any other; and therefore, like every absolutely primary and elementary datum, while it admits of being discussed, it cannot be strictly defined".²³

If this experience is sui generis, it therefore follows that it can only be

understood existentially. It is for this reason that Otto looks to personal experience to justify his stand. Inability to recall such experience excludes one from coming to terms with the numinous. "The reader is invited to direct his mind to a moment of deeply-felt religious experience, as little as possible qualified by other forms of consciousness. Whoever cannot do this, whoever knows no such moments in his experience, is requested to read no further: for it is not easy to discuss questions of religious psychology with one who can recollect the emotions of his adolescence, the discomforts of indigestions, or say, social feelings, but cannot recall any intrinsically religious feelings".²⁴ From this, it is clear that Otto takes the numinous experience to be a unique experience.

How then does Otto go about describing this experience which has not got its equivalent anywhere? Since there are no terms in ordinary language which belong to the area of the numinous, words have to be got from the natural area to describe it. By 'natural' here, Otto means those experiences, feelings, or dimensions of life which are not numinous, that is to say, which do not pertain exclusively to the idea of the holy in its non-rational aspect. "As Christians we undoubtedly here first meet with feelings familiar enough in a weaker form in other departments of experience, such as feelings of gratitude, trust, love, reliance, humble submission, and dedication. But this does not by any means exhaust the content of religious worship".²⁵ One can see that

Otto is careful to note that the passage from natural to numinous feeling which can occur when natural terms are given numinous significance does not involve merely a change in intensity of the natural feeling. He therefore begins by marking the differences between numinous consciousness and Schleiermacher's feeling of dependence. "The feeling of which Schleiermacher wrote has an undeniable analogy with these states of mind: they serve as an indication to it, and its nature may be elucidated by them, so that, by following the direction in which they point, the feeling itself may be spontaneously felt. But the feeling is at the same time also qualitatively different from such analogous states of mind. Schleiermacher himself, in a way, recognises this by distinguishing the feeling of pious or religious dependence from all other feelings of dependence. His mistake is in making the distinction merely that between 'absolute' and 'relative' dependence, and therefore a difference of degree and not of intrinsic quality".²⁶

Turning then to the analysis of the numinous, Otto describes the object to which the numinous consciousness is directed. He asserts that the nature of the numinous "can only be suggested by means of the way in which it is reflected in the mind in terms of feeling".²⁷ It is for this reason that he tries as much as possible to identify each state of mind through which the numinous is expressed and made known. He says that it is "by adducing feelings akin to them for the purpose of analogy or contrast, and by the use

of metaphor and symbolic expressions, to make the states of mind we are investigating ring out, as it were, of themselves".²⁸ What then does Otto mean by the word analogy? The answer to what Otto means by analogy can be seen in the following example, "The phrase 'he loves me' is verbally identical, whether it is said by a child of his father or by a girl of her lover. But in the second case a 'love' is meant which is at the same time 'something more' (viz. sexual love), and something more not only in quantity but in quality. So, too, the phrase 'We ought to fear, love, and trust him' is verbally identical, whether it refers to the relation of child to father or to that of man to God. But again in the second case these ideas are infused with a meaning of which none but the religiously-minded man can have any comprehension or indeed any inkling, whose presence makes, eg. 'fear of God' 'something more' than any fear of a man qualitatively, not merely quantitatively, though retaining the essence of the most genuine reverence felt by the child for his father".²⁹

Further analysis of the numinous reveals the presence of a complex reaction which Otto calls the experience of the Mysterium tremendum or the awareness of the numinous object as a "Mystery inexpressible and above all creatures".³⁰ Accompanying this awareness of the numinous or the Mysterium tremendum, is a specific emotional response which can best be expressed by the German word 'Shauer' or the English word 'Awe'. This emotion is also

sui generis, a thing quite in itself indefinite and primary. Its specific character or 'quale' persists throughout the evolution of religion from the primitive feeling of "something uncanny", "eerie", or "weird" right up to the 'awe' of the developed religious consciousness". It is this feeling which, emerging in the mid of the primeval man, forms the starting-point for the entire religious development in history...It implies the first application of a category of valuation which has no place in the everyday natural world of ordinary experience, and is only possible to a being in whom has been awakened a mental predisposition, unique in kind and different in a definite way from any 'natural' faculty. And this newly-revealed capacity, even in the crude and violent manifestations which are all it at first evinces, bears witness to a completely new function of experience and standard of valuation, only belonging to the spirit of man".³¹

Ordinary language does not have the same means with which to speak comprehensively of the qualities and attributes of the Numen. It is therefore necessary consistently to resort to figurative language, images and symbols to which Otto gave the name 'ideogram'. An ideogram is a "sort of illustrative substitute for a concept",³² "an analogical notion taken from the natural sphere, illustrating, but incapable of exhaustively rendering our real meaning".³³ Otto is of the view that the most important and persistent indicator of awefulness in religious literature is the stress placed on the 'Wrath

of God' or 'ferocity' or the jealousy of God. One can see that these analogies from the domain of ordinary experience are the only concepts available to us, but viewed as ideograms of awefulness, they become apt and striking. In their most original religious meaning such terms are fundamentally independent of any moral significance, such as swift requital or punishment for moral transgression.³⁴ They refer instead to the dreadful daunting character of the divine, the awesome power and the might with which as St. John of the Cross puts it, the Holy God "destroys, crushes, and overwhelms (the soul) in such a deep darkness, that it feels as though melted and in its misery destroyed by a cruel death of the spirit...".³⁵

On the objective side; the mysterium tremendum possesses the characteristics of 'Overpoweringness' (majestas), of 'energy' or 'urgency' and is viewed as the 'Wholly Other' or the 'mysterious' which Otto describes thus: "The truly 'mysterious' object is beyond our apprehension and comprehension, not only because our knowledge has certain irremovable limits, but because in it we come upon something inherently 'wholly other', whose kind and character are incommensurable with our own, and before which we therefore recoil in a wonder that strikes us chill and numb".³⁶

Closely related and yet distinct from awefulness is overpoweringness (or majestas). Otto brings this into focus by discussing what he calls creature

feeling. Here he sees Schleiermacher as coming close to the proper appreciation of this element by his emphasis on the feeling of dependence, but he treated the phrases too rationally, converting it into a speculative concept, instead of an ideogram. The correlate for Schleiermacher was causality, that is, God as causing and all conditioning, but Otto insists that in the first experience of the creature-feeling, the notion of divine causality does not enter it at all. The immediate feeling is not one of createdness or the fact of having been created as Schleiermacher thought. Instead, it is the feeling of creaturehood, of lowly status of creature feeling in this way. Overpoweringness therefore is the correlate of creature feeling taken as "the consciousness of the littleness of every creature in the face of that which is above all creatures".³⁷

The next element is that of 'energy' or 'urgency'. Otto recalls this with terms like vitality, passion, excitement, activity and impetus. Most of these terms are drawn from conative and emotional life. These examples could be seen also in the idea of the 'wrath of God' and in the consuming flame of divine love, of which the mystics wrote. He writes; "In mysticism, too, this element of 'energy' is a very living and vigorous factor, at any rate in the 'voluntaristic' Mysticism, the Mysticism of love, where it is very forcibly seen in that 'consuming fire' of love whose burning strength the mystic can hardly bear, but begs that the heat that has scorched him may be mitigated, lest he be

himself destroyed by it".³⁸ The 'wrath of God' or gods is an ideogram not only of the awfulness of the numinous but also of its over brimming energy and vitality, experienced as capricious, as ferocity that knows no bounds. Otto suggests that this aspect of the numinous experience is the origin of the idea of Lucifer and devilish attributions in all religions. Seen this way, it could be taken as mysterium horrendum or as that which is negatively numinous.

The next element to be discussed is the Mysterium - the 'Wholly Other' or the Mysterious "that which is quite beyond the sphere of the usual, the intelligible and the familiar, which therefore falls quite outside the limits of the 'canny' and is contrasted with it, filling the mind with blank wonder and astonishment".³⁹ According to Otto, the most fitting ideogram to express this state of mental reaction is stupor. "Stupor is plainly a different thing from tremor; it signifies blank wonder, an astonishment that strikes us dumb, amazement absolute. Taken, indeed, in its purely natural sense, 'mysterium' would first mean merely a secret or a mystery in the sense of that which is alien to us, uncomprehended and unexplained; and so far 'mysterium' is in itself merely an ideogram".⁴⁰ Religious fear is not simply natural fear taken or raised to the highest level, it is rather sui generis.

Otto calls the last element in the experience of the numinous the 'Dionysian element'. Whereas tremendum suggests the daunting and fearful side of the

divine. Fascinans calls attention to a side of it which is alluring and joyful. If the moment of worship contained no more than the other experiences of the numinous already mentioned, we should be left with the picture of religion as an influence working to overawe, depress, intimidate and to debase the spirit of man. Its natural offsprings would have been magic and superstition. In worship however, there appears a paradoxical alliance with the impulse to approach the divine "the creature, who trembles before it, utterly cowed and cast down, has always at the same time the impulse to turn to it, nay even to make it somehow his own. The 'mystery' is for him not merely something to be wondered at but something that entrances him; and beside that in it which bewilders and confounds, he feels something that captivates and transports him with a strange ravishment, rising often enough to the pitch of a dizzy intoxication".⁴¹ This is the major element in cultic acts in religion. As with the mysterium, fascinans finds expression in a terminology which is negative in its conceptual significance and yet refers to an experience of an intensely positive sort. These experiences are so 'rapturous' exuberant or 'overabounding' as to defy positive description. The specific quality of religious attainment of salvation, of atonement or identification exhibits once more the presence of non-rational factor. Salvation is something the natural man cannot understand because no manipulation of his vocabulary can bring him to the translation of it. The transports of the mystics or the converted man are as unintelligible to the secular man as the felicity of the lover to the

unromantic. "Every salvation is something whose meaning is often very little apparent, is even wholly obscure, to the 'natural' man; on the contrary, so far as he understands it, he tends to find it highly tedious and uninteresting, sometimes downright distasteful and repugnant to his nature, as he would, for instance, find the beatific vision of God in our own doctrine of salvation, or the 'Hemosis' of 'God all in all' among the mystics".⁴² Otto perceives two values within the element of fascinans which he is careful to distinguish. The first is the subjective value of the numinous, that is the beatitude it promises or brings to man. The second is the objective value implicit in the fascinans. Otto thinks this can be designated by "August".⁴³ The subjective value finds its most notable expression in the idea of salvation which Otto thinks lies at the root of religion everywhere. The element of fascinans and tremendum though they are opposed in one sense, they are nevertheless brought together in the actual experience of the numinous.

Mysterium tremendum et fascinans, an object of boundless wonder repelling and yet attracting constitutes the "positive content of the 'mysterium' as it manifests itself in conscious feeling".⁴⁴ For Otto attempts to describe these feelings in contrast to the mysterium will be impossible and so the only option left is "by taking an analogy from a region belonging not to religion but to aesthetics".⁴⁵ Otto contrasts sublime with the numinous to bring out what he means by analogy of feeling. "The analogies between the consciousness of

the sublime and the numinous may easily be grasped. To begin with, 'the sublime', like 'the numinous', is in Kantian language an idea or concept 'that cannot be unfolded' or explicated (unauswickelbar). Certainly we can tabulate some general 'rational' signs that uniformly recur as soon as we call an object sublime; as, for instance, that it must approach, or threaten to overpass, the bounds of our understanding by some 'dynamic' or 'mathematic' greatness, by potent manifestations of force or magnitude in spatial extent".⁴⁶ Otto insists that though these things come to mind as soon as the word sublime is mentioned, they are only conditions of sublimity and not of the essence. He continues "A thing does not become sublime merely by being great. The concept itself remains unexplicated; it has something mysterious, and in this it is like that of 'the numinous'. A second point of resemblance, is that the sublime 'exhibits the same peculiar dual character as the numinous; it is at once daunting, and yet again singularity attracting, in its impress upon the mind. It humbles and at the same time exalts us, circumscribes and extends us beyond ourselves, on the one hand releasing in us a feeling analogous to fear, and on the other rejoicing us".⁴⁷ Otto sees the idea of sublime as closely similar to that of the numinous and it is in the position to "excite it and be excited by it, while each tends to pass over into the other".⁴⁸ The sublime can excite the feeling of the numinous and so can the numinous to the sublime. This according to him is in accordance with "a well-known and fundamental psychological law that ideas 'attract' one another, and that one

will excite another and call into consciousness, if it resembles it. An entirely similar law holds good with regard to feelings".⁴⁹ What holds good for the association of ideas also holds for the association of feelings. A feeling can arouse a similar one in the mind, "the presence of one in my consciousness may be the occasion for my entertaining the other at the same time. Further, just as in the case of the ideas the law of reproduction by similarity leads to a mistaken substitution of ideas, so that I come to entertain an idea \underline{x} , when \underline{y} would have been the appropriate one, so we may be led to a corresponding substitution of feelings, and I may react with a feeling \underline{x} to an impression to which the feeling \underline{y} would normally correspond. Finally, I can pass from one feeling to another by an imperceptibly gradual transition, the one feeling \underline{x} dying away little by little, while the other, \underline{y} excited together with it, increases and strengthens in a corresponding degree".⁵⁰ Religious feelings have normally been considered side by side with other feelings. This however is not to say that religious feelings developed into other feelings or that other feelings have developed into religious feelings because in the case of the feelings concerned, what undergoes transition "is not the feeling itself. It is not the actual feeling gradually changes in quality or 'evolves', that is transmutes into quite different one, but rather that I pass over or make the transition from one another as my circumstances change by the gradual degree of the one and the increase of the other".⁵¹ For Otto, a transition of actual feeling from one to the other is an impossibility. The equivalent of such a possibility is in

the case of an alchemist producing gold from the transmutation of metals, this we know is impossible.

Having discovered by analysis the non rational element in religious experience, viewed by subjectively as emotion, and objectively as content of the religious consciousness, and having pronounced them a priori and sui generis springing from original root in the soul and constituting the very essence of the religious reaction, Otto goes on to show how the category of the numinous clothes itself in rational and moral forms. Although the numinous experience was originally distinct from and independent of the rational and the ethical, yet in the development of religion, an ever closer association is established between them. The category of the numinous spreads out, as it were, or grows into the more complex category of the 'holy' by taking into itself rational and ethical elements. This process of comprehension is described as a process of 'Schematization of categories' much in the fashion of Kant. "Schematization means that there is an essential correspondence between rational and non rational element in the religious a priori, and that, since the non rational is the core of the religion, all religious doctrine can be seen as the result of an operation of the rational upon the non rational".⁵² In this way religion becomes moralized and human. Rational qualities are conferred on the numinous which appear as a corresponding enrichment of the religious emotions. Otto takes time to show how this

rationalization and the moralizing of the numinous takes place.

"Accordingly we see religious feeling in permanent connection with other feelings which are cojoined to it in accordance with this principle of Association. It is indeed, more accurate to say 'cojoined' than rally 'connected', for such mere conjunctions or chance connections according to laws of purely external analogy are to be distinguished from necessary connections according to the principles of true inward affinity and cohesion".⁵³

The numinous as something sui generis, cannot from itself become moralized, nor can what has been pronounced non rational put on rationality. There is no logical evolution of one from the other, yet the connection takes place according to the principle of true inward affinity and cohesion already mentioned. Both the category of the numinous and the category of the moral obligation are a priori and sui generis. The one cannot derive from the other. Both spring from the spirit of man, but they become associated or cojoined in the course of history. At the same time, in developed religion, the numinous or the non rational element is never eclipsed by the rational and the moral. The former element's continuous presence in the latter gives its specific character as an experience of reality. There is a relationship between the rational and the non rational in the idea of the holy or sacred but the relation is "just such a one of 'schematization', and the non rational numinous fact

schematized by the rational concepts we have suggested above, yields us the complex category of 'holy' itself, richly charged and in its full meaning".⁵⁴ Otto likened the interpretation of the rational with the non rational to the 'warp and woof' in a fabric. He made clear his point by using a "familiar case, in which a universal human feeling, that of personal affection, is simply interpenetrated by a likewise thoroughly non rational and separate element, namely, the sex instinct. It goes without saying that this latter lies just on the opposite side of 'reason' to the numinous consciousness; for, while this is 'above all reason' the sex impulse is below it, an element in our instinctive life. 'The numinous infuses the rational from above, 'the sexual' presses up from beneath, quite wholesomely and normally out of the nature which the human being shares with the animal world, into the higher realm of the specifically 'humane'".⁵⁵ Otto further suggests another example of the interpenetration of the rational with the non rational. This is the 'erotic' experience. Here the feeling is both non rational and 'supra-rational'.

Otto sees two processes in the development of religion. The numinous consciousness develops along its own inner non rational impulsion, "this element or 'moment' passes itself through a process of development of its own, quite apart from the other processes - which begin at an early stage - by which it is 'rationalized' and 'moralized', ie. filled with rational and ethical meaning".⁵⁶ Then "secondary and subsidiary to this, is the task of tracing the

course of the process of rationalization and moralization on the basis of the numinous consciousness".⁵⁷ These two processes 'if not quite' yet 'nearly' synchronize and keep pace one with another. In so doing, the category of the holy is enriched by the non-rational and the rational, the numinous and the moral, the sacrosanct and the good, developing in harmony pari passu, as if by pre-established harmony. But the 'holy' as the supreme religious category, must be regarded throughout as definitely a priori in character. What does Otto mean by a priori category? Here a quotation from Davidson clarifies. "Those categories of thought that appear to be universal and rationally necessary in the interpretation of human experience are taken by Kant to be a priori principles inherent in the structure of the mind itself."⁵⁸ For Otto "an a priori religious category of meaning and value must be recognized, independent of, although comparable to the a priori rational and moral categories identified by Kant".⁵⁹ From all that has been said, it can be seen that the holy in its fullest sense is for Otto; "a combined, complex, category, the combining elements being its rational and non-rational components. But in both - and the assertion must be strictly maintained against all Sensationalism and Naturalism - it is a purely priori category".⁶⁰

Having said this, Otto goes on to discuss the recognition of this a priori religious category which is the 'holy' in its appearance in the phenomenal world. For him the belief in reality beyond the senses and the experience of

it are two different things. By the operation of the religious a priori, the divine can be apprehended in the depth of self. It can also be encountered in the phenomenal world. The religious a priori of the phenomenal world can be seen as a manifestation of the divine. This is because "Religion is convinced not only that the holy and the sacred is attested by the inward voice of conscience and the religious consciousness, the 'still, small voice' of the Spirit in the heart, by feeling, pre-sentiment and longing, but also that it may be directly encountered in particular occurrences and events, self-revealed in persons and displayed in actions, in a word, that beside the inner revelation from the spirit there is an outward revelation of the divine".⁶¹

Otto describes the faculty by which the 'holy' in its manifestation in the phenomenal world is 'cognized' and 'recognized' as the faculty of divination. It consists "in the fact that a man encounters an occurrence that is not 'natural', in the sense of being inexplicable by laws of nature. Since it has actually occurred, it must have had a cause; and, since it has no 'natural' cause, it must (so it is said) have a supernatural one".⁶² Theology bears witness to this faculty or capacity of divination in "Testimonium Spiritus Sancti Internum, the inner witness of the Holy Spirit-limited, in the case of dogma, to the recognition of Scripture as 'Holy'".⁶³ In divination Otto finds "a independent religious apprehension of deity - the culmination indeed of what autonomous recognition of transcendent meaning and value expressed

immediately in the sense of the numinous and mediately in the categories of sanctity, sin and salvation".⁶⁴ A typical example of divination in an unsurpassable form is found by Otto in "Isaiah's moving representation of the sovereign might and awesome majesty of God".⁶⁵

After his treatment of divination, Otto goes on to try the theory on the historical religions. A careful study will reveal if he was successful in the application of the theory or not but for now this is Otto's view of the phenomenon of religion and treatment can be taken by us to be his phenomenology of religion.

Evaluation and Place in the Phenomenology of Religion

A full evaluation of the work of Otto is not easy to come by because of the popularity of the work. However as much as possible an attempt will be made to see to what extent the work has contributed to our search for the phenomenon of religion. An understanding of the contents and arguments of Otto in The Idea of the Holy is impossible without the understanding of the philosophical system taken over from Fries and expounded in The Philosophy of Religion.⁶⁶ Perhaps it was the reductionist's view of religion that was prevalent at that time that led Otto to seek for the core of religion that is not reducible to anything else. For this programme he found in the philosophy of

Fries taken over from Kant, as an aid to make his point about the uniqueness of religion. It was thought by Otto, and vaguely by Fries, that this philosophical system can provide the basis of an account of religion in general. It was thought that all religions are the same due to the fact that the dogma of religion, of all religion ie. what in religion can be categorically known, reduce to the ideas and thus derive from reason which is common to all men. Otto's philosophical position following Fries is that although we cannot say what God is except negatively by denying of him the attributes or the limitations of earthly life, we can in Ahnung feel what he is. The philosophy of Fries as we know, is a development and a modification of the philosophy of Kant. In The Idea of the Holy, Otto does not present his or Fries's philosophy of religion, which of course, is not phenomenology, but there is every indication that he relied on it. He tries to bring to the fore what he considers the core of religion. He begins his analysis by distinguishing the rational from the non rational aspects and the non rational aspects he calls the numinous whose experience is to be the core of religion. For him in the numinous experience there is the apprehension of the numinous object. Said in another way, wherever the category of the numinous is applied, there is always to be a numinous state of mind.⁶⁷ This signifies the feeling of something objectively present - the experience of the numen praesens. It then follows that the experience of the numen praesens is a part of the phenomenology of experience. In The Idea of the Holy the 'holy' is

apprehended through the operation of an a priori category unique to that which is a source of cognition. Can one not see the hand of the idealist philosophy taken over from Fries here? For Fries the religion-aesthetic experience of Ahnung gives us positive knowledge of the noumenal realm and its relation to the phenomenal world. For Otto religious experience gives a positive knowledge of the numinous and through the faculty of divination, its manifestation in the world. Here it can be seen that the numinous has the framework of Friesian metaphysics.

We are not going to delve into the problem of discussing the implications of whatever philosophy may have influenced Otto or why we think he chose to think the way he thought. Our main interest is in looking at the relevance of the work for our on going enquiry into the phenomenon of religion. "An accurate determination of just what constitutes the religious experience and what distinguishes religions from every other human interest is the main concern of all Otto's work".⁶⁸ In attributing to the numinous a unique quality otto has isolated religion. His separation of the ethical entirely from the religious is in danger of destroying the meaning of both the ethical and the religious. If the numinous is entirely non ethical then it follows that it cannot produce the feeling of unworthiness. It can only stunt man into abject fear and obedience. It may compel acquiescence it can never deserve it. It cannot serve as a basis for the development of those higher religions in which the

holiness of God is saturated with the ethical meaning. In anticipation of these objections, Otto insists that in the expression such as 'Tu solus sanctus' the object is not simply absolute might making in its claim and compelling their fulfilment, but a might that has at the same time the right to service and praise because it is in absolute sense worthy to be praised. Regarding the second objection, he has this to say, "In every highly-developed religion the appreciation of moral obligation and duty, ranking as a claim of the deity upon man, has been developed side by side with the religious feeling itself".⁶⁹ He gave the example of the venerable religion of Moses as marking the beginning of a process by which the numinous is throughout rationalized and moralized, that is charged with ethical import until it becomes the holy in the fullest sense of the word. Whatever Otto has to say, one wonders if the answer to the anticipated objection solved the problem.

It is not debateable that "Otto's analysis makes too violent a separation of religion from ethics, that the original datum of religion - call it the numinous or what you will - contains a moral element, that from the beginning one has to do with a nucleus from which religion and ethics in their specific form later develop".⁷⁰ One cannot but agree with Charles Bennet in the above quotation. The separation after all cannot be distinct as Otto would want us to believe because "Since the numinous evidently implies some constraint, however mysterious, upon the conduct of the natural man, it is so far moral.

Anything that enables a man to check or renounce his natural desires for the sake of some good only negatively known contains within itself the promise of moral development, for it brings with it at least the recognition that there are some things you cannot do".⁷¹ Having looked at the impossibility of the separation from the religious side, it can also be seen from the ethical side. Bennett continues, "Moral obligations contain an element of mystery which is of a piece with religious awe. It ceases to be a moral obligation if divested of that quality".⁷² An example is given with what happens in time of crises, where a man's duty will require of him the sacrifice of his earthly goods. Here one finds the same phenomenon as that found in religion: "the acknowledgement of a claim of absolute value that is incommensurable with natural claim. Whether a man identify his duty with 'the good of his soul' or with 'the will of God' is a matter of indifference: the essence of the situation in either case is that no amount of natural happiness could compensate him for being false to soul or to God".⁷³

Closely related to the separation of the numinous from the moral is the separation of the numinous from the rational. It follows that Otto did not remain faithful to his own earlier distinctions. In the development of his doctrine of the numinous consciousness he forgets the nature of the distinctions he made between the rational and the non rational. Instead of accepting it as an expression of two phases of one and the same experience,

he persists in regarding the numinous as a specific experience per se occurring as it were in complete independence of all rational factors. It can be seen here that what Otto begins with as a mere overplus of meaning he later turns into an independent experience that could happen without reference to the rational. Just as religion was marked by a progressive infiltration of the moral, so also it is marked by a continuous interpenetration of the numinous by the rational. "The degree in which both rational and non rational element are jointly present, united in healthy and lovely harmony, affords a criterion to measure the relative rank of religions...".⁷⁴ In disagreement with Otto here, it follows that the process by which religion is said to develop is one in which in the light of Otto's analysis, cannot take place, for in the numinous, man is confronted by something mysterious and incomprehensible. "The absolute exceeds our power to comprehend; the mysterious wholly eludes it. The absolute is that which surpasses the limits of our understanding, not through its actual qualitative character, for that is familiar to us, but its formal character. The mysterious, on the other hand, is that which lies altogether outside what can be thought, and is, alike in form, quality, and essence, the utterly and 'wholly other'".⁷⁵ Since this is the case, reason can only schematize in Kantian language, the elements of the mysterious. "'Revelation' does not mean a mere passing over into the intelligible and comprehensible. For all the time all the elements of non rational 'inconceivability' are retained on the side of the numinous and

intensified as the revelation proceeds".⁷⁶ Following this account, the experience of the numinous as such would be a sort of interruption in the life of the mind. The instances of this interruption in the life of the mind. The instances of this interruption should then be looked for in miracles of prodigy. Surprisingly enough, Otto does not see miracle or prodigy as having religious significance. For Otto "genuine divination, in short, has nothing whatever to do with natural law and the relation of our lack of relation to it of something experienced. It is not concerned at all with the way in which a phenomenon - be it evident, or person, or thing - came into existence what it means, that is with its significance as a 'sign' of the holy".⁷⁷ It is not that the natural is invaded, but it is the invasion of the supra-natural of different value that evokes the holy. Religion cannot be an interruptive phenomenon in the phenomenal world for it that were the case, it would be difficult to explain why the mystics of religious men have always felt an urgent need to translate their experiences into conceptual terms.

The rational and the numinous cannot be as separate as such nor can the numinous be a mere interruption because as Bennett puts it, "...history of religion presents a record of intellectual construction in the form of theology and philosophy which cannot be dismissed as accident or meaningless accretion, and even the mystics who insist most on the ineffability of God have been remarkable for the vehemence and persistence with which they

have tried to express the inexpressible. The non-rational passes by some inherent necessity into the rational. Faith needs reason, reason to complete it as intuition needs concepts. The difference between them cannot be so radical as Otto would have us believe. Religious knowledge, if different from conceptual, must still be knowledge of a sort. The original datum of religion must be rational as well as supra rational. The discontinuity cannot be complete".⁷⁸ One wonders if it is possible to get religious in isolation of an ethical. The necessity by which religion becomes moralized and rationalized is a symptom of the mind's indivisible unity. Religion, ethics, science, philosophy - these are not separate compartments, they are phases in the life of the mind, phases that have their varying degree of purity and intensity, but in each case the whole mind is present. This however, is a point which Otto failed to emphasise. This might be because of what he primarily set out to do. His purpose was to differentiate religion from things that it has been confused with, and to exhibit it in isolation. In the concept of the numinous, he has found a stain to which religion is peculiarly sensitive.

The work of Otto in The Idea of the Holy has been seen by David Bastow as a work of a phenomenologist. "The most obvious way of taking The Idea of the Holy is a work of phenomenology - as a description in the very general terms of religious phenomena and their structure".⁷⁹ Or again, "If Otto had just argued that religion was, or some religions were, true, his claims would

have been only theological interest. But what makes his writings especially important is that he looks at religion not merely as a theologian, but also a phenomenologist; he is concerned to explain religion and religions as they are; even to explain the diversity of religions (with a version of evolutionism)".⁸⁰ He distinguished what he saw as the main theses in The Idea of the Holy which he graded into philosophical, phenomenological and theological theses. In trying to describe the various theses, he tried to bring out their main points. He saw Otto's problem as having to grapple with type of judgement made in these disciplines. Other minor theses such as the philosophical - theology and philosophical phenomenology are also indicated. On philosophical thesis he said that this is indicated when "By means of a Critique of Reason on Kantian lines, Otto following Fries, claims that knowledge of absolute reality, with absolute value, is possible for man. Reflective conceptual but negative knowledge is possible - this Fries calls faith; but also positive knowledge is possible; this is by means of a kind of feeling, which Fries calls Ahnung or intimation; it is non-conceptual, ineffable. These possibilities of knowledge are not merely inborn in all men, but are a consequence of their most essential nature".⁸¹ On the phenomenological theses "all religions are grounded on religious experience...This experience is basically similar in all religions, and is of a mysterium Tremendum et Augustum".⁸² The third major thesis can be seen in "so far as religious clearly base themselves on his experience, they are true; Christianity supremely so".⁸³

There is no need to go into details in this distinction, it suffices that David Bastow's distinctions noted. From the analysis given by Bastow we can pinpoint the different thesis.

It follows that Otto is not and cannot be said to be primarily a phenomenologist. He combines the phenomenologist, philosopher and theologian. The need for full analysis of each discipline involved does not arise here but Otto himself did not aim at a phenomenological, philosophical or theological exposition, his aim was to save religion from the things it has been confused with and in doing things a lot has come into his work which he did not anticipate. In grounding his thesis in the final analysis in the Fresian metaphysics he can be said to have treated religion philosophically, phenomenologically by concluding that all religions are grounded in religious experience and that the experience is basically the same in all religions and that it is of a mysterium tremendum fascinans et Augustum. By basing the truth of religion according to their having their base in such an experience as he has described that is the experience of the numinous he is a theologian. Otto however tried to distance himself from phenomenology when he said "Here I do not find but I have been found, I do not seek but I have been sought after, I do not discover, but I become enlightened. Here, I stand farthest removed from phenomenology all phenomenology".⁸⁴

Though Otto rejects the fact that he has something to do with phenomenology, one cannot say there are not phenomenological aspects in his work. These aspects have been stated above. While Otto rejected any account of religion which would explain it in terms other than the religious ones, he did not operate from criteria which were normative for any particular religious tradition. He did not assume the falsity of all religious data or the truth of any particular set of data as a 'methodological principle'. While one would argue that he does have a method of comparison, but that is based in their having a common basis which is the numinous experience without which whatever it does not pass for religion. It is clear that Otto saw himself as trying to make clear as much as possible the meaning of such data for the believers and practitioners at least with regard to their essentials. The description Otto has given to what he sees as the core of religion can aid the understanding of a large number of religious phenomena. But the substance of his description is welded to philosophical theory so that the truth and falsity of the theory will determine the truth and falsity of his arguments. However in so far as religion is concerned, it remains a classic. Husserl however, sees the work of Otto in The Idea of the Holy somehow as the beginning of phenomenology that eventually went wrong. In a letter to Otto on the 5th March 1919 he wrote "Das Heilige has impressed me greatly as hardly any other book has for years...It is the first a beginning for a phenomenology of religion...In word - I cannot sympathise with the philosophical theorising

instead...The metaphysician (theologian) has, it seems to me, carried the phenomenologist Otto away on his wings...Be that as it may, this book will retain an abiding place in the history of genuine philosophy of religion, or rather of phenomenology of religion".⁸⁵

We can see from every indication that Otto has attempted a phenomenological description of religious experience but it is dependent on certain philosophical presuppositions. The most important of these is that religion as a complex of rational and non rational elements arises from "a category of interpretation and valuation peculiar to the sphere of the religion".⁸⁶ Though the work of Otto was acclaimed as a beginning of the phenomenology of religion by Husserl his presuppositions prevent us from using his work as a basis for a phenomenology of religion.

Brede Kristensen: The believer's point of view as a prerequisite for the phenomenology of religion.

In our discussion of Rudolf Otto's The Idea of the Holy we saw what according to Husserl was the beginning of the Phenomenology of Religion that turned to something else in the end. We cannot blame Otto because from the start, he did not set out to do what we should call the Phenomenology of Religion. How then should we proceed? It would seem obvious that we should now turn to the work of scholars who regard themselves as working in the field of Phenomenology of Religion. The questions that should be uppermost in our minds are: how far have they solved the problem of the phenomenology of religion and how near is their solution to finding the direction for the phenomenology of religion. Is the work of Husserl or his successors decisive for them? How close is their method to his phenomenological method? We begin with Kristensen.

Born in 1867 at Kristiansand Norway, William Brede Kristensen received both his primary and secondary education in Kristiansand and in Oslo. In 1884, he enrolled at the University of Oslo in the Faculty of Theology but transferred to the Faculty of Arts in 1885 where he studied Sanskrit, Hebrew, Egyptian, Babylonian, Avestan and Phoenician, with Lieblein. From 1890 to 1892, he studied in Leyden under C.P. Tiele, A. Kuenen and W. Pleyte. From 1892 to

1894, he continued his studies of ancient languages in Paris under a famous Egyptologist G. Maspero. At the same time together with his friend Nathan Soderblom he continued his study of Avestan language. He spent a year in London working particularly in the British Museum. In 1896, he obtained his doctorate from the University of Oslo with a dissertation entitled "Aegypternes Forestillinger om livet doden i forbindelse med guderne Ra og Osiris" (Egyptian Ideas about Life after Death in Connection with the Gods Re and Osiris). From 1897 to 1901, he was a lecturer at the University of Oslo in Avestan religion. In 1901, he was appointed to the chair of History of Religions in Leyden, where he succeeded his teacher C.P. Tiele. In 1913, he became naturalized as a Dutch subject. In 1916 he married Jacoba Heldring the daughter of a well known church minister in Amsterdam. In 1922 he delivered the Claus Petri lectures in Uppsala, leading to the publication of the book Livet fra doden (Life out of death). He retired in 1937. In 1946, he was a guest Professor at Oslo University. The lectures there resulted in a book Religionshistorisk Stadium, translated into Dutch by Mrs Kristensen under the title: Inleiding tot de Godsdienstgeschiedenis (Introduction to the History of Religion). He died in 1953.⁸⁷

Kristensen's most famous book The Meaning of Religion was compiled posthumously from his lectures on Phenomenology of Religion.

By the time Kristensen came to Leyden in 1901, he had already lost interest in the evolutionist explanation of religion. In that respect, he was not following his great teacher and predecessor C.P. Tiele. Tiele may be considered a pioneer of the 'Science of Religion' and it is largely due to his activity and that the History of Religions became a recognised discipline in the theological faculties of his country. He was one of the first to offer a historical survey of a number of religions based on the study of source materials. In his general view of religions he stressed the evolution of the religious idea through historical forms of religion which represented different stages. Tiele looked for the law of this evolution, passing from nature religions to ethical religions. In his studies he combined a historical with a systematic interest.

In his studies of ancient historical religions of Egypt, Greece, Persia and Mesopotamia, Kristensen made an attempt to come to an understanding of the religious values which, in his view, were proper to the religion studied. He was opposed to the evolutionary views in the development of religion because as Kraemer puts it, he felt that "...phenomena had to be grasped in their own authentic significance and value. The genetic, evolutionist explanation and grading of Religions repelled him by their superficiality and artificiality. This approach to the mystery of Religion seemed to him a wasteful occupation about Religion, but not a serious entering into the reality of Religion".⁸⁹ He preferred to study the texts apart from their time sequence, and to

concentrate on their conceptual differences. In this he differs from his master.

What Kristensen had to say about the Phenomenology of Religion is set out in The Meaning of Religion. For him it "is the systematic treatment of History of Religion. That is to say, its task is to classify and group the numerous and widely divergent data in such a way that an overall view can be obtained of their religious content and the religious values they contain. This general view is not condensed History of Religion, but a systematic survey of the data".⁹⁰

For Kristensen, what is crucial to the phenomenological task, what sets it out apart from the 'older' systematic and comparative studies is not the method of comparison but the way in which the interpreter undertakes the work. "Phenomenology does not try to compare religions with one another as large units, but it takes out of their historical setting the similar facts and phenomena which it encounters in different religions, brings them together and studies them in groups. The corresponding data, which are sometimes nearly identical, bring us almost automatically to comparative study. The purpose of such study is to become acquainted with the religious thought, idea or need which underlies the group of corresponding data. Its purpose is not to determine their greater or lesser religious value. Certainly, it tries to determine their religious value, but this is the value they have for the believers themselves, and this has never been relative, but is always absolute".⁹¹

If every religion takes itself to be absolute as it is the case, how would the phenomenologist get about describing them? Kristensen is of the view that for a phenomenologist to be worthy of his name, he has to take this claim by the believers of the absoluteness of their religion seriously: that is the key to understanding the believers as they understand themselves. For him phenomenology extracts data from religions, putting them together and studying them in groups with the aim of discovering the religious need that lies behind the data. In all religions there is a religious element or the religious need that gave rise to the expressions in particular concepts or notions; it is this common element that Kristensen sets out to investigate. It is never the case of evolution or what is true or false about religion. Though for Kristensen comparative studies are necessary for the understanding of religious data, or the phenomenon of religion, he considers such studies inadequate because the "result of comparative research, and of every kind of historical research, is likewise less than ideal; only approximate knowledge is possible".⁹² As Kristensen indicates, the comparative religion has existed since the later part of the 19th Century, but studies were characterized by an attitude seeking to determine the religious value of a phenomenon, that is which religions were 'lower; and which were higher. The phenomenological approach though employing the same method of enquiry, that is, historical comparison brought to this method, a particular attitude that definitely sets it apart from the branch of religious studies known as the 'Comparative

Religion'. Whereas the 'Comparative Religion' field defines itself by normative attitude which the various phenomena were compared on the basis of a previously established standard, the phenomenology of religion is descriptive and brings to the comparative work no value systems nor does it attempt to establish one from within the phenomena compared. This is to say that phenomenology according to Kirstensen should be free of evaluation. Is this freedom from evaluation completely devoid of values? Waardenburg states that "the only historical evaluation which Kristensen admits is an evaluation which uses the values of the people who are studied; moreover there is a 'comparative history', which uses a comparison which is not evaluative".⁹³ It is taken for granted that behind each particular religious phenomenon, there is a fundamental religious view, which it shares generally and which is the key to the understanding of the particular religious phenomenon. The comparative method serves as an inference-method to clarify the unknown meaning of a phenomenon when the meaning of an analogous phenomenon is known. In the search for religious idea that is to say the common religious need that gave rise to the expression, "it is not important in which religion we find them. We must try then to see whether they do not clarify other cases where the religious meaning comes less clearly to light. Thus data from one religion can shed light on data from another because the meaning of the former happens to clearer than that of the latter".⁹⁴

This can lead to the discovery of the religions idea or common view which would characterize groups of phenomena like altars, sacrifices, oracles. Giving an example with the phenomenon of sacrifice he says, "in any given religion perhaps only one particular conception of sacrifice is expressed. We wish to know more; what religious need has caused men, in all times and places, to present offerings to God? To learn this, we must study the category 'sacrifices' in various religions; we must pay attention to that which in the actions and conceptions of the various peoples is common to the basic idea of sacrifice. Now to determine what is not so simple. It is certainly not to be sought in the outward traits which are held in common, in how the priests are clad and how rites are divided among them. It is the common meaning of the sacrificial acts that is important, and that we must try to understand".⁹⁵

Kristensen's view about the common ideas that gave rise to the different expressions is nearer to Schleiermacher's definition. As Kramer puts it, "Kristensen, who rightly had a high regard for Schleiermacher's power of religious intuition, was in fact the man who spelled out in concrete interpretations Schleiermacher's famous definition of Religion as 'Anschauung des Universums'".⁹⁶ What then does Schleiermacher mean by seeing some aspects of history of religion as Anschauung des Universums. Perhaps here Waardenburg again comes to our aid; "he means by Anschauung the intuitive

capacity to conceive of a spiritual reality, and by Universum something equalling God, to be contemplated in its 'phenomena', whereby each phenomenon finds itself in an infinite connection ie. a connection with the infinite Universum".⁹⁷ It is suggested that the religious emotion is roused in man, when he is touched by the activity of the Universum and when he becomes fully aware or conscious of it. By proposing this Universum Schleiermacher "laid the foundation for a history of religions which come as near as possible to religious reality ie. 'the absolute belief of all believers'".⁹⁸

Kristensen sees the phenomenologist or the historian of religion as someone who is aside from the religion he is studying or examining. The historian of religion, like the symbolist is interested in finding the hidden sense of the external facts by rediscovering the Anschauung, the view of religious reality which lives in the heart of believers, in doing this, he aims at disclosing something of the infinity of the divine reality. It is a question of asking what religious needs led the believer to his actions in such matters as sacrifice, building places for worship such realities discovered in other believers or found in other traditions, whether the outward expression meant exactly the same thing or not is for Kristensen what phenomenology is all about. In this case, his phenomenology could rightly be called typological phenomenology of religion. His main aim is to understand the common needs that gave rise to what is expressed in different types of religious phenomena. It is like

asking the believer what experiential religious needs gave rise to his actions as expressed in sacrifice, prayer. This is a phenomenological question.

Kristensen finds one way of gaining some understanding of the common basis in generalisation based on special investigations carried out by specialists in various fields of religion. However, the question of which phenomena are typical and which gives weight to the phenomenon remains a thorny issue.

For Kristensen, "That which is really essential is shown by philosophical investigations. Essence is a philosophical concept, and it is the chief task of Philosophy of Religion to formulate that essence".⁹⁹ However, there should be a mutual working relationship between phenomenology and the philosophy of religion, "The principal ideas in Phenomenology are borrowed from Philosophy of Religion" and if that is the case, "Philosophy must furnish the guiding principles in the research of Phenomenology".¹⁰⁰ Apart from the use of deduction in philosophy and comparative method in phenomenology, history which uses descriptive method is a third province of the science of religion. Phenomenology can be said to be between history and philosophy because of the interpenetration of the particular and the universal in phenomenology. This makes it at once a systematic History of Religion and applied Philosophy of Religion. Nevertheless, Kristensen continues, "A rational

and systematic structure in the science of religion is impossible...We are certainly not confronted with a comparative science of religion (history-phenomenology-philosophy) systematically built up as a logical unity. The purely logical and rational does not indicate which way we must follow because in Phenomenology we are constantly working with presumptions and anticipations. But that is what makes our labour important. This study does not take place outside our personality. And the reverse will also prove to be the case: the study exerts an influence on our personality...There is an appeal made to the indefinable sympathy we must have for religious data which sometimes appear so alien to us. But this sympathy is unthinkable without an intimate acquaintance with the historical facts - thus again an interaction, this time between feeling and factual knowledge".¹⁰¹ For Kristensen, the scientist has to have "a feeling for religion".¹⁰² Ultimately, the task of the phenomenologist is not to analyze religion rationally, but to attempt to come close to the mind of the believer.

When Kristensen writes of the essence of religion, he has in mind something different from what is usually meant. The essence of religion, which he said should be determined by philosophy, is arrived at by determining the relation of religion as 'a religious reality' to other spiritual realities, in order to arrive at a definition of what must be called religion's distinctive nature. The basis of this is what he calls 'a feeling for religion', by which this means "an

awareness of what religion is, and this awareness is precisely what philosophy of Religion attempts to formulate".¹⁰³ A researcher should not try to interpret religious views from his own narrow point of view for, "If the historian tries to understand the religious data from a different viewpoint than that of the believers, he negates the religious reality. For there is no religious reality other than the faith of the believers".¹⁰⁴ For Kristensen "this believer's viewpoint is feasible to a certain extent - but never completely - by means of a close study of material available to the phenomenologist".¹⁰⁵

Kristensen sees Otto as right in his conception of the 'holy' as a typical religious principle. He however disagrees with him in the expression of the numinous experience. Kristensen thinks that "The holy is an element sui generis and cannot be expressed in intellectual, ethical, or aesthetic terms".¹⁰⁶ This however is not to say that Kristensen doubts Otto's important contributions to the study of religion. He sees Otto's analysis of the concept of holiness though not original, as a major contribution. Kristensen thinks that by the analysis of the concept of holiness, Otto provided terms for the historians of religion. For him the studies are rather studies in the psychology of religion and because it is theoretical in nature, it belongs to the field of the philosophy of religion. Otto's work is seen by him as having some fatal errors in its exposition because according to him "Otto the philosopher and systematic theologian does not see that on this basis no transition is possible

to the historical understanding which he sets as his goal".¹⁰⁷ He compares what he calls Otto's mistake to those of Tiele and Pfléiderer but in the opposite direction. While Tiele and Pfléiderer tried to get the essence through the historical data, Otto on the other hand tried to get to the historical through the essence. Kristensen is of the view that "Like, Hegel, Otto believes that in the essence the germ of all phenomena is contained, that the phenomena have to be understood on the basis of the essence".¹⁰⁸ He makes reference to the oak tree being present in the acorn but denies the connection of this with botany. "The analysis of the structure of acorns does not give us the slightest inkling of the nature of the growing tree. It is simply an illusion to think that even a partial understanding of the developed organism can be gained from its germinal form. So too, it is an illusion to suppose that there can be a systematic development of the science of religion from the essence to the phenomena, or vice versa, whatever notion of religion is employed".¹⁰⁹ In Otto Kristensen sees evidence of the evolutionary pattern being "forced upon the historical reality - for the sake of a certain conception of the 'germinal forms' of the religious consciousness".¹¹⁰ He thinks that Otto is wrong in thinking that history will prove his theory right. This is because, human history unlike the acorn and the oak tree does not have a regular growth. "Egyptian civilization and religion remained about the same for two thousand years and then disappeared. And how many thousand years has the culture of the primitive people remained at the same level?"¹¹¹

Kristensen however, believes that Otto took whatever stand he took in the bid to automatically bridge the gap between his position as a Christian theologian and a primitive idea of the divine. To every religious man, his faith is the point of departure and it is absolute. "If a cultured Parsi priest wished to present an overall view of the history of religion, he would undoubtedly say that his own religion was the crown of historical development. Such statements come, not from a historian, but from a theologian...The believer finds the validation of his faith in quite a different realm. This validation comes, not in comparative approach in which one's own religion is thought to be the purified form of the religious heritage of mankind, but in the actual practice of religious life. Any believer will say that he owes the certainty of his faith to God. That is the religious reality".¹¹²

For Kristensen therefore, there is a presupposition which according to him is the believers viewpoint and not the 'holy' as proposed by Otto. He nevertheless, admits that the 'holy' is a part of it and an essential one at that, thus he suggests "We must put the questions differently than Otto does. We should not take the concept 'holiness' as our starting point, asking, for example, how the numinous is revealed in natural phenomena. On the contrary, we should ask how the believer conceives the phenomena he calls 'holy'. We do not need to make a particular application of the concept

'holiness' to any object for holiness is the most essential element in reality itself".¹¹³

In Kristensen's view, in dealing with the religion of the 'Ancients' we must understand that our conceptions and perceptions of nature are different from theirs and in studying their religion, "it is their feelings and conceptions which we must try to understand".¹¹⁴ We must however be conscious of the fact that the believers were right and their religion should not be viewed as primitive as suggested or thought by Otto. In applying the viewpoint of the believer as the starting point of phenomenology, "all the theories about primitive, higher, and highest standpoints at once collapse".¹¹⁵ For Kristensen, by following the viewpoint of the believer, "we shall become acquainted with more and more different expressions of the holy, but we shall never arrive at a definition of the holy. It is indeed presupposed in historical and phenomenological study that holiness is also a reality for us, a reality sui generis. That is an a priori assumption in our research".¹¹⁶ The analysis of this a priori which is the holy as a religious category however, belongs to the philosophy of religion. That notwithstanding, "the historian who wishes to understand phenomena has a different attitude than the philosopher, who wants to understand the essence of a reality, and who tries to comprehend himself. It would be foolish to sacrifice one discipline to the other, or to deny the distinctive value of both".¹¹⁷ He sees Otto as trying to speak both as a

historian and a philosopher and in the bid to satisfy the two disciplines he runs into problems. This is as much as we can say about Kristensen's observations on Otto's work.

A further understanding of Kristensen's phenomenology will be clear if one examines the way he arranged religious phenomena in the Introduction to the Meaning of Religion. This involves two groups. The type represented by Christianity and classical antiquity and the 'Ancient type'...which the natives of antiquity represent and at least for the most part, those civilization that is alien to the Western way of thought.¹¹⁸ It is likely that the purpose of this grouping is to bring out the differences between the known and the unknown referring to present and old civilization. For him these groupings are of great importance to the phenomenology of religion, that is to say, to phenomenological studies. In this grouping "A difference comes to light which it is impossible to formulate".¹¹⁹ Kristensen thinks that by this way he could distinguish between two types of religious civilization, ancient and modern. Within these categories he groups religious phenomena around three themes, Cosmology, Anthropology and Cult.

He sees these groups of religious phenomena as expressions of the reality which differs in mode of expression. The different cultures, the different levels of development have this expression in a way intelligible to them. In that case

the religious needs may remain the same but the expression may change. There could be a common religious need that gave rise to the concept of sacrifice but the concepts as such have meaning only for the believer. The believer is thus the ultimate determinant of that reality which the concept expresses. How could Kristensen's treatment of this reality lead us to the underlying reality? That is the question that still remains unanswered, the key to the solution of the problem of Phenomenology of Religion.

Evaluation And Place in the Phenomenology of Religion

In evaluating the work of Kristensen as presented in The Meaning of Religion attention should be paid to the differences between what he proposes as the basis for the phenomenology of religion, and what other scholars are saying. In Otto the holy as an a priori category could be called the ground or the essence of religious experiences. In Kristensen's view however, the question of looking for the essence of religion does not arise, rather he thinks that phenomenology has to do with the common religious beliefs which led believers to express their feelings in concrete or institutionalized form. The capacity of the researcher to deal with this common basis is of utmost importance. It appears as if for him, the discovery that something sometimes was sacred made him search for what he calls the religious belief as the basis for it. In his work he is of the view that phenomenological research

must not patronize or exclude certain religions. Whether he kept to this in his work or not is a matter which is debateable. However, as Kraemer puts it "Kirstensen does not make extravagant claims for phenomenology, as if it can deliver all the goods we desire. He takes care to note that the phenomenological endeavour towards true understanding and adequate interpretation remains necessarily proximate, because we as detached observers always remain the sphere of 'imaginatively entering into'".¹²⁰ On the question of the belief of the believers being the core of the phenomenological research in religion, one ought to be cautious. The question that now arises is this, do the different believers of the same religion or faith actually interpret their religious experience in the same way? It is obvious that every religion harbours varying conceptions. Our question now becomes, "to what extent can the scientist or the researcher get to them and analyse them".¹²¹ If religions cannot be compared, it means we can only attain an approximate knowledge of it. "The phenomenologist or the historian is always one removed from the religions he is examining; a scientist can only partly interpret the religion he is working with. One way of gaining some kind of understanding is by means of generalization based on special investigations, carried out by specialists in the various field of religion. But which religious data are typical? Which phenomenon gives 'weight' to a certain religion? These matters are difficult to establish and, according to Kirstensen, they would not be of much help in a phenomenological study".¹²²

If the only point of view in the phenomenological research on religion is that of the believers, how then does the researcher go about describing it? Must one be one with the believers in order to do a meaningful research? Perhaps Kristensen's view of the position of the researcher is nearer to what Ninian Smart had in mind when he said that "the Religionist requires to enter into engagement with those who carry on the Expression of the faith, though this does not entail that he is thereby chiefly concerned with Expression".¹²³ How then is the researcher going to get at the heart of the problem if he is not concerned with the Expression and not one of the believers himself? How could he give an accurate representation of what the believers belief is? Ninian Smart here tries to indicate the possibility of such a position by giving an example. "I may not share the beliefs and values of Father Zossima in 'The Brothers Karamazov', but I can (so to say) act his part. An important feature of human capacities is that we can use imagination and empathy as well as reasoning powers".¹²⁴ His view then implies that one can gain some understanding of the belief of the believers of sufficient imagination. How does the researcher succeed in describing the viewpoint of the believers without evaluations and prejudice? Smart again seems to be on the side of Kristensen when he says "It is that we are not solely concerned with the beliefs (eg. in doctrine or myths); we are not solely concerned with the matters of truth, but also of value, feeling, ritual, etc. In phenomenological

exploration it is not possible to confine the epoche (to use Husserl's jargon) to suspend judgement as to the truth of what is being investigated. The bracketing must also be a bracketing of expressions of value, feeling, etc. This point can be brought out by considering the familiar linguistic device of oratio obliqua"¹²⁵ That the believer expresses his belief does not make it true or false. However, "the project of bringing out what a situation is like is important in trying to convey the content of religious perception and religious practice. This does not commit oneself to that content or to those feelings (just as the novelist and biographer brings out feelings of character with whom they identify, a self-critical sympathy being however, some advantage). Thus religious phenomenology requires not merely the oratio obliqua of beliefs that, but a bracketing of all that is being presented. This presentation, however, within brackets, uses many of the elements of Expression, not just doctrinal statements. Thus an important part of description is what may be called 'bracketed Expression'."¹²⁶

At first glance, Kristensen's phenomenological study appears to verge on regional phenomenology of religion. However, it is doubtful if this is the case. In his discussion he excludes primitive religion thereby breaking his own rules but he however, makes occasional reference to them.¹²⁷ This is in some way seen as inconsistency for it will result in the superficial treatment and mis-interpretation of the elements from the field of primitive religion. A

characteristic trait of the work is that he is only concerned about historical religions in the past. The fundamental idea of his phenomenological research is that the scientist as said elsewhere in this work must start with the experience of the believer. Even if this is true, it gives rise to the problem formulated by Eric Sharpe as follows: "what then is left for the phenomenologist of religion, other than tamely to acknowledge that 'the believer' is always right - even though the believer on an occasion appears to have been disastrously wrong".¹²⁸ The essence of Kristensen's viewpoint is the striving to protect the integrity of the confessors of a certain faith against the "unintentional distortions of scholars who, while not unfriendly, had never learn to understand".¹²⁹ But one can see that the problem facing the researcher here is that he can never attain integrated objective knowledge and gain complete understanding of a 'foreign' religion. It is by means of comparison that Kirstensen arrives at his typology 'ancient and modern', but do religions not become incomparable when seen from this viewpoint?

It cannot be doubted that the work of Kristensen has something to offer to phenomenology of religion. It can be noted that Kristensen does not aim at the essence of religion as do other phenomenologists. For him that is not even to be considered. However, Kraemer thinks that Kristensen's "phenomenological approach leaves the mind with an indelible impression of the seriousness and relevance of Religion, but it offers no way to uncover and

tackle such a disturbing problem as that of the perennial ambiguity of Religion".¹³⁰

That notwithstanding, in not explaining religion away he is in line with the phenomenologist. His apparent neutrality is another point that places him in the tradition of the phenomenologists. The title of the work "studies in phenomenology of religion" seems vague. In one sense it could be called a typological phenomenology of religion. This is correct in so far as what it is trying to treat is the common religious needs that gave rise to the expressions in, for example, sacrifice and cults. It could have been a typological phenomenology of sociology if it had tried to trace the common sociological needs that gave rise to the same acts. It does not answer the question of what constitutes a religious phenomenon nor do we know what differentiates the religious phenomenon from other phenomena. Kirstensen's contribution however, is that religious sentiments or feelings should not be dismissed as a meaningless accretion of individual believers or be dismissed as illusions as some have done.

Gerardus van der Leeuw: Religion as Power

Having discussed the works of Rudolf Otto and Brede Kristensen, our attention now turns to the works of Gerardus van der Leeuw whose work is highly regarded in the area of Phenomenology of Religion. Our line of inquiry will follow those of the two scholars already mentioned.

Born in the Hague, Holland, in 1890, Gerardus van der Leeuw received his primary and secondary education there. In 1908 he enrolled in the Faculty of Theology of the University of Leyden where he studied History of Religions with W.B. Kristensen and Egyptian with P.A.A. Boeser. He finished his studies in 1913 and continued to study a semester in Gottingen and a semester in Berlin where he worked with K. Sethe and A. Erman. In 1916, van der Leeuw obtained the Th.D. degree at the University of Leyden with a Dissertation on Representation of the Gods in the Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts.

From 1916-1918 he was a Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, and in 1918, he was appointed to Chair of the History of Religions, the 'Theological Encyclopedia' and Egyptology at the University of Groningen. In his student days, apart from religion, philosophy and related subjects, he studied music, painting, literature and poetry.

From 1945-46, he was the Minister of Education, Art, and Science for the Netherlands. In 1950, he presided over the International Congress of the History of Religions held in Amsterdam and became the first President of the International Association for the History of Religions. He died in Utrecht in 1950. van der Leeuw wrote several books and articles including Religion in Essence and Manifestation, a study on the Phenomenology of Religion (1938), Virginibus Puerisque, a study of the service of children in worship in ancient Rome (1939), and Sacred and Profane Beauty, the holy in Art.¹³¹

What van der Leeuw regards as the Phenomenology of Religion is spelt out in his Phänomenologie der Religion.¹³² At the beginning of this work he goes straight to discussing what has been called the object of religion. He says that what the sciences concerned with religion have described as the object of religion, is itself for religion the centre of activity. For the religious man, what religion deals with is life and reflection on the activity is, in a way, an afterthought. It is only when he reflects that he sees this experience as an object.

For van der Leeuw, mere mention of the Object of religious experience suggests a 'Somewhat' and this 'somewhat' is something 'Other'. An encounter with this something other which is a religious experience makes it dawn on us that "the first affirmation we can make about the Object of

Religion is that it is a highly exceptional and extremely impressive 'other'".¹³³

Man's subjective reaction to this encounter is that of amazement. For man there arises an experience that is connected to the 'Other' which seems to push itself forward. These experiences seem to be obstructions and the question of theories or generalization does not arise at this stage. This 'somewhat' which is the object of religion is seen as something that is a departure from, the familiar things because it tends to generate power. This is to say that at this stage belief is empirical. On this account whenever reference is made to the religious experience of the primitives we must "accustom ourselves to interpret the supernatural element in the conception of God by the simple notion of an 'Other', of something foreign and highly unusual, and at the same time the consciousness of absolute dependence, so well known to ourselves, by an indefinite and generalised feeling of remoteness".¹³⁴

van der Leeuw refers to a letter by R.H. Codrington in which the word mana was mentioned for the first time. Codrington in both his letter and book defines mana as a sort of supernatural power that inheres in physical objects though the power itself is not physical. In this view mana can inhere in anything and anything can convey it. This power is verified empirically and people talk of mana when something is effective, striking, overpowering and whatever that can be said to be beyond ordinary comprehension and it

cannot be if it does not command all that has been mentioned. van der Leeuw also refers to the South Sea islands where mana has always meant Power; however, "the islanders include this term, together with its derivatives and compounds, such various substantial, adjectival and verbal ideas as Influence, Strength, Fame, Majesty, Intelligence, Authority, Deity, Capability, extraordinary Power; whatever is successful, strong, plentiful: to reverence, be capable, to adore and to prophesy".¹³⁵ van der Leeuw takes time to indicate that our sense of the supernatural cannot be intended here by the islanders. He mentions Lehmann's reproach of Codrington for mentioning the supernatural at all. On the other hand he criticises Lehmann for setting up what he calls "false antithesis between the ideas of 'the supernormal' and 'the amazing' on the one hand, on the other the primitive ideas of 'the powerful' and 'the mighty' in general".¹³⁶ For van der Leeuw, the primitive mind does not distinguish between magical power and others. He does not want the idea of mana to be thought of as emanating from the supernatural. To make the point clear, he goes on to say that a lot of things are attributed to mana. The creative act of God becomes the work of the divine mana. There is the talk of the mana of the king. Apart from the mana, there were other discoveries of similar terms in other parts of the world. The orenda of the Iroquois, the wakanda of the Sioux Indians, the Manitu of the Algonquins of North-West America, the petara of the Dyaks of Borneo which is something as well as someone, and the hasina of the people of Madagascar. In all

these, Power is seen as the basis of all that is religious, not only religious but sometimes what we will in the present day call areligious. In addition to the examples mentioned, van der Leeuw goes on to say something about Europeans, to show how universal power is the basis of religion or belief. "Among the ancient Germans, too, the idea of Power was dominant. The power of life, luck (Hamingja), was a quantitative potency. Men fought by inciting their luck against somebody (Old Nordic: etia hamingju), and were defeated because they possessed too little 'luck'. The Swedish peasant senses 'power' in bread, in the horse, etc., while Nordic folklore the woman whose child has been stolen by a troll is unable to pursue her because she 'has been robbed of her power'".¹³⁷ Apart from objects or things, van der Leeuw talks of power emanating from certain persons who were supposed to possess them. He gives an example with the Arabian baraka which is supposed to be an emanation from holy men and is connected with their graves. One acquires this by pilgrimage and it is an effective cure for maladies. It is therefore no wonder that "to be cured of some disease a king's wife seeks the baraka of a saint".¹³⁸ Whether a name is assigned to power or not, the basis of religion has always been power and for the primitives, the power in the Universe is an impersonal power.

For van der Leeuw, the primitive mind does not make any distinctions between the organic and inorganic nature. His concern is not with life which

for him was self-explanatory but with power as manifested in one event or the other. Whatever appears strange becomes an object of power and it is on this ground that "Winnebago (Sioux) offers tobacco to any unusual object because it is a wakan".¹³⁹ From the earliest of times the idea has had priority over any other conception. It can be seen from what van der Leeuw has been saying that whenever power is considered as a basis of any religious action, it is not in abstract. It is thought of "only when it manifests itself in some very striking way; with what confers efficiency on objects and persons in ordinary circumstances, on the other hand, man does not concern himself".¹⁴⁰ When in other cultural conditions this power is incorporated, it will no longer be power as it appears in individual objects rather it "expands and deepens into the concept of a Universal power".¹⁴¹ The religious man encounters this power and his reaction to this encounter with power be it the Universal one is that of amazement (scheu) and in extreme case fear. One can see a similarity here to the mysterium tremendum of the numinous experience in Otto's description of the 'holy' as a ground for religion. Though van der Leeuw criticised Otto's understanding of the 'holy' his use of the terms used by Otto has not been explained. More will be said about this later.

Power in the nature that is being described by van der Leeuw, that is, the Universal Power can manifest itself in particular objects, material or immaterial. The specific instances of power give rise to different functions in different

objects. It is on this basis that a certain "Esthonian peasant remains poor, while his neighbour grows steadily richer. One night he meets his neighbour's 'luck' engaged in sowing rye in the fields. Thereupon he wakes his own 'luck', who is sleeping besides a large stone; but it refuses to sow for him because it is not a farmer's 'luck' at all, but a merchant's; so he himself becomes a merchant and gains wealth".¹⁴²

These specific instances of power according to van der Leeuw is responsible for the stratifications in Indian community. There is the power for royalty, that for craft and for all that man needs to do. In the case of the Christian Church this is the power that is conferred by ordination. Because power can be found everywhere and anywhere, there arises the problem of the universality of power which is now postulated and affirmed. By this universality of power, van der Leeuw sees a type of monism that is concealed in the thought of the primitives. Power here becomes a universal energy in this case either psychologically in a direct application to humanity, or cosmologically. Power in the first instance becomes a soul and in the second it assumes the form of divinity activating the Universe.

van der Leeuw sees his theoretical consideration as something that was alien to the ancient world. As this approaches the partially developed culture, the "changes and process of the Universe are then no longer accidental and

arbitrary effects of distinct powers that emerge at each event disappear again; they are rather the manifestation of a unitary World-order; appearing in conformity to the rules, and indeed to the laws".¹⁴³

For van der Leeuw, the ancients were familiar with a World-course that is a living power active in the Universe. These resulted in divinities in various parts of the ancient world. We talk of "Tao in China, Rta in India, Asha in Iran, Ma'at among the ancient Egyptians, Dike in Greece; these are such ordered systems which theoretically, indeed, constitute the all-inclusive calculus of the Universe, but which nevertheless, as living and impersonal powers, possess mana-like character".¹⁴⁴

Having finished with the description of power as it touches the cosmological aspect, which in the last analysis results in the existence of divinity, van der Leeuw goes on to discuss what he sees as the psychological significance. "The power that operates within man then becomes regarded as his 'soul', in the sense familiar to ourselves, but as a particular power though nevertheless it is superior to him".¹⁴⁵ The concept of the soul according to van der Leeuw is not a primitive concept. Before "Moirai became the Power of Destiny it was already the personal lot of man, and this it still remains even today among modern Greeks as Mira. The Germanic hamingja, again was not the soul, but the power ruling in and over a man".¹⁴⁶

From this it is clear that for the primitives what the present day man will call soul, he regards as power inherent in man though superior to him. "Power can be bound up with all sorts of material or corporal objects; it is this state of affairs that has led to the designation of 'soul-stuff'. From the soul as such, however, all these ideas were distinguished by the power being impersonal, while one might have a greater or smaller quantity of it, and could either lose it or acquire it; in terms, it was independent of man and superior to him".¹⁴⁷ Whatever man does, the idea of power has an overriding place whether this is bound in objects or otherwise.

Van der Leeuw goes on to give an example of the transformation of power within the Greek Christian world. In this case, the idea of power was transformed into a single Power by means of the concept of pneuma. van der Leeuw gives several examples of the use of the pneuma in both the New Testament and other philosophical movements like the Stoics and the Gnostics. Particularly in the New Testament pneuma is seen as being transmitted almost like a fluid, like the other psychological powers, charis, dynamis and doxa. They are supposed to flow from God to man and the divine Charis is imparted by means of blessing and in some cases the imposition of hands. For van der Leeuw, at times the thoughts, deeds and principles of men can become represented as a store of power. A typical example is the idea of thesaurus in which cumulative deeds are seen as

constituting a power that is effective in favour of the doer, not only the doer but also of another person. It is on this account that the treasury of grace that is said to be accumulated by Christ and the saints is effective in favour of the Church.

Apart from the manifestation of power in specific forms already described, van der Leeuw sees our modern way of describing things as dead objects as alien to the primitive mind. To them, everything can be a bearer of power and even if there is no evidence of any influence, it suffices that one regards such objects as such and the potency is not doubted. Van der Leeuw gives two examples of a negro and a Ewe tribesman, "An African negro steps on a stone and cries out: 'Ha are you there?' and takes it with him to bring him luck. The stone, as it were gives a hint that it is powerful. Again: an Ewe tribesman in West Africa enters the bush and finds a lump of iron there; returning home, he falls ill, and the priest explain that a tro (a divine being) is manifesting its potency in the iron, which in future should be worshipped".¹⁴⁸ This idea of power residing in everything and anything gives rise to 'Fetishism', a term originally used by the Portuguese when referring to the customs and beliefs of the negros. It was originally applied to potent things made by man himself and not a natural thing. This view, however, widened to include the worship of nature, and in this case, power becomes formless. However, to the primitive mind it does not matter whether they are

objects made by him or natural objects, for he venerates what he himself has made, provided it is effective just as he would venerate what nature has given to him when it manifests power. Any peculiarity in natural objects like the odd shape of a stone, the shape of a shell, becomes a pointer to the existence of power. Another quality which the power carrier should have is portability, that is to say that the power bearer must be such that one can easily carry it or pocket it without much fuss, "it is just this feeling of being able to carry the sacred power with one that is characteristic of fetishism".¹⁴⁹ Van der Leeuw gives an example of fetishism as the Australian churinga which is a piece of wood shaped in a peculiar way in which the outline of a totem emblem is scratched. The churinga is seen as the bearer of the power which is connected on the one hand to the individual and on the other hand to the totem. Comparing churinga with the Ark of the Covenant, he says "...the power of the Ark of the Covenant sprang from Jahveh, a God, that of the churinga from a totem; and the potent influence of the fetish, naturally is very often simply presupposed quite apart from any kind of attitude to spirits or Gods being implied - purely dynamically therefore".¹⁵⁰ Having said all this van der Leeuw sees the transition from fetishism to idols as understandable. The problem that seems to arise from fetishism is the fact that here the power comes from is still unknown. He goes on to describe the heaps of stone found in different parts of the world and how such collections became the origin of divinity. Van der Leeuw distinguishes fetishes from amulets which

are certainly containers of power, and pocket size "Stones and almost every imaginable thing were carried on the body as amulets to ward off danger and attract blessings. Like fetishes these too can acquire their influence from some holy person or situation; but then they are preferably called relics".¹⁵¹

For van der Leeuw, the experience of the power of things may occur anywhere and at anytime. Powerfulness reveals itself in an unexpected manner and so one cannot be sure of how and when it will make itself manifest: every moment and everything should be an instant of expectation for this "the place, the action, the person in which power reveals itself receive a specific character".¹⁵² Those who have these gifts of power are distinguished from those who have not and the places that manifest this power are different from other places. They are in other words called tabu (tapu). Tabu is said to be from the same cultural domain as mana. For van der Leeuw, it "indicates 'what is expressly named', 'exceptional', while the verb tapui means 'to make holy'. Tabu is thus a sort of warning: 'Danger High Voltage' Power has been stored up, and we must be on our guard".¹⁵³ Tabu can be said to be the verified condition of being charged with power and man's reaction should be that of keeping his distance to avoid a clash with the power.

Certain actions are avoided at certain times and places because of the

sacredness of the time or place. Persons and things can also be tabu because of the power emanating from them. The sacred time is different from every other time, the sacred place is different from every other place. These can be seen as an intervention on ordinary order of times and places. If the tabu is violated, the result is not punishment as such but automatic reaction of power which at times to ordinary mind look irrational. Van der Leeuw gives an example of such violation of tabu from the Bible, when Uzzah with good intentions wanted to support the ark of Covenant but was struck dead. 'And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there because he put forth his hand to the ark; and he died beside the ark of God' (2 Samuel 6:7-8). He goes on to give several other examples of the violation of tabu.

Van der Leeuw sees the distance between the potent and the powerlessness as the distance between the sacred and the profane, or the secular. The sacred is as that which has been placed within the boundaries and the power it emanates secures for it its place and whoever encounters this unique power "Clearly realizes that he is in the presence of some quality with which in his previous experience he was never familiar, and which cannot be evoked from something else but which, sui generis and sui juris, can be designated only

be religious terms such as 'sacred' and 'numinous'".¹⁵⁴

Man's reaction to these is both avoidance and a seeking. Here one can see that van der Leeuw is using a term by Otto as if it is self-explanatory. While Otto tries to explain his use of the numinous, van der Leeuw does so without explanation. In Otto the numinous experience is sui generis and man's reaction is that of mysterium tremendum et fascinans. For van der Leeuw, "in the human soul, Power awakens a profound feeling of awe which manifests itself both as fear and as being attracted. There is no religion whatever without terror, but equally none without love, or that nuance of being attracted which corresponds to the prevailing ethical level."¹⁵⁵ One can see van der Leeuw saying here that really this is the essence of religion since he thinks this is true of all religion. Having said this he goes on to say that the expression of this fear must be adopted in such a way that it reflects the attitude of the whole person and in countless situations. He counts physical shuddering, ghostly horror, fear, terror, reverence, humility, adoration, profound apprehension, enthusiasm as lying in the realm within the awe expressed in the presence of Power. A look at the above list shows two main tendencies: the tendency to move away from Power and the other to move towards it. It is on this ground that he talks of the 'ambivalent nature of awe'. Power as such is seen as something 'Wholly Other' and our conduct in the face of such 'Wholly Other' according to van der Leeuw is always

ambivalent. There is love, there is hate. There is flight, there is attraction. Whether the sacred as such releases feelings of hate and fear or those of love and reverence, the obligation on the part of man is that of response. In his encounter with Power which is experienced as different from nature, man apprehends its demand. There is an irruption in his life which leaves him seized with dread and yet this is a loving dread.

For van der Leeuw then, it is this awe which develops into observance. He traces this to the Roman concept of religio which according to him originally signified tabu. To emphasise his point, he goes on to quote a passage in Virgil in which an eerie place is described as follows: "the primal awe still glimmers: the sacred grove of the capitol has a 'dread awe' (religio dira)".¹⁵⁶ He also mentions how the ancient idea of shudder still remains in customs of some people. In these customs death is seen as a portentum which is "a sign of potency that enters in religionem populo, as we shall say, 'renders the people impure'. It was, then, preferable to put up with a ceremonial repetition of the consular election, rather than permit a tabu to remain in force over the people"¹⁵⁷. Van der Leeuw gives other examples where tabu, the 'separatedness', means both pure and polluted. He quotes Masurius Sabinus who defines religiosum as that which is withdrawn from us because of its sacred quality. For van der Leeuw, constant regard to that which is sacred is the chief element in the relationship between man and all that is

extraordinary. He thinks that the most probable derivation of religion is from relegere which means to pay attention, perhaps in his own case, it is to pay attention to the tabu. In this case he sees homo religiosus as an antithesis of homo negligens.

For van der Leeuw, tabu leads to a man's response in awe. It is this awe which results in observance. He disagrees with Freud who thinks that man's religious purposes are governed by transmittable tabus. Rather, he thinks that for observance to be real observance that element of awful potency must have been subsistent. He gives examples with customs, ceremonials both of courts and universities. It is to distinguish here between observance and religious observance as implied in van der Leeuw's work. The implication in his thought on tabu, and observance, is that a religious act if it is to be a religious act has to be an observance out of fear and love, intended to deter and to attract Power. Power is his thought therefore, becomes the phenomenon which in history¹⁵⁸ gave rise to religion and its institutionalization. Perhaps this is why the title of the book Phanomenologie der Religion is translated Religion in Essence and Manifestation in English instead of simply Phenomenology of Religion. Van der Leeuw's phenomenology of religion or what he understands as the phenomenology of religion is spelt out here.

Evaluation and Place in the Phenomenology of Religion

It is obvious from van der Leeuw's treatment of religion that he has a preconceived notion which places Power as the basis of religion. It looks as if to him Power is the essence of religion.

Religion in Essence and Manifestation suggests a continuation of a previous work; it seems to begin without sufficient introduction. He assumes that his readers must have been familiar with the terms he uses. Van der Leeuw identifies the element of Power in religion. This power seems widespread in primitive society, and pre-dates all interpretations came to be known, this element has been there. He however, does not give reasons for the existence of this power. In the introduction, he delves into the object of religion, saying that it is a highly exceptional and extremely impressive 'Other'. There is a similarity between this and Otto's 'wholly Other'. He however does not offer any explanation as Otto did on the use of the 'Wholly Other'. He has not attempted to close the gap between Power in primitive cultures which is not seen as something other and the theistic conception of power. In discussing the letter of Codrington, van der Leeuw sees the modern man's alienation from religion as arising from the failure to understand this Power which should be within the knowledge of everyone.

His treatment of power helps him to see the survival of primitive experience which continues in the modern world. Examples could be given from fetishism, attitudes to certain animals and birds, and the carrying of mascot for good luck. Although these things no longer make sense, in the way in which it made originally, their survival may be attributed to their power or potency. Van der Leeuw gives several examples from a wide range of cultures and phenomena. Although he attempts to search for the essence of religion, which Kristensen would disagree with, nevertheless, there is a similarity with Kristensen in the fact of the cognizance of the believers.

In presenting power as the essence of religion, van der Leeuw has presupposed that which the phenomenology properly speaking will be said to be unsatisfactory. The task of phenomenology is to go beyond the successive stages of objectification so as to identify that which is never completely objectified. By presenting power as the essence of religion, he has only succeeded in presenting us with yet another manifestation of the essence of religion. In trying to evoke for the modern man the experience of the primitives which they no longer themselves experience on account of several objectifications, there is some similarity with Otto who assumes that although the numinous experience may seem to elude modern man, given the right circumstances and dispositions, it could be evoked for him, perhaps through analogous experience. Is it any surprise that J.B. Bettis says of van

der Leeuw's work that it "might be considered an essay in the phenomenology of power"¹⁵⁹.

In the modern world, power is experience in many ways, examples of which are; political power, automotive power, the power of electricity and many other experiences of power. Van der Leeuw however does not explain why power as it was experienced by the primitives have eluded the modern man. Could the answer be found in man surrounding himself with so many artificialities? Were the primitives more open to nature? Van der Leeuw's inability to explain this could be compared to Otto's inability to explain why modern man is less likely to recognise the experience of the holy. The power that surrounds modern man makes it imperative for one to ask van der Leeuw to explain or define the type of power that is not experienced by the modern man. One expects van der Leeuw to give guidelines on how to distinguish this power that he has been describing from power in general. Although he uses such terms as 'other', sacred, awesome, fetish, tabu as if it indicate what type of power he means, these are taken together, the tendency is for one to see them not as aspects of power but power is seen as an aspect of a more fundamental experience. This is a weakness of van der Leeuw's phenomenology.

The category 'sacred' which is a phenomenological category is an important

one as such and as such is introduced by van der Leeuw in his description of the Melanesian mana. When he says "there is no antithesis whatever between secular acts and sacred"¹⁶⁰, he does not explain what he means by sacred. The 'sacred' soon becomes part of the definition of power which is in itself undefined. Although he goes on to say that the attitude of power is not regarded as supernatural, but it is something extraordinary, a sort of in its own class, he goes on to say "objects and persons endowed with this potency have that essential nature of their own which we call 'sacred'". Here one sees a marriage of two undefined terms. One wonders if it is right to bring in the sacred to clarify power, for the sacred is one of those words that is beset by assumptions. We may rather ask if a particular experience of power might be seen as an aspect of the sacred.

In his discussion of tabu he distinguishes the sacred and the profane thus: "We can characterise the distance between the potent and the relatively powerless as the relationship between sacred and profane, or secular. The 'sacred' is what has been placed within boundaries, the exceptional (Latin sanctus); its powerfulness creates for it a place of its own"¹⁶¹. As we shall see, it is this ontological distinction between the sacred and the profane that Eliade chose to treat in his work.

Van der Leeuw says of the experience of power that "it remains merely

dynamic, and not in the slightest degree ethical or spiritual"¹⁶². Could one not see the similarity between this and the point made by Otto when he says that the holy has attracted an 'over plus' of meaning as if it were a moral category. In continuation, van der Leeuw says of power "For whoever is confronted with potency clearly realises that he is in the presence of some quality with which in his previous experience he was never familiar, and which cannot be evoked from something else but which, sui generis and sui juris can be designated only by religious terms such as 'sacred' and numinous"¹⁶³, he has borrowed from Otto without explanation. In Otto, the sui generisness lies in the fact that the experience is not an odd form of some other experiences. By using the word numinous coined by Otto, he has Otto's work in mind but what is surprising is that numinous in this case is far from being an essence but is a qualifier of power. It is doubtful if Otto intended its use this way. There are other works like awe, amazement, fear and many others that are borrowed from Otto without expansion or explanation as given by Otto.

Van der Leeuw says "In the human soul, then, Power awakens a profound feeling of awe which manifests itself both as fear and as being attracted. There is no religion whatever without terror, but equally none without love, ..." ¹⁶⁴. Here he is referring to the fear and the attraction of power. This is the ambivalence that Otto points to in the combination of the tremendum et facinans. Van der Leeuw does not analyse the experience

phenomenologically as Otto did. It is true that schematization in Otto has not been dealt with, it is however interesting that van der Leeuw ends up with what looks like what Otto tackles in schematization: ... "that nuance of being attracted which corresponds to the prevailing ethical level"¹⁶⁵ .. He however, does nothing to show how the original experience can be developed into ethical consideration. This in Otto is taken care of by schematization. There are many other places where similarities could be found but this would take us beyond the scope of this work.

From the comments so far, it can be seen that though van der Leeuw tries to clarify power, he has only succeeded in bringing in terms which are in themselves problematic. His work remains at the level of describing certain characteristics of the experience of power without attempting to get beyond it to a deeper understanding. Examining what he says, on commenting on the primitives that; "whence the power arises is, however, a question in itself"¹⁶⁶, one would expect here that since he is referring to fetishism, he would pursue the issue. He however, is not concerned to do this. What is it that makes the sacred sacred; wherein lies the power of fetishism? What makes this special power special? These are problematic areas for him. He seems satisfied with remaining at the level of the manifestations of power without any real attempt to get to the essence. Can such a work really be called phenomenology of religion? Phenomenology of religion it is, in the fact

that it tries to describe the phenomenon of religion as he understands it.

This however is in line with the phenomenology proposed by P.D. Chatepie de la Saussaye in the first of three sections of the Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte of 1887. As George James puts it here, phenomenology "has a meaning different from that later intended by Husserl or any of his successors."¹⁶⁷ Van der Leeuw's work fits into the typological phenomenology of religion.

Though van der Leeuw's work has been widely read, its contribution to the current debate on the phenomenology of religion has been minimal. For Ake Hultkrantz, the work of van der Leeuw is too 'speculative', in some places incomprehensible, to be of use to empirical research¹⁶⁸ He sees it as a parenthesis in the development of religion¹⁶⁹ For Baal "there is hardly a more disappointing book than van der Leeuw's Phanomenologie der Religion".¹⁷⁰ Van der Leeuw is in line with the phenomenologist trying to discover the essence of religion. He however has stopped at certain manifestations. The phenomenon is still elusive.

Mircea Eliade: Religions as Hierarchies.

Having discussed the works of Otto, Kristensen and van der leeuw, our attention now turns to the works of Mircea Eliade who is regarded as one of the most significant scholars in the study of the phenomenology of religion.

Born in Romania in 1907, Eliade's early education at the University of Bucharest and Rome was in philosophy and especially the philosophy of history. He obtained an M.A. degree in 1928 for a thesis on Italian philosophy from Ficino to Bruno. In the same year, he went to India where he studied Indian philosophy at the University of Calcutta under Surendranath Dasgupta until 1932. During this time he spent six months in Rishikesh learning the theory and practice of Yoga. In 1933, he took his Ph.D. with a dissertation on the subject of yoga. He lectured from 1933 to 1940 at the University of Bucharest. He worked in the Romanian London legation in 1940 and at the Lisbon legation from 1941 to 1945. From 1945 he taught at the *École des Hautes Études* of the Sorbonne in Paris, and from 1957 he was Professor of History of Religions at the University of Chicago¹⁷¹. He died in April, 1986.

Eliade's interests are varied and wide ranging, including fiction writing, Eastern religion, shamanism, alchemy, phenomenology of religion, hermeneutics, primal religions, history of religions and the renewal of Western man's

religiousness. Central to his thought however, is the notion that there are certain basic comparative structures and patterns built into religion whereby man perceives the sacred. These take the form of heiraphonies, symbols and archetypes. The task of the student of religion is their identification. Eliade's interest in primitive religions dates back from at least 1924 when at the age of seventeen, he read Frazer in a French translation. Later his interest was stimulated by his encounter with yoga which Eliade regards as a pre-Aryan technique of spirituality of great antiquity and therefore truly primitive. While teaching philosophy and history of religions at the University of Bucharest between 1933 and 1940, Eliade read widely in older anthropological works such as the works of Frazer, Levy-Bruhl, Marett, W.Schmit, Pettazzoni and others. He was also fascinated by the ancient heritage of Romanian folklore and the pre-Roman religion of his homeland.

In 1946 he published his first article on shamanism Le probleme du chananisme¹⁷² and his Patterns¹⁷³ followed soon after. From this date, the bulk of his writings centered upon or at least included data from the 'primitives' though his interests know no bounds and he writes concerning the whole History of religions. Among his many publications are; The Myth of the Eternal Return (1954) Patterns in Comparative Religion in 1958 Birth and Rebirth also in 1958. The Forge and the Crucible in 1962 and Shamanism in 1964, The Sacred and the Profane (1961) in which he contrasts the traditional

religious 'mode of being' in the world with that assumed by the modern man. In the issues of the journal, History of Religions volumes 6 and 7 of 1966¹⁷⁴. Eliade published studies on Australian religion and the South American high gods.

In the introduction to The Sacred and the Profane Eliade indicates his awareness of Otto's treatment of religion. While not downgrading the work of Otto, he indicates the way in which his own investigation is to be carried out. "We propose to present the phenomenon of the sacred in all complexity, and not only insofar as it is irrational. What will concern us is not the relation between the rational and the non rational elements of the religion but the sacred in its entirety".¹⁷⁵ Eliade sees the first thing about the sacred as being the opposite of the profane. For Eliade the religions are hierarchies, that is the manifestations of the holy: "Four l'histoire des religions, toute manifestation du sacré est de conséquence; tout rite, tout mythe, toute croyance ou figure divine reflète l'expérience du sacré, et par conséquent implique les notions d'être, de signification et de vérité".¹⁷⁶ This conception may be compared to the proposal by Heiler that religious phenomena point to 'otherness' - the holy. For Eliade, man becomes aware of the sacred because it shows itself to him as something that is different from the profane. It is on account of this that Eliade tries to "designate the act of manifestation of the sacred, with the term hierophany"¹⁷⁷ He chose this on account of the fact

that it does not imply anything further. And as stated earlier, "the history of religions - from the most primitive to the most highly developed - is constituted by a great number of hierarchies, by manifestations of sacred realities".¹⁷⁸

He gives examples with the incarnation of God in Christ, the manifestation of the sacred in some ordinary objects such as stone or a tree. For those who worship these objects, the stone or the tree is not adored or worshipped because they are everyday things we know but for what is manifested in them. What then constitutes this 'sacred' and the 'profane'? What does Eliade mean by religion? The answers to these questions will bring us nearer to understanding Eliade's phenomenology of religion.

For Eliade the "sacred and the profane are two modes of being in the world, two existential situations assumed by man in the course of his history".¹⁷⁹ For him this mode of being in the world is not only of concern to the history of religions or to sociology but are of concern to everyone in search of meaning for human existence. Perhaps it is on account of this that Eliade proposes to treat religion in its entirety. For Eliade, the man of the traditional society, that is to say, the archaic man does not distinguish between religious and non religious acts. It is on this account that his actions will be of interest, not only to the historians of religion, but also to philosophical anthropology,

psychology and in short to all human sciences.

We have read from Eliade that religions are manifestations of the sacred, that the sacred is the opposite of profane, and that both are two modes of being in the world. It then follows that whatever is said about religious experiences, implies the experience of the sacred. If both are existential positions, what then makes the sacred different from the profane?

For Eliade, generally speaking man is basically religious, on account of his situation in the world. In this world then man experiences an irruption. For this religious man then, there is a break in the order of things and this break constitutes the sacred sphere. "For the religious man, space is not homogeneous; he experiences interruptions, breaks in it; some part of space are qualitatively different from others".¹⁸⁰ Eliade quotes the case of Exodus 3:5 where the Lord commanded Moses to take off his shoes because the ground on which he was standing was sacred. That is the indication of the differences between sacred and the profane space. It then follows according to Eliade that for the religious man, the world is not homogeneous and "this spatial non homogeneity finds expression in the experience of an opposition between space that is sacred - the only real and really existing space and all other space, the formless expanse surrounding it".¹⁸¹ For Eliade the experience of the non homogeneity of space is a primordial experience which

is to say, a primary religious experience that precedes all reflection. The break in the space constitutes the sacred character because it shows the fixed point. "The manifestation of the sacred ontologically founds the world. In the homogeneous and infinite expanse, in which no point of reference is possible and hence no orientation can be established, the hierophony reveals an absolute fixed point, a centre".¹⁸² In Eliade's view, the sacred is the centre of irruption. How then does he see the profane? "For profane experience, on the contrary, space is homogeneous and neutral; no break qualitatively differentiates the various parts of its mass".¹⁸³ Having said this much about the sacred and the profane, we shall now proceed to consider what Eliade has to say about the phenomenon of religion.

In Eliade's conception religion "does not necessarily imply belief in God, gods, or ghosts, but refers to the experience of the sacred and consequently is related to the ideas of being, meaning and truth".¹⁸⁴ His point of departure is the historical data which expresses the religious experience of mankind. Throughout his phenomenological approach he tries to decipher these data, to describe and to interpret the religious phenomena which constitute the Lebenswelt of the homo religiosus. For Eliade, the sacred cannot be reduced to anything else. This stems from the antireductionist stand. Having identified the empirical basis of religion which according to him is the experience of the sacred, we shall now ask what constitutes the sacred. Eliade's answer to this

might point us in the right direction.

Eliade is familiar with the positions of the ethnologists, the philologists, and the positions of Durkheim and Freud. Though he sees them as opening a new dimension of the sacred, they fall short by trying to explain religion away or by considering only the function it performs. He disagrees with these views and says that a historian of religion must attempt to grasp the religious phenomena "on their own plane of reference".¹⁸⁵ To reduce our interpretation to some other plane of reference is to neglect their full intentionality. In Eliade's view, what is most characteristic of religion is its being occupied with the sacred which it distinguishes from the profane. This sacred can be described and experienced as the following: 'Power' (van der Leeuw) 'Wholly other' (Otto) as 'Ultimate reality' (Wach). One can still see places or religious contexts where it can be described as 'Absolute reality', 'Being', 'Eternity', 'Divine', 'Metacultural' and transhistorical', 'Transhuman' and others.¹⁸⁶ Eliade focuses on religious experiences as such because they bring a man out of his worldly universe or historical situation and project him into a universe different in quality and entirely different world, transcendent and holy. Trying to understand the essence of such phenomena by means of psychology, physiology, and sociology, economics, linguistics, art or any other study is false. It misses one unique and irreducible element in it which is that of the sacred. For Eliade the historians of religion must respect the fundamentally

irreducible character of religion. He frequently quotes the ironical query of Henri Poincare: "Would a naturalist who had never studied the elephant except through a microscope consider that he had an adequate knowledge of the creature". The microscope reveals the structure and mechanism of cells, which structure and mechanism are exactly the same in all multicellular organisms. The elephant is certainly a multi-cellular organism, but is that all that it is? On the microscopic scale, we might hesitate to answer. On the scale of human vision, which at least has the advantage of presenting the elephant as a zoological phenomenon, there can be no doubt about the reply".¹⁸⁷

Eliade like other phenomenologists of religion sees phenomenology as an instrument for a better understanding of the history of religion. In Patterns in Comparative Religion he extends his view on religion by first faulting current approaches to religion. "All the definitions given up till now of the religious phenomenon have one thing in common: each has its own way of showing that the sacred and the religious life are the opposite of the profane and the secular life".¹⁸⁸ Here Eliade is in agreement with Roger Callois on his view of the definition of religion.¹⁸⁹ Callois himself admits that the sacred-profane distinction is not always sufficient to define the phenomena of religion but such an opposition is involved in every definition of religion so far.

From all that has been said, Eliade seems to be implying that religion always entails some aspect of transcendence. The transcendence is expressed in terms such as 'Absolute bliss and power' 'transhistorical and transmundane'. Perhaps it is Eliade's intention that his sense of transcendence be viewed as a universal structure of religion. The universal characterization in terms of this transcendent structure is meant of course to include not to be exhausted by the definitions offered by Otto, van der Leeuw and others. It then follows that in Eliade's conception, the 'holy' is an aspect of the sacred. Eliade is aware of the secular transcendence but he differentiates that from the religious transcendence the basis of that of religion being homo religiosus as the norm for the religious transcendence. For Eliade religion involves a radical break with all secular or profane modalities, it invariably point man beyond the relative historical 'natural' world of ordinary experience. He goes as far as to say that the main function of religion is the rendering of human existence 'open' to superhuman world of transcendence.¹⁹⁰ There can be no doubt, however, that Eliade has brought to his treatment of religion the result of his investigation into the common elements in all religions. In contrasting religion with the mode of being in the world of the non religious man, Eliade claims that "the non religious man refuses transcendence, accepts the relativity of 'reality', and may even come to doubt the meaning of existence...Modern non religious man assumes a new existential situation; he regards himself solely as the subject and agent of history, and he refuses all transcendence. In

other words, he accepts no models for humanity outside the human condition as it can be seen in the various historical situations. Man makes himself, and he only makes himself completely in proportion as he desacralizes himself and the world. The sacred is the prime obstacle to his freedom. He will become himself only when he is totally demysticized. He will not truly be free until he has killed the last god".¹⁹¹

According to Eliade, the sacred is always revealed through something natural, historical, ordinary, profane. For the religious man, the profane alone has no significance but only insofar as it reveals the sacred. To sacralize a thing involves a radical ontological separation of the thing which reveals the sacred from everything else. If a thing is singled out, it is not because of its size or impressive natural dimensions but rather, because its imposing look reveals something transcendent. The sacred objects, places, times are not arbitrarily chosen by man. If the signs are not there, they are provoked. And for the archaic man "neither the objects of the external world nor human acts properly speaking, have any autonomous intrinsic value. Objects or acts acquire a value, and in so doing become real, because they participate, after one fashion or another, in a reality that transcends them".¹⁹² For Eliade then the reality that transcends the ordinary mundane world becomes the universal structure of religion.

It looks as if Eliade's attempt to provide us with the universal structure of religion leads to a certain peculiarity. Although in Patterns in Comparative Religion his intention is to get rid of any a priori definition of religion; the reader can make his reflections on the nature of the sacred as one goes along. Eliade will simply investigate his data in order to see "just what things are religious in nature and what those things reveal".¹⁹³ The definition of religion that will arrive from this would be open and changeable depending on the availability of results of research. One wonders if Eliade in his treatment of religion is true to his definition.

For Eliade, in the process of sacralization, the sacred and the profane co-exist in a paradoxical relationship. To clarify this he says that "One must remember the dialectic of the sacred: any subject whatever may paradoxically become a hierophony, a receptacle of the sacred, while still participating in its own environment". "One need only recall the dialectic of hierophony: an object becomes sacred while remaining just the same as it is". The dialectic of the sacred consists of the fact that "The sacred expresses itself through some other than itself" that "in every case the sacred manifests itself limited and incarnate". It is "this paradox of incarnation which makes hierophonies possible at all".¹⁹⁴

Every hierophony proclaims the coming together of the sacred and profane,

the being and non-being, the absolute and the relative, the eternal and the becoming. This coming together becomes according to Eliade the mainstay of any religion. The fact that comes to mind is not manifestation of the sacred in stones and in other things but the fact of the manifestation itself. That unlimited can become limited that in itself is paradoxical. It is paradoxical that an ordinary finite historical thing while remaining natural can at the same time manifest something which is not finite, not historical, not natural. While Eliade recognises that a religious phenomenon is at the same time a social, psychological and historical phenomenon, he specifically emphasises the autonomy of the religious dimension.¹⁹⁵

Religion for Eliade begins when and where there is a total revelation, an irruption - a revelation which is at once part of the sacred, an intermingling of the sacred and the profane begets religion. The sacred times, places are all irruptions in the order of ordinary mundane world. Rites and other religious ceremonies are attempts to bring to the present the acts as it happened in the past. Rituals, symbols all become conformity to the archetype.

Has Eliade solved the problem of the phenomenology of religion? What makes the sacred sacred? These are the questions that remain unanswered by Eliade.

Evaluation and Place in the Phenomenology of Religion

Having examined what is relevant to our work on the phenomenology of religion in the works of Eliade, we shall now consider its possible contribution to the phenomenology of religion. The question that should be uppermost in our minds is this; has his treatment of the sacred proceeded beyond the manifestations of religion to the phenomenon properly speaking? From our work so far, we can see that Eliade's starting point is the polarity between the sacred and the profane. He begins his work by stating that he is going to treat the issue in a way different from Otto's treatment. He says "We propose to present the phenomenon of the sacred in all its complexity, and not only insofar as it is irrational" and that "What will concern us is not the relation between the rational and the non rational elements of religion but the sacred in its entirety";¹⁹⁶ it is natural to expect him to begin by explaining his terms sacred and religious, or that he treats the issue quite differently from Otto. When he says "Man becomes aware of the sacred because it manifests itself, shows itself, as something wholly different from the profane"¹⁹⁷ and that every religious phenomenon is hierophany, that is to say, a manifestation of the sacred or the holy, this connotes that the hieros or the holy, is perceived in Rudolf Otto's image of 'the Wholly Other'. Eliade seems to be using the term 'sacred' with essentially the same meaning. He says that "The sacred already manifests itself as a reality of wholly different order from 'natural' realities".¹⁹⁸

Does this not imply that he has isolated the sacred without sufficient introduction as to what he is about to do? This sense of mystery and transcendence is, to Eliade the uniquely religious dimension of human life, yet nothing seems distinctively to separate the sacred from the profane or the secular view. This is more so when for him the two are existential situations. As it stands, it looks as if for Eliade there is something objectively 'out there' which at one time or the other enters into an object.

Elsewhere Eliade distinguishes the sacred from the profane, thus "on the one hand, the sacred is, supremely the other than man - the transpersonal, the transcendent - and, on the other hand, the sacred is the exemplary in the sense that it establishes patterns to be followed: by transcendent and exemplary it compels religious man to come out of personal situations, to surpass the contingent and the particular and to comply with general values, with the universal".¹⁹⁹ It can be seen here that the sacred is conceived ontologically here. The sacred is seen as the universal basis, the reality, the model under which all actions, if they are to be meaningful will be exact copies. Eliade here seems to be basing his position on Platonism. He does not indicate what will differentiate the acts of the religious man from that of the secular or the non religious man. Eliade talks about the sacred being an irruption or of cosmologization of a place or the sacralizing of a thing, the mostly likely conclusion that any one would draw is that at some point

something objectively 'out there' comes into what is to be made holy. The manifestation of this becomes the hieros, the holy. The question that is bound to arise here is what happens to the sacralized object if it becomes desacralized? Does this not pose the problem of wherein lies the sacredness? Is it in the object or is a state of consciousness of the religious man or the man concerned? It is obvious that only the religious man will see the sacralized object as something special. To the secular man, the stone remains a stone and nothing more. The rituals remain mere observances with little or no meaning. If the sacred is the ideal to which the religious man strives to, it follows that the sacred would be identified with being. The conclusion we draw from this is that being is sacred and only the religious man lives the life that is real. The majority of others live in chaos. Eliade has thus identified the whole of Being with the sacred without indicating what in Being constitutes the sacred sphere. For Eliade there seems to be no hierarchy between the sacred place, time and action. What however constitutes this sacred is still a question that remains unanswered by him.

Eliade contrasts the views of the religious man and the non religious thus "the non religious man refuses transcendence, accepts the relativity of 'reality' and may even come to doubt the meaning of existence".²⁰⁰ It is obvious that Eliade has based his interpretation on narrow understanding of transcendence, which is influenced by a theological view. He is falling into the

pattern of attributing transcendence and meaning to religious side thereby denying it to the profane. Secular existence can be characterized by transcendent meaning. He fails to indicate this transcendence which the secular or the non religious man refused to accept. It is more likely that when Eliade mentions the non religious man who refuses transcendence he has in mind 19th century nihilism and not the most sensitive forms of secular existence. One can see Eliade here allowing a theological view to determine the distinction between the sacred and the profane.

Here again he posits an ontological basis. He is not dealing with what men regard as sacred but the structure of the sacred. His focal point is not only the subjective but the objective and hence the ontological. Not only are they hierarchies which describe hierarchies for those involved, but they are in fact hierarchies. It is obvious to us that in doing this, Eliade has passed from descriptive to normative without adequate explanation. As D. Baird puts it, "once one sees 'the sacred' or 'religion' as an ontological reality and once one operates as though its structures are also ontologically real, having identified these structures one has discovered reality. It then follows that those whose lives are lived in the sacred as completely as possible are the most authentic since they exist closest to reality".²⁰¹

The accusation that modern man has lost all sense of transcendence arises

from the establishment of this ontological basis, that modern man does not seem to see this basis is to Eliade an aberration.

When Eliade tries to avoid the definition of religion, he seems to be saying that religion can be identified without the need for a definition. One problem that arises is this, how can religion be distinguished from the demonic? By failing to provide a definition he has not succeeded in eliminating the ontology. What he has done is make it less clear. It is assumed that there is something 'out there' that corresponds to the term 'religion' or the 'sacred' and this can be identified intuitively at least by the religious man. What constitutes this sacred is our quest in the work of Eliade. This will aid our work in phenomenology of religion. Eliade however has not gone beyond the sacred to see what in fact constitutes its sacredness. Meanwhile it looks as if what Eliade is describing is another manifestation. We need to go beyond that to see what constitutes the phenomenon of religion.

It can be seen that the phenomenologist of religion so far studied have tended to ignore the phenomenological method. Wherein lies the problem. What is the problem with the phenomenology of religion?

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EX CURSUS

The Dilemma of the Phenomenology of Religion

The Dilemma of the Phenomenology of Religion

The phenomenology of religion as presented by the phenomenologists of religion discussed in chapter two seem to have completely ignored the basic insights of the phenomenological method. It is for this reason that we pause a bit to investigate the reason behind this state of affairs. Where lies the similarities and the dissimilarities between the Husserlian idea of phenomenology and the phenomenology of religion? What accounts for this apparent neglect of the phenomenological method by the phenomenologists of religion?

It seems appropriate to begin this section by turning once more to the work of Husserl. Husserl's early work in phenomenology began in 1900 with the publication of the Logische Untersuchungen in which he sought to make a systematic critique of the methods of psychology and the social sciences where ideas are reduced to biological facts. It was Husserl who first developed the method of phenomenology. Although the term phenomenology was in use in varying forms long before Husserl, no one had made explicit the distinctive approach of phenomenology, which, above all else, is its distinguishing characteristic. Though this part of the work has already been treated in the first chapter, it is good to remind ourselves that it was Husserl's intention at the time of the inception of his phenomenology to release

philosophy from the death grip of the scientific-biological world view so that it might regain its autonomy and once again practice authentic philosophy as he understood it. For Husserl, the task of philosophy was to bring to light the ideas lodged within the facts of the world. His early work dealt with the ideal nature, or essence, of mental acts relating to cognition, such as believing, seeing and imagining. his work distinguished itself from psychology by the fact that it was descriptive rather than causal in approach. Husserl did not explain such acts in terms of known facts, but sought to describe them in such a way as to reveal their essential nature. He later went on to develop fully the implicit meanings within these early concerns. His later work is known as transcendental or pure phenomenology. In this work Husserl set forth a method, known as the reduction, which makes possible the reconstitution of the appearance of the world in terms of its transcendental structure or essence. The same reduction, applied to the investigator gave rise to the notion of the transcendental ego. These studies gave rise to the notion of the transcendental ego. These studies culminated in a series of lectures delivered at the Sorbonne in 1929, entitled Cartesian Meditations. For Husserl then phenomenology is a method of investigation whose effectiveness depends upon the assumption of a particular attitude by the investigator using it. "Phenomenology: this denotes a science, a system of scientific disciplines. But it also above all denotes a method and an attitude of mind, the specifically philosophical method".¹ Husserl equated philosophy with

phenomenology and felt that modern philosophy had forgotten its task and its peculiar genius. Husserl was interested in regaining the original and authentic task of philosophy, a task whose focus was not upon the facts but upon ideas, or rather, upon the idea of the facts. Having said this, how far does the phenomenology of religion so far appropriate Husserl's insight.

It is said that although the meaning of phenomenology for the academic fields such as psychology, sociology, history, law, political science, art is not yet clear, there is a common element in the areas of study. "Within each of these disciplines, there seems to be at least a degree of agreement on the presumption that the philosophical insights of Husserl and his successors do have a bearing on their work and that the relation between the two is to be sought in the study of and reflection on the works of Husserl, his followers, and their critics, as the ideas and materials traditional to these domains of discourse are re-examined in the light of the insight they have to offer. Such is not the case with the academic study of religion".² It is obvious that the same problem of the 'application' of the method of phenomenology to any of the social and human sciences definitely applies to religion, but so far the work on phenomenology of religion or use made of the method of phenomenology seems to be in disarray. While the phenomenological method used in other areas of study has Husserl's insight to phenomenology as an authoritative representation, in the study of religion, that does not seem to be

the case.

In The Sacred and the Profane Mircea Eliade has the following to say about the phenomenology of religion. "The phenomenology of religion had its first authoritative representation in Gerardus Van der Leeuw (1890-1950)".³ Could this be a key statement in understanding the diversities in the phenomenology of religion? Why is van der Leeuw an authoritative representative instead of Husserl?

The problem of phenomenology of religion has not been helped by the comments of some scholars in the field of religion.

In an essay of 1954, C.J. Bleeker in a bid to clarify the meaning of the phenomenology of religion stated that the phenomenology of religion differs totally from the philosophy of Husserl. He sees phenomenology of religion as "an investigation into the structure and the significance of facts drawn from a vast field of the history of religion and arranged in systematic order."⁴ He goes on to say that as one studies religions one finds oneself forced into comparing religions. One sacrifice is compared with another, the prayer in one tradition is compared to prayer in another. In the end one finds oneself no longer considering the significance of sacrifice in any particular historical context, but prayer or sacrifice as such. With this one is already doing

phenomenology of religion. Because the phenomenology of religion does not limit itself to a particular time and place, it is in danger of grouping together materials so diverse that the scientific character of the study is endangered. This, according to Bleeker may be avoided through the application of epoche and eidetic vision of Husserl's pure phenomenology. In this case, one has to adopt the position of the listener who is not normative in his judgements, "Phenomenology must begin by accepting as proper objects of study all phenomena that are professed to be religious: subsequently may come the attempt to distinguish what is genuinely religious from what is spurious".⁵ For Bleeker, the eidetic vision contributes the concern for the eidōs, the essentials which are the essentials of religious phenomena. For him then, phenomenology is primarily a method of procedure in the study of religion. He also sees it as designating the specific effort in form of a handbook or monograph which in the last analysis is used "to assess the significance of religious phenomena".⁶

In the same year, however, another prominent scholar, Raffaele Pettazzoni presented a different conception of the phenomenology of religion. In this conception pure phenomenology had nothing to do with the phenomenology of religion. In Pettazzoni's view, phenomenology of religion did not spring from the comparative study of religion but from certain problems that had to do with the examination of religious data under the umbrella of other

disciplines. No matter how successful the results of researches into religious data by philology, archaeology, ethnology, sociology, psychology to the extent that they study religious data in the spirit of these sciences, he feels that the specific and essential nature of these data, which is religious, is systematically evaded.

For this reason the need arises for a science that will "seek to co-ordinate religious data with one another, to establish relations and to group the facts according to these relations".⁷ He calls this science the science of religion. For him then the phenomenology of religion is a subsection of the general science of religion. For Pettazzoni the history of religions come into prominence when the relation to be established is not only that of chronology but when it also has to do with internal development. To do this however, the history of religion has first to establish the history of various religions. For Pettazzoni this is where the phenomenology of religion comes in. In pursuing the history of various religious traditions, the history of religion is necessarily concerned with their development within a particular environment and thus with their relation to non religious environments including poetry, art, speculative thought and social structure. Here according to him, the question arises as to whether a more systematic study of religious data in their relations to other religious data and apart from their contact with the non religious would make for a better understanding of religion. "It is not enough

to know precisely what happened and how the facts came to be; what we want above all to know is the meaning of what happened".⁸

For Pettazzoni the history of religion cannot be expected to provide this deeper understanding but this understanding springs from another religious science which is phenomenology. The task of phenomenology then is the factoring out of different structures from the multiplicity of religious phenomena, from which their meaning can be understood. In this, it stands out as a science sui generis, quite different from the history of religion. For Pettazzoni however, this science has not been altogether satisfactory. Seen correctly it is obvious that Pettazzoni's intention was the mitigation of the separation of history from the phenomenology of religion. He is aware of the point made by Van der Leeuw that phenomenology and history of religion are different and that "phenomenology knows nothing of any historical development of religion".⁹

Pettazzoni contends that though phenomenology by its nature is superior to purely historical, ethnological, philosophical and other researches, it does not follow that history or religion as he sees it has nothing to contribute to an inquiry into the meaning of religious phenomena. For him, historical development can hardly be considered negligible to the interpretation of historical religious phenomena even if these data are systematically arranged.

In reference to van der Leeuw, Pettazzoni states that his own confessed limitation requires phenomenology to apply constantly to the results of historical research whose progress the conclusions of phenomenology must continually be informed. While Bleeker relies on the epoche and the eidetic vision of Husserl to avoid bringing together such diverse facts and drawing such varied conclusions as to mar the scientific integrity of the study, Pettazzoni prefers to rely on historical research to provide the corrective necessary for phenomenology's progress.

The dilemma of the phenomenology of religion can be clearly seen in the disagreement between these two scholars. In Bleeker's response to the insights of Pettazzoni, an appeal was made to the phenomenology of van der Leeuw, which he accused Pettazzoni as having misunderstood. For Bleeker, the nature of phenomenology is too complicated and its activities too varied to characterize it by the single aspect brought about by Pettazzoni. Bleeker sees his own phenomenological effort as having been mainly occupied with the theoria of religion which seeks the significance of various conceptions of the divine, of various types of anthropology, or prayer, sacrifice, and other elements of cult and the logos of religion (the strict spiritual laws that he takes to underlie the constitution of every historical religion). While he thinks that religious phenomenology is generally preoccupied with the various religious

phenomena, he is of the view that phenomenology can proceed to the question of the entelecheia of religious phenomena. The use of the term entelecheia makes clear the emphasis Bleeker places on the non-static nature of religions. Though the term is Aristotelian, it cannot be said to be a substitute for evolution. As Olof puts it, "with this term he stresses that religion is 'an invincible, creative and self-regenerating force'. The phenomenology of religion must not disregard this fact".¹⁰ The question that arises is this, in the past history of religions, say going back about five thousand years, is it possible to discern a course of events in which essence is realized by its manifestation? Bleeker finds phenomenology uniquely equipped to deal with this question on account of his familiarity with the entire field of religious phenomena.

Bleeker gives examples with Zarathustra, Jesus, Moses, Buddha and Mohammed and concludes that "By their work, religion suddenly reaches a higher level of self realisation".¹¹ He finds further ground for this entelecheia in the regenerative function of period reformation that is characteristic of great religious tradition, the purpose of which is to recall them to their original purpose. It is on this account that Bleeker is of the view that modern man "has a clearer view of what is genuinely religious, is more able to distinguish the religious from the secular, and makes demands as to the quality of religion". He concludes that traces of an entelecheia of religion can be

discerned that proceed according to Toynbee's law of challenge and response: "Each relapse seems to evoke in religious people a strong desire for and an attempt of restoring religion".¹²

The view expressed by both Bleeker and Pettazzoni did not go without challenge. Widengren suggests that it is remarkable how Bleeker allowed himself to be influenced by his own Christian ideas. He believes that in pursuing the entelecheia of religion, Bleeker has executed judgement that phenomenological epoche cannot abide by. He thinks that Bleeker's reference to certain religions as having reached a higher level of self realisation is an example of an imperfect practice of epoche by a scholar who claims to adhere to it. Widengren declared "I feel bound to declare it absolutely impossible for the phenomenology of religion to pass such judgements of value, purely subjective as they are...In a manifest way, such judgements transgress the borders of objective scholarly work. Here...a very strong epoche (is called for)".¹³ However, it is clear that while Bleeker is aware of the influence of the Husserlian epoche and eidetic vision on the phenomenology of Van der Leeuw. In Bleeker's view phenomenology of religion is "an empirical science without philosophical aspirations".¹⁴ While against outside attack he claims that phenomenology never pretended to be a science of the essence of religion¹⁵, he described it elsewhere as "a method of study, which enables us to penetrate into the core and essence of the

phenomena".¹⁶

For Widengren the eidōs in the phenomenology of van der Leeuw is a search for the essentials of religious phenomenon. He however, asserts that the problem is to ascertain what the essentials of a given phenomenon really are. He expresses certain doubt as to the conviction of van der Leeuw that the entire essence of phenomena is given in the appearance.¹⁷

On his own point Hans Penner has suggested that a phenomenology of religion properly so called "will not be an uncritical intuition of essence, not a description of historical development of religions".¹⁸ For him the task of writing the phenomenology of religion that appropriates Husserl's phenomenological insights is still to be done. Bleeker however, was not unaware of these problems for that he admits the need for clarity in the working procedure of phenomenology of religion. He suggests that it "should work out a more precise method" and "sharply delimit the field of its activity" for this to be possible. "It should keep at a clear distance from the philosophical so that its character stands out indisputably", and it "should be prudent by using as...(little) as possible of the terminology of a certain philosophy or psychology for fear of being forced to accept the theoretical implications of these concepts".¹⁹

Having said all this the question that comes to mind is, how can there be such a difference between the phenomenology of religion so far and the philosophical phenomenology or the phenomenological method that uses the insights of Husserl? What is the background to the diversity of meanings? Here attention will now be paid to the history of the word phenomenology.

It seems likely that the earliest occurrence of the word 'phenomenology' was in the work of Johann Heinrich Lambert (1728-77)²⁰. The term was employed by Lambert as the title of the last of his New Organon (1764), Phenomenology or Doctrine of Appearance. Lambert had claimed that he derived his phenomenology from the already developed science of a particular kind of phenomena and said he had extended it. His insight came from optics, the science of visual appearances or visual phenomena. He observes that it is well known that objects appear smaller and more vague at a distance than when situated close at hand. That things appear differently from different sides, that colours of objects varies according to the light shed on them, that a circle appears elliptical at a certain angle. What Lambert considers to be the contribution of his phenomenology is the insight that his distinction applies not only to the realm of visual phenomena, but to all areas of human knowledge.²¹ Lambert observes that it is possible by apprehending the principles of optics (that is the principles that determine the appearance of spatial objects) to proceed from the appearances towards the things as

they are in themselves. By apprehending and applying this principle he notes astronomers have been able to proceed from the manifest shape of the heavens towards conclusions about the true structure of the universe. In this way, Lambert contends that it is possible to proceed beyond the manifest shape of things as they appear in an intellectual region be it in psychological, moral, idealistic or whatever, the way they are themselves. He calls this phenomenology a transcendental optics.

Another mention of the word phenomenology was in Kant's reply to Lambert's letter of November, 13th 1765, in which he was calling the attention of Kant to the similarity of their views. In it he was proposing a joint philosophical project directed towards the improvement of metaphysics through the perfection of a new philosophical method to be erected in the light of evident inadequacy by Wolf.²² In December of the same year, Kant replied expressing interest in the proposal. February 3rd the following year, Lambert wrote again to Kant expressing a preliminary way, a number of key propositions: that philosophy is concerned with material not merely formal truth and that if philosophy was to make progress it would be through recourse to the simplest elements of knowledge. If that is to be the case, how far does the knowledge of form lead to the knowledge of matter.²³ Kant responded to this last letter on 2nd September 1770. In the letter he responded to Lambert's insights. Included in the reply was a copy of his

inaugural dissertation concerning the form and principles of the sensible and intelligible world. Here we find Kant's own use of the word 'phenomenology'. This may be the second historical use of this term. He says "It seems that a quite special, if merely negative science (*Phenomenologia generalis*) must precede metaphysics, wherein the principles of sensuality, their validity and their limitations, must be determined, in order that they do not confuse judgements of objects of pure reason, which has nearly always happened in the past...It occurs to me also...that such a propaedeutic discipline could be brought to a state of useful elaboration and evidence through our relatively modest effort".²⁴

As was said earlier, Lambert derived his phenomenology from the science of the visual phenomena which he extended into all regions of human knowledge, making it more general. In the same way, Kant spoke of the negative science that would determine the principles of sensuality, as well as their validity and limitation, as a general phenomenology. In his communication to Lambert he said he had now arrived at a philosophical point of view that he should not be required to abandon, a position through which all metaphysical questions will be tested and answered. In a letter to Marcus Hertz in February 21, 1772, Kant speaks of a projected work on 'the limits of sensuality and reason'. This was to be divided into theoretical and practical parts. The first part again was to be divided into two parts: a

general phenomenology ("Die Phanomenologie uberhaupt"), to be followed by a metaphysics 'according to its nature and method'. In this letter, the work is referred to for the first time as a "critique of pure reason"²⁵. We are not going into details as to the differences between Lambert and Kant but it is certain each understood the way in which the other used the term phenomenology.

The first occurrence however in English has quite a different meaning or should we say stands for something quite different.

In an article by John Robinson (1739-1805) in third edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica (1798) phenomenology denotes the first of three distinctive phases of a philosophy of nature consciously based on Francis Bacon's conception of the subject. Here philosophy is described as "the study of the phenomena of the universe, with a view to discovering the general laws which indicate the powers of natural substances, to explain subordinate phenomena, and to improve art".²⁶ The task of the philosopher is three fold, consisting of, description, arrangement and reference to events or phenomena. The description also termed a 'philosophical history', involves the complete or copious enumeration of facts, properly selected, cleared of all unnecessary or extraneous circumstances, and accurately narrated. The second operation called 'investigation' puts these into compendious and perspicuous form, based on observed resemblances 'so that a general

knowledge of the universe may be easily acquired and firmly retained'. The third question known as 'aetiology' rates the perceived uniformity of events to some natural bond between them. Having said something about Lambert's phenomenology, Robinson's view becomes interesting. The use of the term phenomenology in English in the following century shows meanings to accord with that in Robinson's article. In his Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic of 1836-1837, Sir William Hamilton argued that the whole of philosophy, a science exclusively concerned with the mind, is occupied with three great questions. What are the facts to be observed? What are the laws which regulate these facts, or under which these phenomena appear? And what real results, not immediately manifested, follow from these facts or phenomena. To these three questions, there correspond three general divisions of philosophy of which 'phenomenology of mind' is the first. Hamilton equated this first division with empirical psychology or the inductive philosophy of mind phenomenology, which considers the mind 'merely with the view of observing and generalising the various phenomena it reveals' is to be followed in Hamilton's scheme by a nomology of mind or nomological psychology, concerned with the laws by which our faculties are governed, and again by ontology or metaphysics, which is concerned with the character of that 'unknown substance' of which phenomena are manifestations. This division includes such subjects as the being of God, the immortality of the soul and so on.²⁷ There may not be any more need to treat other scholars

that we have not touched.

However from the observations above, it seems that in early history the term 'phenomenology' was used in two different ways and although they were no longer exclusive, it denoted two quite different types of intellectual activity. The term was used differently by two different communities of discourse. The two communities correspond to the use of the term in German and English, respectively. As James puts it "As used by Lambert and Kant, it stood for an exploration of the principles that determine appearances in all intellectual regions. In that community of discourse, it eventually denoted an exploration of the a priori subjective conditions of knowledge as such. As used by Robinson and others, the term denoted an operation concerned with the description and perhaps the classification of empirically accessible facts according to observable resemblances".²⁸ It looks as if the science of religion has equivocated between these two different meanings. When Bleeker speaks of phenomenology as an enterprise that transforms the chaotic field of the history of religion into a 'harmonious panorama', a 'typological survey' or as 'an empirical science without philosophical aspirations', it is the English community of discourse that stands behind his use of the term. When on the other hand, he is preoccupied with certain strict spiritual laws which underlie the constitution of every historical religion, when the essence of religious phenomena is in question, he appears closer to the transcendental

preoccupation of the phenomenology of Kant and Lambert. It seems likely that this equivocation is at the root of the confusions in the phenomenology of religion.

There arose however another use of phenomenology just before the advent of phenomenology in the study of religion. It is good to call to mind the fact that the term was used by Fichte as the title of the part of his Wissenschaftslehre of 1804 that undertook the deduction of appearance (Erscheinung) or the world of consciousness from the Absolute.²⁹ Following this, it came to stand for Hegel's philosophical effort to demonstrate that the time had arrived for the elevation of philosophy to the level of science, his effort to furnish the individual with the ladder to the absolute standpoint and show him that standpoint within himself. Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit could be said to conform to Robinson's understanding of the term in as much as it constitutes a perspicuous description and arrangement of the data in question, constituting a copious history of the subject. This said, the arrangement of Hegel's phenomenology is not based on empirically observable resemblances. Nor is this arrangement to be followed by the inference of natural laws. It might be suggested that, where Hegel's use of the term diverges from that of Robinson, it more closely resembles the sense the terms receives with Lambert and Kant.

Having gone this far in our exposition, we can now safely distinguish between two early communities of discourse within which the term 'phenomenology' was employed. We can now see both the position of Husserl and that of certain key exponents of the phenomenology of religion. It might be possible to see the course that was taken by Husserl. While one cannot call Husserl a Kantian, it is significant that among Husserl's first definitions of phenomenology was 'a critique of cognition' and in his last work he characterises the transcendental philosophy of Kant, which he specifically opposes to the naturalism of empirical psychology and the natural sciences, as a prodigious scientific effort towards his philosophical goal.³⁰

Without pursuing the question any further it is obvious that the Husserlian phenomenology has its root in the phenomenology of Lambert and Kant. The phenomenological studies on religion have tended to use the idea of phenomenology as understood by Robinson and others. This has led to the colossal misunderstanding of the nature of the phenomenology of religion. Earlier in the chapter we said the uses of the term phenomenology in areas other than the field of religion though unclear have something in common which is the fact that they appropriate or try to appropriate Husserl's insight into their investigation. Having taken the trouble to point out the root of the problem we shall now continue the work by looking for the conditions that are necessary for the phenomenological method to be applied to the

phenomenology of religion.

This will enable us to approach the phenomenology of religion that is in line with other disciplines that have the Husserlian method as their guiding principle.

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CHAPTER THREE

RELIGION BEYOND THE FIELD OF THE GENERAL HISTORY OF RELIGION.

Ludwig Feuerbach: Man's Self Consciousness as Religious.

The Husserlian idea of phenomenology is the description of the essence-intuition of a phenomenon. Pure phenomenon which phenomenology describes is that state of consciousness beyond which it is impossible to proceed. Since this is the case, the phenomenology of religion that appropriates the Husserlian method must attempt to describe the essence-intuition of the phenomenon of religion to enable it to stand a chance of being a phenomenology. It is with this in mind that we set out to investigate what the nature of religion is. This will put us in the right direction for the phenomenology of religion. The phenomenologists of religion as hitherto known besides identifying the unique nature of religion have not gone beyond the identification to tell us what the phenomenon of religion is. It therefore follows that in the field of the general history of religion from which they have investigated, we remain at the level of manifestations of religion. This is of little use in the phenomenology of religion. Is it possible to step outside the field of the general history of religion to investigate the nature of religion? It is with this in mind that we proceed to discuss the works of three scholars namely Ludwig Feuerbach, Thomas Luckman and Peter Berger. Though the three scholars wrote independently and in different fields, they have interest in one way or another in the nature of religion.

We begin with work of Ludwig Feuerbach. Later we shall look at the works of Thomas Luckmann and Peter Berger.

Born on July 28th, 1804 at Landshut in Bavaria, Ludwig Andrea Feuerbach was the son of a famous jurist Paul Johann Anselm von Feuerbach (1775-1833). In 1823 he went to Heidelberg where he began his studies in theology under H.E.G. Paulus and Karl Daub. In 1824 he went to Berlin where he came under the personal influence of G.W.F. Hegel and decided to change from theology to philosophy. In 1828 he became a Privatdozent in Philosophy at the University of Erlangen. In 1832 his appointment was terminated because of an anonymous work which he published entitled Gedanken über Tod Unsterblichkeit (Thoughts on Death and Immortality). Feuerbach devoted the rest of his life to study and writing. After 1860, he lived on the Rechenberg near Nuremberg and died in 1872.¹ Feuerbach's philosophy developed out of criticism and ultimate rejection of Hegelian dualism. For Feuerbach, all reality was material nature of which man formed a part, his consciousness being dependent upon nature for its development. Among his works are Das Wesen des Christentums (The Essence of Christianity) first published in 1841, Vorläufige Thesen zur Reform der Philosophie (Preliminary Thesis for the reform of Philosophy) and Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft (Basic Propositions of the philosophy of the Future) both published in 1843. Das Wesen der Religion (The Essence of Religion) in 1846 and Vorlesungen über

das Wesen der Religion (Lectures on the Essence of Religion) in 1851.²

In The Essence of Christianity,³ Feuerbach describes religion as a basically human phenomenon. He sees it as the essential difference between man and brutes. This difference between man and brutes is based in consciousness. Although animals have consciousness, human consciousness is unique. "Consciousness in the strict sense is present only in a being to whom his species, his essential nature, is an object of thought".⁴

While in brutes the inner and the outer lives are one, and the same thing, for man there is a distinction or a difference between the 'inner' and the 'outer' life. This inner life of man is seen by Feuerbach as that which relates a man to his species. "The inner life of man is the life which has relation to his species, to his general as distinguished from his individual nature".⁵ The capacity to live by inner non-coercive authority to which his life yields is the distinctive trait of man. It is here that he differs from brutes or animals whose behaviour may be either attractive or perverse according to human standard but is neither good nor bad. An animal reacts to a stimulus, man responds to a situation. All acts of man are motivated by his inner authority which acts upon him with an objective force. In ordinary parlance this may be called conscience, it could also be called the power to live by ideals. It is through ideals that the element of infinity become operative in us. While the inner life

of man enables him to be conscious of his species and his relations to them, the brutes do not perform any such function.

Feuerbach sees the capacity for speech and thought as the distinguishing factor between men and brutes and this he regards as "the true function of the species".⁶ This function implies man's relations with individual. It follows that conscious awareness is implicitly a social awareness. The use of speech or thought implies the presence of the consciousness of the species. Contrasting with a caterpillar, he sees the limit of conscious nature as the limit of consciousness. "The limit of the nature is also the limit of the consciousness. The consciousness of a caterpillar whose life is confined to a particular species of plant does not extend itself beyond its narrow domain".⁷ However, man's consciousness is infinite because "The consciousness of the infinity of consciousness or, in the consciousness of the infinite, the conscious subject has for his object the infinity of his own nature".⁸ If religion generally expressed is the consciousness of the infinite, it follows that man's self consciousness which is the consciousness of the infinite and religion identical. In Feuerbach's term man as different from the caterpillar has an object for consciousness, his generic nature. Human consciousness alone can attain infinity and the infinity attained by consciousness is the infinity of the generic species nature. For Feuerbach then, the objective essential nature of the species is the highest object to which the species

consciousness can attain. Feuerbach sees the nature of man as constituting of Reason, Will and Affection. These are qualities that make up man or constitutes human nature and so according to Feuerbach are religious. These activities which are religious are imperative in man and so he is nothing without them. For Feuerbach, man's life has always tended towards an objective. Whatever they do in life tend towards the realization of the aim which is the essential object of the activity. This implies that man tends towards an object. "Man is nothing without an object. The great models of humanity, such as reveal to us what man is capable of, have attested the truth of this proposition by their lives. They had only one dominant passion - the realization of the aim which was the essential object of their activity".⁹ But Feuerbach goes on to say that this object to which the subject tends is nothing different from his subject. It might be of interest to note that when Feuerbach speaks of species, his idea is that of species as an ideal concept. Taken in another way, Feuerbach will have us believe that man tends towards an ideal but the ideal to which man tends is nothing but his own nature.

In the ideal which man contemplates himself, the consciousness of the ideals become self consciousness. "In the object which he contemplated, therefore man become acquainted with himself; consciousness of the object is self consciousness in man".¹⁰ Whatever man contemplates as outside him has been in his nature so his nature become his absolute. "The absolute to man

is his nature. The power of the object over him is therefore the power of his own nature".¹¹ So in Feuerbach the consciousness of any object is man's consciousness of his own nature. The human activities of affection, will and thought cannot be seen as limited powers. When consciousness is discussed, it is in connection of being becoming objective to itself. Feuerbach claims that, "...it is impossible that we should be conscious of will, feeling, and intellect, as finite powers, because every perfect existence, every original power and essence is the immediate verification and affirmation of itself. It is impossible to love, will or think without perceiving these activities to be perfection - impossible to feel that one is a loving, willing, thinking being, without experiencing an infinite joy therein. Consciousness consists in a being becoming objective to itself; hence it is nothing apart, nothing distinct from the being which is conscious of itself".¹² Feeling is seen by Feuerbach as one's own inward power but at the same time a power distinct and independent of itself. It is in itself that which constitutes the object of self. Consciousness is seen as the highest form of self assertion. In general there is no limit to the nature of man. Though the individual can see himself as limited, this limitation arises from his perception of the infinity of his, as an object of feeling or of consciousness. "It is true that a human being, as an individual, can and must - herein consists his distinction from the brute - feel and recognise himself to be limited; but he can become conscious of his limits, his finiteness, only because the perfection, the infinitude of his species,

is perceived by him, whether as an object of feeling, of conscience, or of the thinking consciousness".¹³ Consciousness as such has no limit. Every being is seen by itself as being infinite. Whatever is in consciousness is a reflection of infinity of consciousness. Feuerbach continues thus "...if thou thinkest the infinite, thou perceivest and affirmest the infinitude of the power of thought; If thou feelest the infinite, thou feelest and affirmest the infinitude of the power of feeling. The object of the intellect is the intellect object to itself; the object of feeling is feeling objective to itself".¹⁴ For Feuerbach then, whatever sensibility we have is an objectification of an ideal which we project and internalize. Taking feeling as an example, if it is taken to be an essential organ of religion, it follows that the nature of God is nothing other than the nature of feeling. He states "Feeling is thy own inward power, but at the same time a power distinct from thee and independent of thee; it is in thee, it is in itself that which constitutes the objective in thee - thy own being which impresses thee as another being; in short, thy God".¹⁵ This is not only limited to feeling but it applies also to others like power, faculty, reality and whatever else.

In considering the essence of religion generally, Feuerbach distinguishes sense consciousness from that of religious consciousness. He contrasts the difference between the two by saying that whereas in perception of sense consciousness the object is distinguished from conscious self, in religion,

consciousness of the object is identical to self-consciousness. While the object of the senses is outwith man, the object of religion is within man. This is why it is said to be the closest object to man. Since the object of any subject is the subject's own nature taken objectively, it follows that any knowledge of man is self knowledge. Consciousness of God is self consciousness and the knowledge of God is the knowledge of man. The essence of God is the essence of man. The attributes of man when stretched to infinity becomes the attributes of God. God becomes a projection of man and man becomes a projection of God. Anthropology become theology and theology become anthropology. Religion in the final analysis for Feuerbach becomes "that conception of the nature of the world and of man which is essential to ie. identical with, man's nature".¹⁶ However, it stands above man, it animates him, determines and governs him. God per se is man's relinquished self. Whatever man thinks of himself that God is. It is with this theory that Feuerbach went to treat religion as it appears, paying special attention to Christianity. For him in religion, man projects his being into objectivity.

Feuerbach's theory of religion comes to the conclusion that religion whatever it is, is the same with the essence of human nature. What lessons if any do we learn from Feuerbach or how far has he contributed to our search for the phenomenon of religion? In identifying the possible root of religion in human consciousness, we have no quarrels with Feuerbach. We however run into

trouble when we insist with Feuerbach that the object of religion is nothing other than the object of man and the object of man is nothing other than the subject of man taken objectively. That the essence of religion is nothing other than man's consciousness or shall we say his self consciousness objectified and internalized. From whence comes the ideals that is objectified, internalized and objectified again? There seems to be 'the egg and the chicken situation'. Which is first, the chicken or the egg? If we are to remain at the level at which Feuerbach leaves us, the motion will merely be a circular motion without any beginning or point of entry. It is not to be denied that Feuerbach's way of looking at religion rests upon a real perception of truth. It is profoundly true that our human idea of God must of necessity be constructed from the knowledge of the attributes that we observe in our own selves. To realise that man attains to the idea of God by projecting a construct of his own self consciousness or self awareness upon the screen of the beyond is probably to realise a deep truth. Perhaps the work would have been looked at differently had Feuerbach said that religion stands for not what man wants to be true but for what he feels to be true. In Feuerbach the image of God reflects an idealization of man. Man makes the gods in his own image, not just any image but his ideal image. The ideal of man is fulfilled in the gods or God. In God is combined, the factor of utility on one hand and man's quest for an ideal on the other. The process of idealization may be regarded as a leap forward in Feuerbach's thinking. It is obvious to

us that without the idea of certain values, which are distinct and probably superior, there can be no idealization. How then does he come to create the ideal for himself? This is the question that Feuerbach does not answer. Man's quest for idealization can be said to be a basic component of Feuerbach's thesis. Feuerbach has taken us to man's consciousness of ideals by which he lives. The ideals are in man but their origin transcends man's human nature. Feuerbach has so far identified these ideals however, its origin is not explained by him. What we are certain of however, is that ideals are both within and beyond us. They are with us, yet at least in their social and perhaps their cosmic origin they come from without. They operate subjectively yet with objective power. It is this combination of objectivity and subjectivity that gives them potency for moulding of life.

The tendency might then be to say that ideals are merely products of biological forces modified by social conditioning, it seems at least to be more sensible to say that they are the products of an inherent tendency within man's nature which enables him to direct his life. But that man has ideals is rooted in the fact that he is human. If intellect, will, affection as maintained by Feuerbach are ideals which man internalizes and objectifies, it means that it goes beyond self consciousness but they transcend the human nature of man. It is this process of the transcendence of the biological nature of man that Luckmann calls religious¹⁷, as we shall discuss later in this chapter.

Though Feuerbach does not go beyond the human nature of man, he has at least brought us to a point in the quest for the phenomenon of religion. The root of religion is to be found in man's self consciousness. Self consciousness presupposes man's consciousness of ideals which transcend the biological nature of man. How could the knowledge of ideals relate to human consciousness? The problem with Feuerbach is that he has not related the origin of the ideals which transcend the biological nature of man to man's self consciousness.

What is the relationship between self consciousness and the ideals which in Feuerbach's term the mind objectifies? What is the relationship the self and the sacred or holy? What makes the sacred sacred or religion religion? These are the problems we have to tackle if we are to make any headway in the phenomenology of religion.

The work of Feuerbach so far seen has its contribution to the phenomenology of religion in the fact that it locates the possible root of religion in human consciousness. As seen earlier in the dissertation, the phenomenology of Husserl deals with the states of consciousness. The justification for examining the works of Feuerbach then, can be seen in the fact that unlike the phenomenologists of religion seen so far, he relates religion to consciousness. In the human consciousness is located the ideals that give rise to religion in

its various forms. He points indirectly to the ideal, he however fails to locate the relationship of the ideal to the human consciousness. While agreeing with him in some aspects, we beg to differ by saying that there is more to religion than the human projection which he advocates.

As already hinted, a possible solution might be found in the work of Thomas Luckmann.

Thomas Luckmann: Religion as Transcendence of the Biological.

Having examined the work of Ludwig Feuerbach, we now turn to consider the possible contribution of Thomas Luckmann to the phenomenology of religion. Though he is a sociologist, his interest in religion and phenomenological description is not in doubt. In Life-World and Social Realities he says, "Phenomenological description strips away, layer by layer, the intentional activities of human beings without which a specifically human social world is simply unthinkable. It uncovers the universals and the invariant structures of human existence at all times and in all places".¹⁸

Thomas Luckmann was born in 1927 in Yugoslavia. Presently he is a professor of sociology at the University of Constance, Switzerland. He has published widely and his titles include Das Problem der Religion in der Modernen Gesellschaft (1963). The Invisible Religion (1967), Lebenswelt und Gesellschaft (Life-World and Social Realities (1983) as well as many articles written for Journals. He is an American citizen married with three daughters.

In The Invisible Religion, Luckmann tries to disconnect religion from the institutional forms in the bid to solve the problem of secularization.

From the beginning, Luckmann is critical of his contemporaries whom he

considers as having left the traditional patterns set by the 'classical sociologists' notably Durkheim and Weber. Luckmann sees both Durkheim and Weber as being interested in the fate of the individual in the modern society. Although they have come up with different theories for Luckmann "it is remarkable that both Weber and Durkheim sought the key to an understanding of the social location of the individual in the study of religion."¹⁹ They both see the problem of the individual in the society as a religious problem. Having said this Luckmann goes on to note the lack of well articulated links with this theoretical foundation in the recent sociology of religion. Though the sociology of religion seems to be flourishing, he cannot find a theoretical significance in the recent sociology of religion. Instead of advancing on the work of the 'classical' scholars, "the state of theory in the recent sociology of religion is, in the main, regressive".²⁰

The result of this abandonment of the 'classical' situations is narrowness and triviality in the study of the sociology of religion. Luckmann can find an active field of research in parish sociology, in demographic and statistical analyses of churches and of institutional participation. So also, is in the studies of church organization. There has also arisen church journals and organisation of specialized institutes. What however appears to be lacking according to him is the proper 'informing' of this research by broader theoretical concerns that characterized the works of the sociologists including Durkheim and

Weber. As a result, much research has been narrowly empirical and has been dominated by interest in the apparent decline of traditional religious institutions often orientated towards an institutional defined set of problems and strategies for their solution. This is because religion as such has been identified with the institutionalized form. It is the decline of church life that leads to new conceptualization of religion.

Luckmann opens his work by pointing to the way in which the churches have become marginal to the modern society. "The marginality of traditional church religion in modern society poses two distinct, although related, theoretical questions which must be answered by sociology...First, it is necessary to identify the causes which pushed traditional church religion to the periphery of modern society and give an account of the latter process in terms consistent with general sociological theory. Second, it is necessary to ask whether anything could be called religion in the framework of sociological analysis replaced traditional church religion in modern society".²¹

Though these questions are of no relevance directly to the phenomenology of religion, it is in answer to these that Luckmann theorizes about the nature of religion. Interestingly enough as said earlier, it is the decline of church life that has led to the new conceptualization of religion.

Luckmann is not surprised about the identification of religion with the institutional form because, according to him, it is in this form that religion appears in the Western society. "It is easy to understand why religion is commonly identified with one of its particular forms; that is, the form in which it appears in the history of Western society. It was in this form that religion became an impressive yet familiar reality for many generations".²² Whatever work that has been done on religion has taken off from this standpoint. However, Luckmann does not quite agree with such identification of religion with the institutional forms. He sees religion as a universal phenomenon while the institutionalization cannot be said to be so. "Religious institutions are not universal; the phenomena underlying religious institutions or, to put it differently performing analogous functions in the relation of the individual and the social order presumably are universal".²³ Luckmann asks, "What are the general anthropological conditions for that which may become institutionalized as religion?"²⁴ It is here that his work becomes of interest to us. He is not only concerned with the institutionalized form, but the basis on which institutionalization stands.

Luckmann begins the solution of this problem by stating that "The familiar forms of religion known to us a tribal religion, ancestor cult, church, sect and so forth as specific historical institutionalizations of symbolic universes".²⁵ If religions are specific historical of symbolic universes, the question that readily

comes to mind is this, what are the symbolic universes? Luckmann answers, "Symbolic universes are socially objectivated systems of meaning that refer, on the one hand, to a world of everyday life and point, on the other hand, to a world that is experienced as transcending everyday life".²⁶ Taken that institutionalized religion is specific historical institutionalization of socially objectivated meaning system that refers to the world of everyday life and point on the other hand to a world that is 'transcendent', what differentiates other meaning systems from symbolic universes?

Luckmann's answer is that while the symbolic universes refer to the transcendent, other meaning systems do not. "Other systems of meaning do not point beyond the world of everyday life; that is, they do not contain a 'transcendent' reference"²⁷ If institutionalized religions are specific historical objectivations of meaning systems. The question that we should ask now are, what are objectivations and how do meaning systems come about. Perhaps understanding this may hold the key to understanding what Luckmann has to say about religion. For Luckmann objectivations "are the products of subjective activities that become available as elements in a common world both to their producers and to other men".²⁸ He goes on to explain how the objectification of a symbolic universe as a meaning system can be achieved. For it to be, the subjective activities that make up the objectification must according to him be meaningful. Meaningfulness on the other hand, comes

about by the fact that it is bestowed on it by an interpretative act, which locates the subjective act in the interpretative scheme. He goes on to say that the meaning of an ongoing experience is therefore derived from the previous acts deposited. For an interpretative act to be meaningful, it has to draw from the scheme of deposited acts, otherwise the act will be nothing other than successive meaningless activities. "Subjective experience considered in isolation is restricted to mere actuality and is void of meaning. Meaning is not an inherent quality of subjective processes but is bestowed on it in interpretative acts. In such acts a subjective process is grasped retrospectively and located in an interpretative scheme. Such 'meaning' as may be superimposed on ongoing experiences is necessarily derived from prior - eventually habitualized - interpretative acts".²⁹

The fact that there is an ongoing act and an interpretative scheme presupposes two activities, the 'outer' and the 'inner'. He goes on to say that the interpretative scheme however transcends the ongoing experience. How then comes the interpretative act? Luckmann answers, "Interpretative scheme results from sedimented past experience".³⁰ The possibility of experiences sedimentation involves some degree of detachment from the ongoing experience. Such detachment however, does not originate from isolated subjective processes. "Now it is true that a genuinely isolated subjective process is inconceivable. At the very least, each ongoing experience has a

temporal horizon of past and anticipated future experience".³¹ To achieve detachment from immediate and ongoing experience is for Luckmann a social act. His actions will be a succession of acts that would not be meaningful because there is no interpretative scheme. "A human organism considered in a rigorously biological perspective would be wrapped up, as it were, in the immediacy of its ongoing experience. It could learn from past experience but experience could not be sedimented into interpretative schemes".³² The action now lacks an inner force. In brutes it is this succession of activities that make them what they are. Meaning is created by human being being conscious of itself. This is only possible in recognition of a self to self consciousness. Human organism in isolation does not create meaning. Meaning creation is a social activity. This takes us back to Feuerbach, in his term, self consciousness is a species consciousness which is a social process.

From what we have said so far, it follows that detachment is possible because of interpretative scheme and the interpretative scheme is possible because of sedimentation which is a social process. If the interpretative scheme transcends the individual experience, it follows that individuation of consciousness is only possible in the human organism by way of social process. So for individuation to emerge, it has to be in a social context. Simply put, self consciousness becomes a social process which is only

attainable by the individual transcending his biological nature in the interpretative scheme. There is a similarity here to what Feuerbach says about the formation of consciousness. The process that leads to self consciousness becomes the process of man transcending his biological nature. This is the level of meaning given. The ability to transcend the biological nature of man becomes the ability to be religious. "The organism in isolation is nothing but a separate pole of 'meaningless' subjective processes becomes a Self by embarking with others upon the construction of an 'objective' and moral universe of meaning. Thereby the organism transcends its biological nature".³³ This transcendence of the biological is according to Luckmann a universal human phenomenon, following this, religion then becomes a universal human phenomenon. The outcome of this for Luckmann is that man is of necessity a homo religiosus, thus the root of religion is the human consciousness. Since human beings exist everywhere and in every generation, religion now becomes a necessity for man everywhere he finds himself.

If meaning systems emerge by man transcending his biological nature, and Luckmann identifies this transcendence of the biological with religion, surely not all aspects of the transcendence of the biological are religious. While agreeing that the root of religion is in the transcendence of the biological, we cannot admit that it is only religion, for it is obvious that other things have

their roots there. What then separates religion from other views is not made clear by Luckmann. The same root could still be the root of magic.

Up to where Luckmann identifies the transcendence of the biological as the universal condition of religion, there is probably no disagreement with phenomenology. From what he has said, the transcendence of the biological is the self consciousness which we see in Feuerbach. It now follows that for the two men the root of religion is found in self consciousness. What then in this transcendence of the biological that makes the religious religious? It is here that Luckmann does not tell us exactly what would have amounted to the solution of the problem of the phenomenon of religion.

Luckmann is well aware that the root of religion is not to be found in the institutional form but in a thing basic to human beings. The root is in transcendence but he does not go further. Since he does not explain why certain things are religious and some not, we have to thank him for at least turning our attention away from searching for the root of religion in religious objects. In doing this, he has gone a step beyond the scholars already studied in the field of the general history of religion.

The question that comes to mind is this, at what stage or position in transcendence does religion begin? Where does the ontic transcendence of

Luckmann meet ontological transcendence. How do we analyse transcendence to arrive at that which is religious? This will be a pointer to the way the phenomenology of religion should go.

Peter Berger: The Persistence of Transcendence.

From the works of Ludwig Feuerbach and Thomas Luckmann, it is clear that the root of religion can be found in human consciousness. While Luckmann does not continue after arriving at the conclusion that the transcendence of the biological is religious, Feuerbach goes on to say that religion properly speaking is a projection of human ideals. The question that one tends to ask Feuerbach is this, where the ideals which are projected come from? If his answer is that they belong to the nature of man, we shall then be tempted to ask why there are present in man the demands and claims of his nature that do not seem to rise intellectually.

Feuerbach propounds projection. Can that be all there is to it? This is a question that is difficult to evade. As previously admitted, there is no disagreement with Feuerbach on the fact that projection cannot be ruled out in religion but the point that is at issue is what is projected and its relationship to both the projector and the screen upon which the projection is effected.

Could what Feuerbach sees as a projection be after all a reflection? Peter Berger's work in the bid to tackle the problem of projection theory of Feuerbach seems to suggest this. Peter Ludwig Berger, son of George and

Jelka Berger was born in Vienna, Austria in March 17 1929. He obtained a B.A. from Wagner College in 1949, M.A. from New School of Social Research in 1950 and Ph.D. in 1954. He served in the U.S. Army from 1953-55. From 1956-58 he taught at Hartford Theological Seminary. From 1958-63 New School of Social Research, 1963-70 Rutgers University. From 1970-79 he lectured at Boston College. Since 1979 he has been professor of Social Research in Boston University.

He is author of many books including The Social Construction of Reality (1966) The Social Reality of Religion (1969) Pyramids of Sacrifice (1975) The Heretical Imperative (1979) and The Capitalist Revolution (1986). He is married with two children.³⁴

In his work A Rumour of Angels³⁵ Peter Berger tends to question the validity of the projection of theory of Feuerbach. In the opening chapter of the work Berger sees his contemporaries as allowing the divine to recede into the background of human consciousness. "If commentators on the contemporary situation of religion agree about anything, it is that the supernatural has departed from the modern world. This departure may be stated in such dramatic formulation as 'God is dead' or 'the post Christian era'. Or it may be undramatically assumed as a global and probably irreversible trend".³⁶ Berger does not see the process of secularization as a phenomenon

occurring only in the churches or in the social set up alone, but as a phenomenon affecting the processes inside the human mind. Just as Luckmann formed his view on religion in the process of treating secularization, so Berger in his treatment of the same secularization concedes the fact that traditional religious beliefs appear to have become empty of meaning for large segments of the general population whether they continue to attend church or not. The lack of meaning has however put believers into a difficult situation. Two harsh choices face them. They can adopt to what Berger calls the view of a 'cognitive minority'. By cognitive minority he means "a group of people whose view of the world differs significantly from the one generally taken for granted in their society. Put differently, a cognitive minority is a group formed around a body of deviant 'knowledge'".³⁷

Berger stresses the fact that the term knowledge used with reference to the sociology of knowledge does not in any way attest the truth or falsity of the proposition. It is neutral. In this case they withdraw from the community and form an isolated subgroup.

An alternative choice of action on the other hand is the abandonment of their belief altogether. The midway however, is to reach a sort of compromise or a working accommodation between theistic commitments and the secularization attitude of the society. Berger sees the main problem of the

traditional churches as being compounded by the sociology of knowledge which studies relationship between human thought and the social conditions under which it occurs. Because of their unusual origin and especially in terms of their continued affirmation, the plausibility of the things we believe depend in large upon the social support these receive. However, there can be exceptions to this. Here Berger refers to the notion that derives directly from our idea of experience. Still it can be seen that this experience can only be directed into meaningful views of reality by means of social process. The sociology of knowledge maintains that all our beliefs are conditioned by the societal structures of plausibility within which our thoughts are conceived and conducted. Thus the relativity of belief is not only a fact but a necessity of human condition.

Berger however, acknowledges the fact that while our beliefs must in some way be related to their societal contexts, the fact alone does not grant some special warrant to current structures of plausibility which is lacking in their counterparts of the previous era. Sociology of knowledge shows that all theological options are inevitably contextual and projective products of human history. Could what is regarded as projections not on the other hand be a reflection of a larger whole? As Corr puts it "to describe the historical, psychological, or sociological genesis of any phenomenon is simply to realise its inevitable context in human situation. To label a phenomenon a

'projection' is not to settle its ultimate status but to call for a further investigation of its remaining aspects which have yet to be considered".³⁸ It is on this account that Berger request the reconsideration of the whole idea of religion as human product of projection. It is this that has led to his suggesting that religion may after all be a reflection. This questions the work of Feuerbach. "...I would like to go further, to suggest that the entire view of religion as a human product or projection may once again be inverted, and that in such an inversion lies a viable theological method in response to the challenge of sociology. If I am right in this, what could be in the making here is a gigantic joke on Feuerbach".³⁹

Berger in his disagreement with the projection of Feuerbach gives example with projection in mathematics. This example is used because he sees it as the enterprise that appears to be a pure projection. Projection in mathematics is man projecting out of his consciousness and this projection somehow corresponds to a mathematical reality that is external to him. "Put crudely, the mathematics that man projects out of his own consciousness somehow corresponds to a mathematical reality that is external to him and which indeed his consciousness appears to reflect".⁴⁰ He goes on to say how this is possible, which is the fact that man according to him is a part of overall reality. The implication is that "there is a fundamental affinity between the structures of his consciousness and the structures of the empirical world".⁴¹

This is possible because "projection and reflection are movements within the same encompassing reality".⁴¹ The religious projection is to be seen in the same line as the mathematical projection. Berger thinks that any theological system that could be regarded as worthy of its name ought to be based on this possibility of projection. He however stresses the fact that that does not imply the search for religious phenomena that will manifest themselves as different from human projections. He is of the view that nothing is immune to the 'relativization of the socio-historical analysis'. "They will also be human projections, products of human history, social constructions undertaken by human beings. The meta-empirical cannot be conceived of as a kind of enclave within the empirical world, any more, incidentally, than freedom can be conceived as a hole in the fabric of causality".⁴² For Berger then the decision which he regards as a theological decision is that in the "immense array of human projections, there are indicators of a reality that is truly 'other' and that the religious imagination of man ultimately reflect".⁴³ Here one calls to mind Rudolf Otto's 'Wholly Other' and the 'Other' of Van der Leeuw.

The evidence here so far points to man as the starting point of religion and it is in man that religion will be given the clearance it needs. If the starting point of religion is man, it is however, unlikely that projection is all there is to religion. Man on the other hand has a major role to play for "if the religious projections of man corresponds to a reality that is superhuman and

supernatural, then it seems logical to look for traces of this reality in the projector himself".⁴⁴ Theology for Berger here has to have an anthropological basis. While not turning theology to anthropology, he intends to suggest a theology of a high empirical sensitivity that seeks to correlate its propositions with what can be known empirically.

For this reason, Berger calls for a renewed analysis of human experience, especially in its social form. He suggests that theological thought be reverted to anthropological starting point and for him "such an anchorage in fundamental human experience might offer some protection against the constantly changing winds of cultural moods".⁴⁵ He suggests that for theology to be anthropologically based, it has to seek out what he calls signals of transcendence in the empirically given of the everyday human situation. He further suggests that there are what he calls 'prototype human gestures' that may be available as signals of transcendence. About transcendence Berger says "I am not using transcendence here in a technical philosophical sense but literally, as the transcending of the normal, everyday world that I earlier identified with the notation of the 'supernatural'" and for him 'human gestures' mean "certain reiterated acts and experiences that appear to express essential aspect of man's being, of the human animal as such".⁴⁶ Berger's task is to determine if one can find, what in his term he calls angels, in other words, messengers or signals of transcendence in the

data of social anthropology. These signals of transcendence according to him refer to "phenomena that are to be found within the domain of our 'natural' reality but appear to point beyond that reality".⁴⁷ For him the existence of a transcendent or other worldly reality has become problematic and the signs of transcendence are weak and scattered. In the metaphor of Berger's title, they have become only rumours of angels. By tracking down the rumours, Berger hopes to get to their roots and see the bases on which they stand. It is on this account that the sub title of the book is Modern Society and the Rediscovery of the Supernatural.

Berger's search for angels is an attempt to justify a choice between the options of a naturalistic world view and one which involves transcendence. His argument is that such a choice should be made on the basis of available evidence. This demands a high sensitivity to the empirical data of human experience. The question of whether or not the projections of religious imaginations are to be recognised as reflections of transcendence, will have to begin by analyzing human projection. This requires that theology adopts a broadly conceived anthropological starting point. Moreover, to avoid the vagaries of what Berger calls 'mood theologies', we must seek for that kind of anthropological starting point which looks to fundamental forms of human experience. For these reasons Berger's quest for the signals of transcendence begins with 'prototypical human gestures'. Such acts are not confined to

particular temporal situations. They are expressions of what Berger calls man's fundamental 'humanities'. This for Berger does not mean a static 'human nature' outside of history. On the contrary, he argues that our understanding of humanitas which would seem roughly equivalent to what existentialists call the human attention, grows and changes in the course of history. The point is that prototypical human gestures have a certain timelessness and metaphysical quality which transcends the individual situation in which they appear. They are in other words, "experiences of ecstasy of ek-statis. A standing outside of the taken-for-granted routines of everyday life".⁴⁷ Although these acts are to be found in the midst of normal human experience, Berger's contention is that their ecstatic quality permits us to stand outside the ordinary course of events and to adopt a perspective from which these events are to be judged.

He offers such ecstatic gestures as the signals of transcendence. These are arguments from ordering, arguments from play, arguments from hope, arguments from damnation, and arguments from humour. We need not go into this detailed discussion of his treatment of these five arguments. It suffices to take note of them. These arguments are examples of what Berger calls an inductive faith as opposed to deductive faith. He describes inductive faith as "a religious process of thought that begins with facts of human experience"; for deductive faith, it "begins with certain assumptions (notably

assumptions about divine revelation) that cannot be tested by experience. Put simply, inductive faith moves from human experience to statements about God, deductive faith from statements about God to interpretations of human experience".⁴⁸ The need for detailed study of the whole of Berger's thought in the work A Rumour of Angels does not arise here. All that concerns us is what it has to say about projection and reflection.

While Berger does not doubt the fact that in religion there could be projection as Feuerbach states, he doubts that that could be all there is to religion. If self consciousness is awareness of human projection, it can also be taken to be an awareness of that which is projected. Our problem can now be restated, if projection is as a result of reflection, what is the relationship between the self that reflects and projects and the reflection and projection? While Berger does not discard the idea of projection in religion, his view is that after all there may be reflection before the so called projection. What is it in transcendence that gives account of what can be regarded as religion? Berger is not interested in going further.

For us religion is not all transcendence and all transcendence is not religion. What is certain however, is that there are two sides to religion. How can we combine these two sides? The combination perhaps may throw some light on the phenomenology of religion.

NOTES

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29. Ibid, p.45.
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32. Ibid, p.46.
33. Ibid, pp.48-49.
34. Information obtained from Who's Who in America (Marquis Who's Who, Macmillan Directory, Illinois, U.S.A.) 45th Edition.
35. Berger P.L. A Rumour of Angels: Modern Society and the Rediscovery of the Supernatural (Allen Lane the Penguin. The Press, 1970).
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39. Berger P.L. Op. cit. p.63.
40. Ibid, p.64.
41. Loc. cit. (both quotations).
42. Ibid, p.65.
43. Loc. cit.
44. Loc. cit.
45. Ibid, p.69.
46. Ibid, p.70 (both quotations).
47. Ibid, p.70.

48. *Ibid*, pp.75-76.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF RELIGION

Wilfred Cantwell Smith: The History of a Concept.

The last chapter raised doubts concerning the terminology of religion. Despite our best efforts, the problem of identifying the phenomenon of religion itself remains elusive. In the ex cursus after chapter two, there is an indication of the difficulties encountered in the bid to apply Husserl's insights to the phenomenology of religion. In other human sciences, there are some sort of agreed procedures; for them Husserl's insight into phenomenological principles have been applied with relative ease. Why has this not been the case with regard to religion? Could the obstacle be in the very conception of a phenomenology of religion? For this we shall examine the work of Cantwell Smith since he too in his own way has questioned the adequacy of the term 'religion'.

Born at Toronto in 1916, Wilfred Cantwell Smith spent a year as a school boy at Grenoble in France at the age of eleven, and at the age of seventeen, a year in Spain and in Egypt. He lived for eight years in Lahore from 1941 to 1949. In 1943 he was ordained in the Presbyterian Church of Canada, and in 1961, became a minister of the United Church of Canada. He was appointed as W.M. Birks Professor of Comparative Religion at McGill University Montreal in 1949. Two years later, he founded the McGill Institute of Islamic Studies and in 1964 became the Director of the Harvard Centre for

the Study of Islamic Studies and also the Director of the Harvard Centre for the Study of World Religions. This latter centre combined a rigorous academic programme in Comparative Religion with a residential setting wherein twenty-five students from different cultures and religions could share colloquia and discourse. At Harvard, his interest and expertise widened to include all major living religions.

From 1973-78, he was McCulloch Professor at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia after which he returned to Harvard to direct the religious Programme in the Faculty of Arts and Science which he had originally masterminded.¹

Smith is a prolific writer. Among his works are: Islam in Modern History (1957), Some Similarities and Differences between Christianity and Islam (1959),² The Meaning and End of Religion (1964), The Faith of Other Men (1965), Religious Diversity (1976), Questions of Religious Truth (1967), Belief and History (1977), Faith and Belief (1979), Towards a World Theology (1981).

Although the theme of religion runs throughout his works, we shall be concentrating on The Meaning and End of Religion and Towards a World Theology for what Smith has to say about the phenomenon of religion. References will be made to the other works as and when necessary.

Smith sees the difficulties in the definition of religion as emanating from asking the wrong questions. The persistence of the difficulties in the definition prompted his suggesting that "one might argue that the sustained inability to clarify what the word 'religion' signifies, in itself suggests that the term ought to be dropped; that it is a distorted concept not really corresponding to anything definite or distinctive in the objective world".³ Smith does not doubt the existence of religious phenomena, but whether they constitute some distinctive entity is problematic. However, he suspects that one other possible reason for the inability to define religion could lie in the fact that what one thinks of religion is central to what one thinks about life and the universe as a whole. Looking for an agreement on the definition of religion then is equivalent to looking for a consensus on the ultimate questions of man, truth and destiny. We know that expecting this is expecting the impossible. Smith is aware of the difficulties involved in such venture and states clearly his intention. He is not unaware of scholars who have spent the whole of their careers searching for the essence of religion. His intention is "to propose a way of looking at religious phenomena that does not attempt to locate their essence, and that seems to me consequently serviceable perhaps for the questions that arise".⁴

Smith now turns to the origin and meaning of the word 'religion'. The word

'religion' he says comes from the Latin religio, a form that eventually came to be used in a great variety of senses by different writers without precision. About the first century B.C. under the influence of Greece the meaning of religio came to be much more restricted than the meaning it acquired later. For Smith there is disparity of opinion among modern scholars as to what the word came to designate in the early stages. Was it power outside of man obligating him to a certain attitude or behaviour failing which he is threatened with "aweful retribution, a kind of tabu, or the feeling in man vis-a-vis such powers".⁵ Though the difference between the power outside of man obligating him to a certain attitude or behaviour and the feeling in man vis-a-vis such powers can become blurred on account of the fact that outsiders regard religious experiences as subjective, in spite of the fact that they were believed, or felt to reside in some objective thing or practice, it follows that both "that in which 'mana' was felt to dwell, and the person whose scrupulousness towards it was vivid, were each termed religiosus. There were religiosae locae, sacred places; and viri religiosi, reverent or devout persons careful in the conscientious fulfilment of corollary prescriptions".⁶ Making room for the later development of the meaning of the word in later centuries, Smith finds that the adjectival use of the word has been employed more frequently than the substantive. He concludes that this supports the notion that in the early Christian period and before, the important thing was piety (or religious attitude) rather than religion.

It is clear that Christianity introduced a certain we - they exclusivism which was also beginning to take shape among the New Testament Jews. This reification according to Smith had not taken place in the New Testament, a point made clear in the letter of James, "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world".⁷ Here it is clear what the author means by 'religion': the quality of experience of the truly religious man. He is not contrasting 'our' religion which is pure with 'theirs' which is corrupt. In this case, and in many other cases, religion is to be thought of more "in terms of quality of men's lives or a colouring of the world that they perceive, than in terms of some independent substance or entity".⁸ Smith quotes Arnobius contrasting nostra religio with vestra religio to show the change that occurred in the conception of religion. Smith also cites Augustine and Calvin to make clear his point about religio. In the fourth Century Augustine 1430 undertook to explicate the notion of religio. Prior to that Smith traced the history of religio in the Christian Church, and how it came to be used. The history of martyrdom shows that the difference between pagans and Christians was their way of life. For Smith, Augustine's work makes a clear the meaning of religio. De Vera Religione of Augustine Smith says, would today be translated On the True Religion. Since the writer was a Christian, one would suppose that by the True Religion he meant

Christianity. A close translation according to Smith should be On True Religion, which means on proper piety of genuine worship. Augustine argues at length that the Vera Religione is the worship of God. The book he says "hardly mentions Christianity", and culminates in a warm, reverberating and sustained affirmation of a personal relation to the transcendent God "from whom, through whom, and in whom are all things. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen".⁹ He contends that for this writer, religion is not a system of things to be done or to be believed, nor is it a historical tradition, institutionalized or susceptible of outside observation. It is instead, "vivid and personal confrontation with the splendour and the love of God. The Church, for him, exists in order to make this relationship possible".¹⁰ Religion then is the bond between God and man which ought to subsist and which was never absent from the beginning of mankind 'till now. Smith holds that the concern of the religious man is God, that of the observer of religion. He cites the work of Marsilio Ficino entitled De Christiana Religione published in 1471. The title would today be translated The Christian Religion, Ficino did not have that in mind when writing the book if by 'Christian religion' one understand any system of doctrines, any institutional phenomenon or historical development. For Smith, what Ficino means by religio "is universal to man; it is, indeed, the fundamental distinguishing human characteristic, innate, natural and primary. It is the divinely provided instinct that makes man, by which he perceives and worships God".¹¹

For Smith when Calvin's Christianae Religionis Institutio first published in 1536 is rendered Institutes of Christian Religion a similar misunderstanding of religion is created, for according to him, institutio means instruction, and religio refers to the same piety which prompts man to worship. For Calvin, the material described and discussed in his Institutio was not religion as institution but things that he hoped would guide men into a personal worship recognition of God. He called this Christiana religio.

In the first half of the seventh century inspired by Hugo de Groot's De Veritate Religionis Christianae which led the way from 'the genuineness of Christian religiousness' to 'the truth of Christian religion, "men were calling by this name not that personal vision but the matters such as he set forth to lead to it: the system of beliefs and practices, considered as a system, irrespective of whether or not they elicited in the human heart a genuine fear of and love of God".¹² What a change. The system now becomes 'the Christian faith' since there are other systems as well, one arrives at the position that there are different religions, which can be considered true or false in an intellectual sense. This according to Smith is a translation from a personal orientation to a de-personalized intellectual systematization. This is the beginning of the plural for 'religions' which is not possible as long as religio is something which is in men's heart. There is then the general

concept of religion to designate the total system or "sum of all systems of beliefs, or simply the generalization that they are there".¹³

From the discussions so far, Smith's conclusion is that the word 'religio' has been used in four different ways. It has been used to point to a personal piety whereby a person has a warm or cold or narrow religion; it has been used to point to an overt system of beliefs, practices and values as seen as ideal, as in 'true Christianity'; it has been used to point to an overt system of beliefs, practices and values seen as sociological and historical phenomenon, as in 'true Christianity of history'.¹⁵ It has been used to point to Religion in general as 'a generic summation'.¹⁶

These four different ways contribute to the difficulties in the definition of religion. Smith suggests that, "the word, and the concepts, should be dropped - at least in all but the first, personalist, sense...I suggest that the term 'religion' is confusing, unnecessary and distorting".¹⁷ Smith also analyses the use of the names of separate religious systems and traditions showing how inappropriate this has been in regard to Buddhism and Confucianism and more so in regard to 'the Religions' in general. The term 'Hindu' was "developed by the Muslims".¹⁸ The problem of whether 'Buddhism' and 'Confucianism' are 'religions' is one "the West has never been able to answer, and China never able to ask".¹⁹ "If Tao as they conceived it

is at all a valid concept, then it follows that Taoism is a false one".²⁰ 'Shinto' is not Japanese but Chinese; 'Judaism' arose not in Hebrew but in Greek; Guru Nanak as 'the founder of Sikhism' is rather a misconception. Smith points out that even the word 'Islam' which is given by God in the Qur'an to Muslims who insist upon it has yet been reified in the ways that he suggests. Although the case of Islam seems at first sight to contradict Smith's view, word study of Iman (faith) and others in the Qur'an show that though Islam has been verified, that it began like others "as a ringing personal summons to men and women to have faith in God and to commit themselves wholeheartedly to His commands, and that the instructions and conceptualized system of what is now called Islam have been the result of that faith and commitment".²¹ It then follows that the case of Islam "does not after all disprove, as it at first seemed calculated to do so, our general interpretation of religious reification as a mundane process - by which men come to substitute, for a vivid personal faith in direct commerce with transcendence, a human and limited conceptualization".²² Summarising the survey on the concept of religion, Smith says "In its contemporary form there would seem little question but that the concept of a religion is recent, Western-and-Islamic, and unstable."²³ The process of naming the particular religions was bound up with the process of reifying religion in general, so that the change to individual names "Followed somewhat after the trend towards reification in the concept 'religion' itself".²⁴ Smith, however, sees this trend as

a passing phase so that "As knowledge continues to grow, one may reasonably expect these alien labels to be more and more abandoned".²⁵

Smith's complaint however, is not merely against the use of the word religion, but against the very concept itself. His problem is not the meaninglessness of the old concept but that it was imprecise and could distort. He finds this reified meaning of religion irrelevant to the non-civilized peoples who simply perform their rites and relate their myths without constructing a system and naming it.

For Smith many thinkers around the world object to the use of the term to refer to their faith. He reacts against the idea that Islam or any other 'religion' can guide, save, be known, or given allegiance to. It is an impediment which stands in the way of God. For Smith, God does not reveal religions, nor do religions reveal God. He goes on to show that no religious leader, with the exception of Mani, has consciously founded 'a religion'.

Religious leaders have rather called men to transcendent reality. In fact the concept of religion is "inadequate for the man of faith",²⁶ for "fundamentally it is the outsider who names a religious system. It is the observer who conceptualizes a religion as a denotable existent".²⁷ Even the sympathetic observer is liable to say that the term 'religion' does not apply to his field

though it may apply to that of others. Other reasons Smith gives for the inadequacy of the notion of religion are those of God and history. For Smith, the notion of 'religion' leaves out the transcendent element in religious life. This is because it is an observer's concept which is constituted by what can be observed, notwithstanding the fact "the whole pith and substance of religious life lies in its relation to what cannot be observed".²⁸ The observable phenomenon, the 'religion', is not all there is. "Being a Muslim means living in a certain context, sociological, historical, ideological and transcendent. The significance of being a Muslim lies in this fact, not in some prolegomenon to it".²⁹ God, the transcendent element is the point of it all, for "we must look not at their religion but at the universe, so far as possible through their eyes".³⁰ Even as far as our own faith is concerned there is more than we can see or even formulate, and if it is so for ourselves this transcendent element is equally important for others. Smith also stresses history as a stumbling-block to the concept of religion, saying that if religious history is to be taken seriously, then we cannot take seriously the idea of the essence of religions. There is no such thing as the essence of a religion. "For essences do not have a history. Essences do not change. Yet it is an observable and important fact that what have been called religions do, in history change".³¹ In history there is a process, flux, infinite variety and development, a richness too great to be defined, a future unknown; religion is a static and monolithic term which does not do justice to the rich variety in time and space of

religious history. This however is not to reduce religion to its history and nothing more. Smith rejects the 'nature and origin' theory of religion; the idea that there is something common to all instances in a tradition that constitutes 'religion'; 'religion' as a transcendent ideal; 'religion' as the ideal its followers hold concerning it; and also religion as its history. These terms are inadequate for "their faith is greater than its history, is above the sins and foibles and distractions of those who profess it".³² These words merely suggest the study of man in his religious dimension. It is not a study of religion. Any attempt to understand the religiousness of man must recognize the fact that life has of necessity and rightly so, looked different when viewed from outside than when seen from within. In history there is no such thing as 'Christianity' or 'Buddhism' or any other religion existing, for these concepts are static and history is change. "Neither the believer nor the observer can hold that there is anything on earth that can legitimately be called 'Christianity' or 'Shintoism' or 'religion' without recognising that if such a thing existed yesterday, it existed in a somewhat different form the day before. If it exists in one country (or Village), it exists in somewhat different forms in the next. The concepts were formed before the ruthlessness of historical change was recognized, in all its disintegrating sweep...It is time now definitely to reject them theoretically, as inherently inept".³³ For Smith the "history of what has been called religion in general and of each religion, is the history of man's participation in an evolving context of observable actualities,

and in something, not directly observable by historical scholarship".³⁴ For Smith human history is rendered intelligible on account of the reference to the transcendence. History distorts reality if it omits either the mundane or the transcendent. The inadequacies in the study of religious life of man is due to the fact that the concept of religion has tended to neglect either the mundane or the transcendent.

Smith now suggests the replacement of terms 'religion' and 'religions' with his own terms 'faith' and 'cumulative traditions'. Faith refers to the inner, existential, and experiential dimensions of religion. In this sense it is synonymous with 'piety'. It is essentially adjectival, a quality of persons, and refers to a subjective involvement with the transcendent value. "By 'faith' he says, "I mean personal faith...For the moment let it stand for an inner religious experience or involvement of a particular person; the impingement on him of the transcendent, putative or real".³⁵

In contrast to this, by 'cumulative tradition' he means "the entire mass of overt objective data that constitute the historical deposit, as it were, of the past religious life of the community in question: temples, scriptures, theological systems, dance patterns, legal and other social institutions, conventions, moral codes, myths and so on; anything that can be and is transmitted from one person, one generation, to another, and that a historian can observe".³⁶

By dividing 'religion' into two hemispheres of 'faith' and 'tradition', Smith wants to clarify the study of both the inward dimension of faith and the objective data of the traditions. For him these are all embracing terms.

He says "it is my suggestion that by the use of these two notions it is possible to conceptualize and to describe anything that has happened in the religious life of mankind".³⁷ Smith rejects the view that religion has an essence - an unchanging core. Rather, religions as cumulative traditions may be seen as constantly shifting processes. The cumulative tradition is open to future redefinition. The life of a tradition occurs in its members. Just as a person is open to change until his or her death, so too is a tradition which is the creation of persons and cannot be fully defined until it has expired. Smith described how tradition is built up by reference to the writer of RG Veda. "He received external to himself, in the form of rites and practices, norms, ideas, group pressures, family influences, vocabulary, social institutions and what not, a religious tradition; and he changed the tradition by adding to it".³⁸

Tradition is wholly historical but not at the mercy of history "since as agent within it stands man".³⁹ It allows for variety, it allows for process, it allows for change, it allows for historical intelligibility. He suggests that it is even

objective "in that Marxists, Muslims, and Mennonites should in principle have no difficulty in agreeing on what in fact the Christian cumulative tradition has so far been".⁴⁰ Tradition so to say deals with the objective data, the texts, the words, the observables, the outward.

By resolving 'religion' into faith and 'tradition' we now recognise why faith is not equivalent to religion. Faith corresponds to the inward manner in which a person makes sense of the world. This explains Smith's choice of wording the title of his early work The Faith of Other Men. In this work we see the world through the eyes of several types of faith.

If faith is not religion as a whole, because it excludes the cumulative tradition, it is also not belief. To understand why this is so, we must recognise that Smith also distinguishes several meanings in the terms 'belief'. We shall not go into details of Smith's treatment of belief. It suffices that mention be made of it.

In his examination of the concept of 'faith' Smith is concerned "to understand not the nature of the personal faith, but the role that it has played in the religious history of mankind".⁴¹ The expressions of 'faith' have appeared in various forms, in prose and poetry, in patterns of deeds, both ritual and morality; in art, in institutions, in law, in community, in character; and in many

other ways. It then follows that tradition is the result of the past faith and the cause of present faith. Faith is not objective data like tradition. "What the words mean, what pattern of words suggest, what emotional implications for man they may have had...these are not objective data, but they are historical facts and are important. They must be, and they can be, studied and taught".⁴² 'Faith' personal as it is, like other of man's involvement in art, love, ambition, joy and sorrow though beyond comprehension, can be apprehended. It is clear that when Smith talks of faith he prefers it through an ideal, rather than in ideal. This is probably because he understands ideals to have transcendent properties which are never comprehended. Ideals lure persons with the force of intrinsic attractiveness and demand. Through them, by means of them, by participating in them, persons are open for growth in the direction of infinity. In a similar way, Smith does not speak of the content of faith, since a container is larger than that which is contained. Persons of faith are unable to contain that which is limitless and greater than themselves.⁴³ He is slow to speak of faith having a specific object, though he acknowledges the fact that the worshippers are naturally conditioned by a particular idea of reality. It then follows that for him, the idea is not the reality that the worshippers open to in faith, but rather Reality itself. It is on this account that he speaks of faith 'in shape of' an idea, faith in an idea.⁴⁴ There is not generic faith of each tradition; there is not ideal faith that we ought to have; faith varies from person to person and from day to day. As

Edward Hughes puts it, for Smith, "The locus of faith lies not in rituals, doctrines, or forms of organisation: these are public items. The locus is in individuals who both find and give meaning to their cultural inheritance and who in turn, are inspired by earlier generations. New generations turn to the inherited tradition but reinterpret its data and discover new meaning according to the psychological and historical demands of the situation. Through this ongoing interpretation a meaning world is constituted and kept vital. Yet it would not be correct to imply that persons seek the meaning of a tradition as their primary goal; instead, they seek the meaning of existence as illuminated by that tradition".⁴⁵ This is because Smith's concern is "with meaning: not only the meaning that a person's tradition has for him or her, if they are involved, but more significantly the meaning that life and the universe have for them, in the light of that involvement".⁴⁶

Though faith is a personal capacity for meaning, Smith does not conceive of faith in an individualistic manner. Though faith is personal, the person is not isolated. For Smith, the person is radically social. Faith enables persons to attain self-transcendence by surrendering to the ideals that they experience as making a claim upon them. In this case, it can be said that faith reveals the unique dignity of human freedom. Individuals reveal the ability either to embody value or to fall short of the mark. As an idea, true personhood exists in each religion as a dream to be attained. To have faith then is to be

truly human. "To think or feel that human behaviour may on occasion be inhuman, that people may be 'less than human', that, unlike crocodiles, we persons may become or may fail to become our true selves, is to recognise 'man' as transcendent and not merely as an empirical concept".⁴⁷ For Smith then a human being's way to transcendence is through the anthropological ideals of their culture. Faith then can be said to be the capacity for authenticity. Persons have attained integrity by being involved in one or more of the earth's major traditions. What has been called religions may be thought of as historically significant attempts to be excellently human. One is not first a human being who has Jewishness, Muslimness, Christianess, and so on, accidentally added to his or her humanity. Rather Smith argues: "one is human by being one or another of them".⁴⁸ He sees human nature as not a fixed entity. Rather, what is called 'human nature' is a potential for cultural definition. It is through culture that one awakens to the definition and possibility of authenticity.

Smith sees being a Muslim, a Christian, a Buddhist and so on as a participation in the traditions of Muslim, Christian or Buddhist. That is to say to be any is to interpret reality through their institutions or practice. "To be Christian, Muslim or Buddhist, to be religious, is a creative act, of participation in a community in motion".⁴⁹ For Smith man as a historical being, has been in interaction with the mundane, and as a spiritual being, has been open to

transcendence. Whatever religion is, it is the course traced out by this double involvement. Though faith is personal, it is not isolated and for this, "any person's faith is what it is; in interaction with the particular religious context in which that person actually lives. The context during any given century is different from that during any other, historians can demonstrate for us; and of course, the religious context for any person living in the latter twentieth century is in turn different from those that went before".⁵⁰

For Smith then context of faith is in a constant flux on account of historical development.

Smith sees the religious not only participating in his own religious movement, but that he does also participate in the remainder of the historical process in which they live, in other words its secular parts. "There is the bustling courtyard of the profane outside of the temple: pro fano".⁵¹ Smith here seems to indicate that both the sacred and the profane are religious but in different dimensions. This is in a way similar to Eliade's view. For Smith then, taking part in the secular affairs is religious though he acknowledges the difficulties in using the same terms for both. Here he makes clear the point he has made about being religious which he sees as the individual participating in his universe which is made real by appropriating its transcendent dimension. Each religious person is seen as participating in the

ongoing historical process of which the contemporary life of their community is a current phase. "As their community comes out of its inherited past and moves into an uncertain future, the present members constitute the present phase as each plays his or her part in the company of fellow members and in the constant presence, dimly or deeply perceived, of that transcendent power in whom we all live and move and have our being. It is the quality of their participation that gives their life its religious significance".⁵² It then follows that faith of any man does not lie in the data of that man's tradition but in the heart, that is the human heart and what that tradition means to them, in the light of that tradition.

Smith now seems to substitute the word religion with his term faith or the word 'religio' as he described elsewhere and that gives him the impetus to emphasise once more that "The study of religion is the study of persons, as I have long urges; and indeed of human lives at their most intimate, most profound, and most primary, most transcendent".⁵³ Smith sees the source of the problem as Western man's understanding of religion. His criticism of the Western critics is that they have "tended to perceive what they have thus labelled 'religion' or 'the religions' as a construct, an addendum that human beings 'have' over and above their prime humanity".⁵⁴ The reason for this way of thinking can readily be understood when one recalls that the sceptics only know one dimension of reality, which is the secular one. For them the

dimension that exists is the secular, the religious dimension only an extra. This is in contradiction to the Christian classical position in which the death of Christ is seen as making man to become what he was originally. What he was truly made to be. Taking the case of Christianity as a typical example, it can only be understood if one recognizes it "as envisioning not an overplus, additional to man's essence, but the restoring of man's essence, the removal of a subtraction from or distortion of it".⁵⁵ For Smith religion is a way of living in transcendence. He sees the Western humanist position as a way of living in transcendence in the world and that is why it has had its martyrs and champions. The reasons versus faith debate has been to Smith nothing but a polarity between faith in reason and faith in God. All said and done, religion for Smith is a way of life and not the institutions as have been known. He sees history as evidence of the fact that man has been man by 'his and her being in one way or another transcendence-orientated'. "Men and women have not been human, and then Buddhists, Hindu, Muslim, rationalists-humanist, or whatever, in addition. Rather, there has been a Jewish way of being human, a Hindu way, a Greek-metaphysic way, a Christian way".⁵⁶

On account of this Smith doubts the possibility of one way claiming to be the truest or the right way. For this then Smith sees all that has been called religion and 'the religions' as inherently human.

It cannot be abstracted from the men and the women whose humanity it informs. "It is not an entity to be postulated, one that can be legitimately conceived in itself or considered analytically. It is not a thing, but a quality of personal life (both social and individual)".⁵⁷ Smith sees the dichotomy between the secular and the religious as originating in the Enlightenment period. He tries to explain the one time definition of religion as "peoples views about the supernatural, a distinct realm (many added distinct from reality)".⁵⁸ This is because the Enlightenment period went along with the dualist view of the universe. At this time the concept of 'nature arose and was contrasted with the supernatural'. Attempts were made to avoid the dualism that resulted and this led to the denial of the 'existence of the supernatural'. However, whenever religion is mentioned, the peoples view was that it had to do with the supernatural. Although according to Smith the Church resisted this definition, it has its own definition inherited from the scholastics which is equally faulty. Ever since the definition of religion has been bogged down by these two conceptions.

For Smith the religious response is the response of the whole person. The life of faith involves everything in man. Being a Christian then means the participation in the full integrity of one's personality in all that the Christians stand for in their relationship with God, Christ, and the Church, one's neighbour and one's cosmic reality. Smith once more emphasises the fact

that what makes the religiousness of any person is not the concept of religion or the group to which the one belongs, but the sum total of his world view and as it is appropriated by him. Giving example with the Buddhists he has this to say: "To understand the Buddhists I have insisted, we must not look at something called Buddhism but at the world; so far as possible, through Buddhist eyes. For this, we must among other matters learn to use the total system of Buddhist doctrine or world-view as Buddhists use it: as a pattern for ordering the data of observation not as a data to be ordered. A conceptual framework can be understood historically and accurately, insofar as it is appreciated as it has functioned, as a framework within which the universe is framed: the universe and the man;...all that man sees and knows".⁵⁹ This can be seen as conferring meaning on his existence. As it is with Buddhism, so it is with the other religions. The history of religion then is the history of man in his meaning giving role to his existence. Religions then or the institutions as such can be seen as a symbol of participation in transcendence. A particular symbol then may be satisfactory to some and not to others, as a symbol of participation in transcendence. For Smith then religion is the history of the encounter of the community and the individual with transcendence. Since a community is created by shared values and symbols, it is easy to understand why different communities arise with their idea of participation in transcendence. "There are many ways of perceiving the world; and the history of religion makes clear, there are many ways, differing

in place and time, of perceiving transcendence immanent within it".⁶⁰ Though different communities exist and have their own means, one would say that they have something in common which is participation in transcendence and that for Smith is a uniting factor.

One cannot say all there is to be said in the work of Smith about the nature of religion. Having seen religion in his view as the history of the encounter of the community and the individual with transcendence, we shall go on to investigate the relationship between transcendence and the historical entities that are called religions. Meanwhile Smith has redirected our attention in the search for the phenomenon of religion. Although a lot is still left unsaid about his treatment of religion, we shall summarise our findings of his views of religion with the following: "What used to be the conceptual pattern, through which one looked has become 'a religion', at which one looks. What used to be the context of transcendence, within which one responded, has become an empirical item among the several objects of one's inquisitive scrutiny, which some people 'believe' - while increasingly many do not: for what at that level are, quite apparently, almost good reasons".⁶¹ For Smith religion has moved from being a way of life to becoming an institution. It is his wish that it be returned to its rightful place, that of being seen as an encounter of the individual and the community with transcendence.

Smith's suggestion has thus taken us forward in the examination of the phenomenon of religion. It can be seen that he has provided a basis for distinguishing religion and religious trappings from what religion is trying to express, that is the encounter with transcendence. If this is the case, it is not difficult to understand how in different places and cultures, men have responded in different ways.

Having said that the problem still remains concerning the relationship of religion to transcendence, we now look at the work of Karl Jaspers. This issue has been addressed by him.

NOTES

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3. Smith W.C. The Meaning and End of Religion Foreword by John Hick (SPCK London 1978).
4. Ibid, p.18.
5. Ibid, p.20.
6. Loc. cit.
7. James 1:27
8. Smith W. C. Op. cit. p.20.
9. Ibid, p.29.
10. Ibid, p.33.
11. Loc. cit.

12. Ibid, p.39.
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14. Ibid, p.49.
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17. Ibid, p.50.
18. Ibid, p.65.
19. Ibid, p.69.
20. Ibid, p.70.
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22. Loc. cit.
23. Ibid, p.120.
24. Ibid, p.61.
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28. Ibid, p.136.
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30. Ibid, p.138.
31. Ibid, pp. 143-144.
32. Ibid, p.153.
33. Ibid, p.142.
34. Ibid, p.156.
35. Loc. cit.
36. Ibid, pp.156-157.
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41. Ibid, p.171.
42. Smith W.C. The Teaching of Religion: Academic Rigour and Personal Involvement. Unpublished M.S. Harvard 1967, p.23 quoted by Whaling Frank on A Critique of the Thought of Wilfred Cantwell Smith a paper presented to the Scottish Working Party of Religions of the world in Education.
43. Smith W.C. The Finger that Points to the Moon Reply to Per Kvaerne Temenos Helsinki 9 1973 p.172.
44. Ibid. See also Smith W C Belief and History pp. 127-128, note 44.
45. Hughes Edward J. Wilfred Cantwell Smith: A Theology for the World (SC 19 Press Limited 1986), p.16.
46. Smith W.C. Faith and Belief Paper presented at the Claremont Graduate School at a conference entitled Towards a Philosophy of Religious Diversity, California 23-24 September 1981, p.3.
47. Faith and Belief p.139.
48. Ibid, p.138.
49. Smith W.C. Towards a World Theology: Faith and the Comparative History of Religion (Macmillan Press 1981) p.35.
50. Ibid, p.37.

51. Ibid, p.38.
52. Ibid, p.42.
53. Ibid, p.48.
54. Ibid, p.51.
55. Loc. cit.
56. Ibid, p.53.
57. Loc. cit.
58. Ibid, p.54.
59. Ibid, p.82.
60. Ibid, p.87.
61. Ibid, p.93.

CHAPTER FIVE

TRANSCENDENCE AND RELIGION

Karl Jaspers: Being as all Encompassing and its Relationship to Transcendence.

The conclusion to be drawn from the last chapter is that if the phenomenology of religion is to be attempted, the concept of religion must be returned to its position as a form of consciousness of transcendence. Taking this as our basis, we can look at the works of Karl Jaspers whose interest extends to both transcendence and religion. Though writing independantly, Smith and Jaspers seem to address the same issue. Could we find a clue as to the way phenomenology of religion could be approached in the works of Jaspers? It can rightfully be said that Jasper has a link with both the religionists and the phenomenologists. In addressing himself with the problem of transcendence and religion, he has a relationship with the religionist. Though he does not regard himself as a phenomenologist, a look at his work will show that he has connections with phenomenology and can rightly be called a phenomenologist.

Karl Jaspers was born on February 23rd 1883 at Oldenburg, Germany, about twenty-five miles West of Bremen.¹ His father was a descendent of many generations of farmers and merchants, and studied law and, after serving for sometime as high constable of the district, became a bank director. After graduating from the Gymnasium, Jaspers was matriculated as a student of

jurisprudence for three semesters. He was then enrolled as a student of medicine and passed the medical state examination in 1908. In 1909 he received his degree of Doctor of Medicine after which he became a research assistant at Heidelberg Psychiatric Hospital. In 1910, he married Gertrude Mayer whom he had known since 1907. In 1913 he became a Privatdozent in Psychology in the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Heidelberg. In 1921 Jaspers became a full professor of philosophy in the University of Heidelberg despite the effort of Rickert to block it. In 1928 he was called to the University of Bonn but he declined. In 1933 Jaspers was excluded from all administrative duties in the University and in 1937, the Nationalist-Socialist regime denied him the right to teach though he was allowed to draw a modest pension.² In 1945 he was reinstated by the Americans who were administering the Universities. In 1948 he was called to the University of Basel. There he was until his retirement in 1961. He died in Basel of a stroke on the 26th February, 1969. Among his works are Allgemeine Psychopathologie (1913), three volumes of his Magnum opus Philosophie 1931 (Copyrighted for 1932) Vernunft und Existenz (1935) Von der Wahrheit (1947), Vernunft und Widervernunft in unserer Zeit (1950) Nietzsche und das Christentum (1946).

Jaspers came into contact with phenomenology as a young doctor in 1909 through reading some of the earlier work of Husserl. He took immediate liking

to Husserl's method which he found uncommonly useful for the description of certain psycho-pathological phenomena the study of which occupied him at that time. More profoundly however, he was impressed by Husserl's singularly disciplined way of thinking and by his tenacity in ferreting out hidden presuppositions everywhere. "In a world which at that time was full of prejudices, schematisms, and conventions, this felt like being liberated".³ Though Jaspers preferred not to be included in the phenomenological movement, saying that his philosophy would be the same with or without Husserl, this can be understood in the light of his appraisal of Husserl's method as an approach to psychology and psychiatry. At that time Jaspers was especially interested in research in psychopathology and Husserl and Dilthey were two philosophers whose works helped shape his views. Husserl's method was fruitfully appropriated to describe the inner experience of patients as phenomena of consciousness, including hallucinations, delusions and emotions. This however, is not the limit of the method. "As a method, I adopted Husserl's phenomenology, which, in its beginning he called descriptive psychology. I retained it, although I rejected its further development into essences (Wesensschau)".⁴ From this it is clear that even if at a later stage Jaspers pulls away from phenomenology as practised by Husserl, it is likely that he did not abandon the general method of approach.

Whatever else the work of Husserl is, it "can also be regarded as an attempt

to determine the nature of reason in relation to science. Philosophy, he insisted, must be strictly scientific and not merely a string of opinions which may or may not be true. In fact, philosophy must be universal science that lays the foundations and justifies all the other sciences and at the same time also carries its own immanent justification".⁵ This concept of philosophy can be said to combine the ideal of a Cartesian universal science and a Kantian sort of idealism. As Quentin Lauer puts it, "The synthesis of these two ideals, requires that Husserl admit nothing which cannot be the object of science and that he accepts no other source for the necessity which belongs to scientific knowledge than consciousness itself. With Kant...he will designate the subjective 'faculty' in which necessity resides by the name of reason. Thus, the ultimate source of science in the strict sense must be reason; and if phenomenology is to be an investigation of consciousness, then phenomenology which is to be a universal science must be an investigation of reason, in the sense that it determines how and when reason is operative".⁶ Reason he says signifies the necessary constitution of consciousness, and rational means scientific because, "to be scientific and to be constituted in reason are synonymous".⁷ Husserl's originality however, consists in the fact that he seeks to determine this rationality not apart from lived experience itself, for he considers that the rational activity is only the explication of what is contained already in the experience of a Lebenswelt. For Lauer, "Husserl wanted to regulate the relationship of reason and experience according to a

law which is intrinsic to both".⁸ Husserl seeks to determine the nature of reason and rationality in the context of science and scientific necessity. Jaspers could be said to be in this tradition. He too institutes a radical investigation into the nature of science, and in connection with it, into the nature of reason. In a sense his thought can be looked upon as an immense contemporary critique of the sciences, providing him with the occasion to rouse philosophy to a new degree of awareness. This is evidenced by the very plan of his writings. In the Existenz Philosophie for example, he introduces his treatment of truth by posing the problem of science and philosophy, and concludes it with a description of reason. However, he differs from Husserl and Kant in that he does not agree with the investigation of pure reason but insists that one must also investigate the personal sources of man's thinking, his individual experience. Jaspers' attitude to science and philosophy stems from his own personal experience. He moved from science to philosophy so what he has to say are those of a man at home with both science and philosophy.

Philosophie Weltorientierung is an attempt to investigate the domain of the phenomena or the objective beings which constitute the positive world, the world that the positive sciences investigate. It is in the effort to think philosophically about the whole objective being, the world, which in itself however, is not an object. The philosophical reflection, it is not even a

compact whole. Jaspers distinguishes at least four irreducible spheres or areas in it, matter, vegetative life, sensitive life, and spirit.⁹ He considers these four areas to be discontinuous with each other. As Kurt Hoffmann rightly points out, "Jaspers' primary concern is to resist the tendency of making one of the spheres absolute and to subject the others to its logic and laws. Philosophy must avoid the pitfalls of materialism and biologism as well as those of panpsychism and radical existentialism. Physics, biology, psychology and the humanities have no common criteria and cannot be ordered according to any one standard. Each order fails if it pretends to be the one true order. The totality of the universe is neither a possible object of a universal science, nor can it become unified by systematic philosophy".¹⁰ The essential task of world orientation therefore is not for unitary theories about the world, but to seek out the definite limits of objective science in order to designate those points where philosophical rationality must take over from scientific rationality and transcend it in the explanation of reality. What then does Jaspers understand as science and philosophy?

Jaspers sees science as the only domain of strictly objective knowledge that is, of knowledge that can exhibit the notes of impersonal validity, univocity, and universality. These qualities derive from the nature of general consciousness, which is the cognitive subject of the scientific knowledge. It can be said that science is the clearest expression and the highest

achievement of general consciousness. Though science is the highest achievement of general consciousness, it cannot be said to be synonymous with it. "Science adds something to the ordinary performance of consciousness in general: it introduces order and method into it".¹¹ In contrast to mathematics and logic which study mere forms, the empirical sciences deal with reality. It is on this account that Jaspers call them real sciences. Since they deal with reality, they must introduce additional steps of procedure into their methods over and above purely deductive and combinatory steps of mathematics and logic. In the empirical sciences, the facts are first observed, this however implies a more subtle procedure than simply stating everything about a phenomenon. It implies the selection of relevant factors in the event under observation. The selection takes place according to some hypothesis which promises to explain the phenomenon in question. If a sufficient number of observations are verified by repeated experiences, science may begin to generalise by a complex way of induction and set up a model or a theory. This theory will be valid for all similar phenomena in such a way that science will be able to make reliable predictions of phenomena as yet unobserved. There is of course a curious circularity and endlessness in this procedure, which Jaspers does not fail to note in his critique of the sciences. It looks as if the finding of facts depend on an anticipatory theory, called a hypothesis, while the verification of the theory or the hypothesis depend on the facts thus found.¹² Put in another

way, a particular observation has no significance except within a theory, while the adoption of a theory is not justified except through the observational and experimental facts that led to it. This way, the cogency of empirical research is gravely relativised because, as a fact it is bound to a theory and as a theory to facts.¹³ Here we can distinguish the difference between the theories of the natural sciences and those of the intellectual sciences. The former are more readily expressible in exact mathematic formulae than the latter. The theories of the intellectual sciences consist largely of understanding. For this the method of verification or falsification are not entirely reducible to exact measurements. They are rather matter for intuitive sense reconstruction. Another field of cogency are the intuitions of the categories of objectivity in general. The objects of these intuitions are therefore not real but possible objects which constitute the material for an intuitive phenomenology.¹⁴ This type of phenomenology "describes, explicates, brings to consciousness certain identical and unmistakable elements and structures of world-orientation as that network in which the objective world exists for us. These structures cannot be defined but must be brought to light in an actively performed intuition".¹⁵ According to Dufrenne and Ricoeur, this is an allusion to Husserl's Wesenschau.¹⁶ The implication here is that Jaspers seems to admit a kind of eidetic insight into the structures of objects in general which, ideally speaking, are identical for consciousness in general. These structures uncovered by phenomenology are the fundamental ones of conscious

experience and constitute the very conditions of possibility for having contact with the objective world. However, with all that Jaspers brings to the possibility of phenomenology as a strict science, his conclusions have little real similarity to the Husserlian doctrine in this respect. Unlike Husserl, Jaspers does not believe that any single method of explicating the content of a phenomenological insight can be regarded as the method of phenomenology.

For Jaspers theory and contemplation are not considered as the end of knowledge. "Theoria is not desired for its own sake but it is integrated into a larger flow, which Jaspers calls praxis. By praxis, he simply means an original totality of thoughtful doing, denkendes Tun".¹⁷

This however, should not be construed to mean that science has a right to existence only if it points to practical applicability, or that the immediate concern of science is directly pragmatic. The chief concern of science is in fact theoretical, but Jaspers points out that theory itself is a necessary means to an end not an end in itself. For him the end is thoughtful doing or praxis. Praxis contains both theorizing and doing. Thus Jaspers claims "These are not two possibilities of equal worth, side by side; rather pure theorizing is only a phase or else the breakdown of the original whole, which is knowing as thoughtful doing".¹⁸ For him "The distinction between speculation and doing

is too simple, for even in detached speculation there is a residue of doing, and in simple pottering a leftover of speculation".¹⁹ "Thinking, as a Being-centred reality, is thoughtful doing".²⁰ "All genuine science consists of praxis".²¹

As it stands, Jaspers does not seem to deny the formal possibility or even the necessity of theory. He however denies that theory is the ultimate end of knowledge. It is however not surprising how Jaspers views science. "The end of all knowing activity, including that of the sciences, is somehow to recapture the unity of the rational appetite in which thought and reality originally coincide. Particular sciences are all manifestations of this unifying endeavour. Each in its own particular and partial way explores some empirical domain of object-being, thus preparing the way for a metempirical or philosophical exploration of Being itself. If this is the case, sciences can be taken as "the necessary ground and first stage of philosophy, but are not capable of achieving the unity and totality which reason cannot renounce".²² The sciences initiate a movement which points and find fulfilment beyond them. Thus they begin on an exploration of Being, but stop short in object-being. It is the task of philosophy to continue this exploration.²³ We run into problems when the conclusion is drawn that which can be measured is worth examining. One would think that this is an unfair value judgement on the aspects of reality. For Jaspers, any one who philosophizes must be familiar

with the sciences. Science discovers objectifiable knowledge but that knowledge is not the goal of philosophy. It follows that philosophy begins where science ends and it is its duty to transcend science.

Jaspers maintains a sharp distinction between science and philosophy. He rejects the view which places philosophy with science and the scientific philosophy which accommodates itself to science. He also rejects mistrust of science by some philosophers. Against anti-science which dismisses objective knowledge, he insists on the necessity of a mutual alliance between science and philosophy. Jaspers' theory of science is the continuation of his theory of objectivity. Science is for him the only domain of strictly objective knowledge that exhibits the notes of impersonal validity, stability, univocity and universality. For him, knowledge is the intentional grasp of a particular object which is apprehended in an objective and univocal way. As far as he is concerned, there might be all sorts of thoughts intuition, awareness, and total vision but there is only one kind of objective knowledge: objective, univocal, scientific knowledge.²⁴ "Knowledge" says James Collins, "is not an indeterminate general term, covering every relation between the mind and things. Instead it connotes one definite sort of thought; that in which a polar relation is set up between the subject and the phenomenal object".²⁵ This however, is only obtainable in science. Science alone is knowledge and if science alone is knowledge, it then follows that philosophy must be some sort

of non-knowledge, Nichtwissen. It is non-knowledge because its relation to reality is not the same objective relation that science has to its objects. It is from this that the distinction Jaspers makes of between science and philosophy follows. It might be said that philosophy is not a cogent science. One chief characteristic of science as we have seen is intellectual cogency. This is on account of the fact that it proceeds from the impersonal intentionality of general, and deals with determined object being and deals with deals with determined object being according to universally acceptable and controllable method. The same cannot be said of philosophy. "If we call science that which is cogently knowable for every understanding, and which for that reason has actually gained universal recognition, then neither philosophy nor theology can be called sciences".²⁶

Measured against the cogency of science, philosophy is less than science, "for it does not open up any tangible result, nor any intellectually binding insight".²⁷ This is so because, philosophy is not the act of an anonymous consciousness, but the act of a concrete Existence. It does not determine itself by logical rules and impersonally valid methods, but by the necessity of personal faith. One can say that philosophy is a passionate quest of Existence for a true and genuine Being. In it the individual seeks a more intimate relationship with reality than the distorted search of science can afford. "Scientific truth is one and the same for all - philosophical truth wears

multiple historical cloaks; each of these is the manifestation of a unique reality, each has its justification, but they are not identically transmissible".²⁸ But philosophy is not only less than science it is also more than it in the sense that it is the source of truth that is inaccessible to scientific compelling knowledge. It is this plus that is usually referred to by various definitions of philosophy. In these, philosophy is presented as a supreme science or as the knowledge of all being as being, or as the way to the good life. According to Jaspers, the meaning of such definitions is that "philosophical thought is inward action; that it appeals to freedom, that it is a summons to transcendence".²⁹

It is not surprising that Jaspers begins his philosophy with the same question that has haunted philosophers all along. "What is Being?"³⁰ What is surprising in the work of Jaspers is not the question, but the position it occupies. For him Being is not only basic but also first in the order of philosophical inquiry. Other philosophers who ask the question do so towards the end as the crowning theme of their reflection. Jaspers seems to begin with metaphysics whereas others gradually lead to it through a series of lesser consideration. If this looks unnatural, it is only apparent. His concern with the metaphysical problem of Being takes a more personal and existential turn in the questions that follow: What am I? What is my authentic purpose? This is an indication that the consciousness of being is inseparably

bound up with the consciousness we have of our own existence in the world. Jaspers is interested in the question of Being from the beginning, but he implies that any possible treatment of it must constantly keep in mind the situation of the questions. In other words, he indicates that the basic question about Being is at the source of our philosophical inquiry, but not at the beginning of it.³¹ The beginning is in man's situation from which he poses the question about Being. Consequently, a profitable meditation on the question of Being must at least have its start in the situation of the questionnaire, and a philosophy of Being must be accompanied by an analysis of this situation.³² Man's being is such that it raises the whole question of Being.

However, from time the answer to the question, what is Being? has frequently been reduced to some form of objectivity, that is, either as object being, self being, or being in itself. However, both object and self remain obscure. Both reveal and conceal something and therefore such universal formal concepts of being as object being, self being, or being in itself are deceptive when identified with Absolute Being. No one of these forms of being mentioned so far can be accepted as ultimate at the expense of the others. They are modes of being not the source of being. They can be differentiated from each other, but they also compliment each other and hence no mode of being can claim pre-eminence. According to Jaspers, what we experience is always the appearance of being and not being itself. Being cannot become

known through the universal structures because the universal structures themselves are modes of being which discloses itself and yet remains veiled, Jaspers gives it the name, 'the encompassing' (das Umgreifende). The encompassing is that which is encountered as the pre-logical and which remains in question after and in the midst of all logical, scientific and speculative endeavours. In other words to think the encompassing, it has to be conceptualized, but as it takes its place, it is also being distorted. The encompassing is being that is neither only a subject nor only object, rather it be on both sides of the subject-object dichotomy. It is never the horizon, for it pushes beyond it. It is the open ended totality as the ground for all beings, and as such, it is the basic philosophical ground. It follows that the encompassing can be seen in terms of totality. We need not go into a detailed study of the problem of the encompassing in the philosophy of Karl Jaspers. What we are really concerned with is what will eventually lead us to the solution of the problem of transcendence, which is our main objective in considering his work.

The encompassing is present in terms of totality. It could also be said to be the fundamental image of the unity of Being. Through the idea of the encompassing we endeavour to transcend not only the duality of subject and object but also all possible distinction and multiplicity of objects. Through it we touch upon the unity which makes distinction and multiplicity possible.

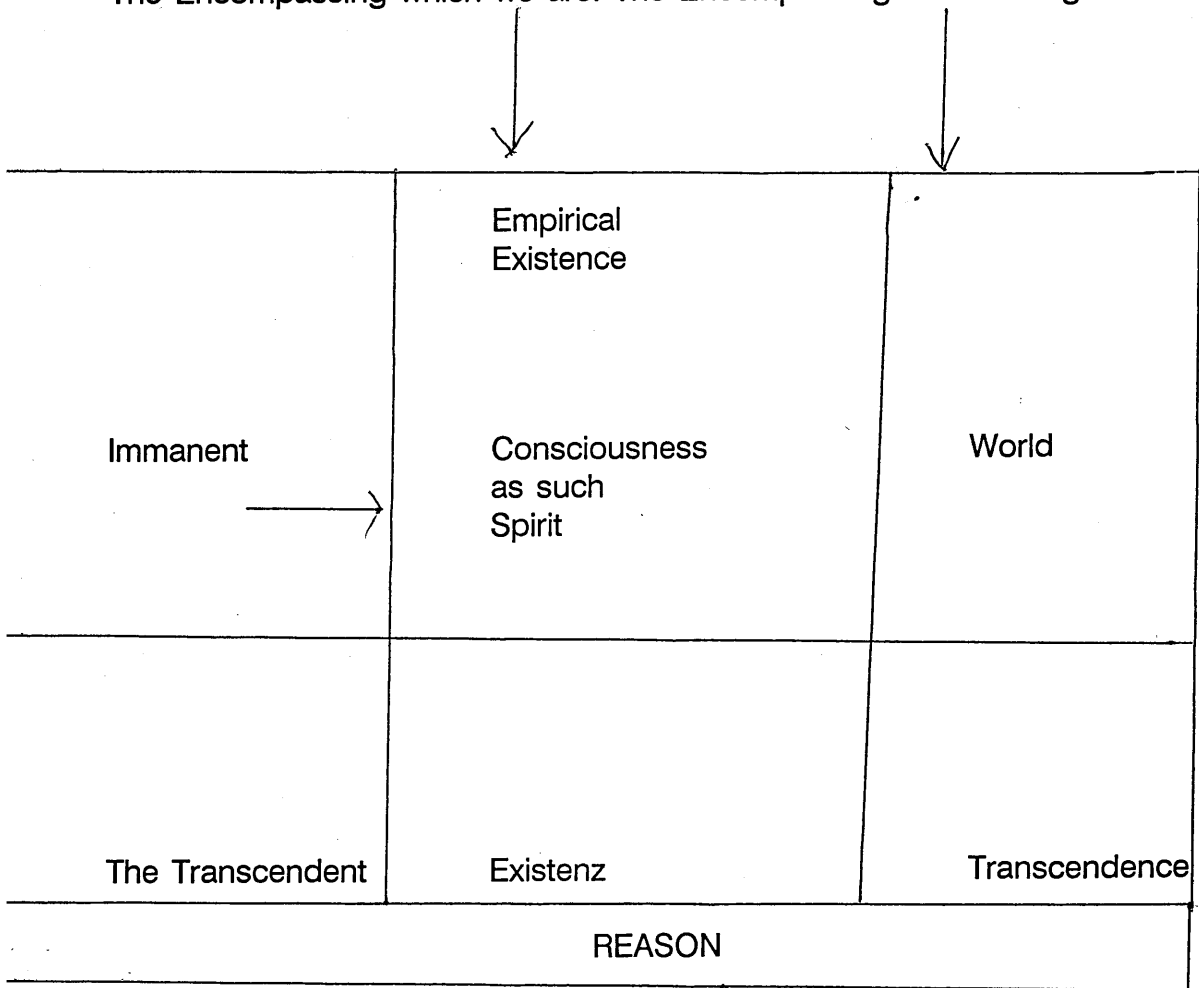
If this is the case, is it not surprising that Jaspers speaks of various modes of encompassing. If in transcending the subject object dichotomy our intention is precisely to suspend all variations and separations. Why talk of the various modes of encompassing? One would think that the very idea of encompassing is one is not doubted. However as Knauss points out "from the manner of the transcending movement there arise for us various manners of the Encompassing. These manners are not the Encompassing itself, but the expression of our finite approach to the Encompassing".³³ This is to say that multiplicity and variations are not the properties of the Encompassing in itself, but the expression of our finite approach to it. The idea of the Encompassing though developed fully in Jaspers' Vernunft und Existenz and in von der wahrheit has been present at least implicitly from the earliest of his works. However, from what has been said, the modes of Encompassing arise from the different manners of approaching it. Fundamentally our approach according to Jaspers can take two opposite directions. Our transcending effort may go towards either Being itself or ourselves. It is for this reason that Jaspers distinguishes two modes of the Encompassing. The Encompassing that we are and the Encompassing of Being itself. The Encompassing that the self is as immanence comprises empirical existence, consciousness as such, and spirit. The Encompassing the Being is as immanence, the world. The Encompassing that Self is as transcendent, Existenz and the Encompassing that Being is as transcendent, Transcendence. To use a familiar phrase, one

could call these the subjective and objective dimensions of the Encompassing. This of course is a misnomer. Added to this is reason which acts to bind the modes together.

Below is the Diagram that Jaspers uses to put across his point³⁴.

Diagram

The Encompassing which we are. The Encompassing which Being is.



The bond of all the modes of Encompassing within us.

In the Encompassing that we are, we see ourselves as empirical existence, consciousness as such and the spirit, but the Encompassing that we are is transcended when the question is asked if this is the whole of being itself. If being itself is that in which everything that is for us must become present, then it might be thought that this appearance for us is in fact all being. It is this type of thinking that prompts Nietzsche to conceive all being as interpretation and our being as interpretative. But for Jaspers, "the question does not stop with the limits of our knowledge of things, nor in the inwardness of the limiting consciousness of the Encompassing which we are. Rather this Encompassing which I am and know as empirical existence, consciousness as such, and spirit, is not conceivable in itself but refers beyond itself".³⁵

The Encompassing that we are, that is empirical existence, consciousness as such and spirit are all modes which indicate what we are in reality. However, we know that man is much more than reality. That mode which indicates that man is not only reality but also potentially, Jaspers calls Existenz. We are never Existenz in the mode of reality but in the mode of potentiality. As Existenz we never become objects to ourselves as compared to other modes of the Encompassing. Existenz does not become appearance for what appears, appears as reality. Existenz for that kind of thinking that knows only reality is nothing but a fabricated illusion. Existenz cannot be object while the

other modes of the Encompassing can. Thus Jaspers says, "While more empirical existence, consciousness as such, and spirit all appear in the world and become scientifically investigable realities. Existenz is the object of no science".³⁶ Existenz then can be seen as the capacity of man to transcend that meets transcendence. This is to say that Existenz is the link between the Encompassing that we are and the Encompassing that Being itself is. The Encompassing that we are participates in the Encompassing that Being is and this participation is through Existenz. Existenz then becomes the base which relates immanence to transcendence.

Existenz is not transcendence but without transcendence there could be not Existenz or could we say there would be no meaning to Existenz. Existenz bring to real the being of transcendence.

Earlier in the work notably from the work of Smith, we had suggested that the root of religion could be in transcendence, can we now see anything in Jaspers' treatment of transcendence that will aid the phenomenology of religion? Applying the same principles that makes the being of transcendence appear may help us discover the phenomenon of religion or at least adumbrate which way is the right way to proceed. Without going into details about Existenz, we can now proceed to ask the question that could bring us nearer to our reason for looking into the work of Jaspers. How does

Existenz make known the being of transcendence? What is the relationship between existence, Existenz and transcendence?

While the Encompassing that we are as empirical existence, consciousness as such and spirit can be said to be static, Existenz can be seen as pure motion because of its movement towards potentialities. This means that conceptions which are pure motions can be said to be 'concepts of Existenz'. Jaspers' scheme of these concepts is based on Kant's categories of understanding. Both require the medium of time, but objective time is to be distinguished from existential time. We need not go into detail concerning the relationship between Kant and Jaspers at this point. Jaspers set forth the following concepts "The rules of reality are causal laws; whatever happens has its cause or effect in the course of time. Existential reality, on the other hand, is self originating as it appears to itself in time - in other words, it is free...Substantially? is temporal inertia, the quality of enduring, of being neither increased nor decreased, while Existenz begins and vanishes in the phenomenality of time...The mutual causality of substances, the Kantian reciprocity of community, confronts communication between self beings".³⁷

For Jaspers, the concepts of Existenz, that is to say, Freedom, historicity, communication and so forth are not the formal conditions of objectivity or of the subject-object dichotomy itself. As Young-Bruehl Elizabeth puts it "The

mysterious root of intuition and understanding which Kant sought in his mediating schematism of imagination is, so to speak, on a different level from the Existenz which Jaspers appealed to with his concepts - his existential schematism. The existential schematism mediates between the inexpressible self-certainty of Existenz (as opposed to the certainty of objective knowledge) and elucidative reason".³⁸ For Jaspers, reason without content would be mere understanding and since the concepts of understanding are empty without intuition, it can be said that reason is hollow without Existenz. "Reason is not itself as mere understanding, but only in the acts of possible Existenz...Existenz becomes clear through reason, reason only has content through Existenz".³⁹

Jaspers uses the concept of boundary situation to explain what he means by non-objective thinking and says "To experience boundary situations is the same as Existenz".⁴⁰

What then are the boundary situations which he sees as equal to Existenz? They are situations which can only be elucidated, "Situations like the following: that I am always in situations; that I cannot live without struggling and suffering; that I cannot avoid guilt, that I must die - these are what I call boundary situations".⁴¹

Having said this much about Existenz, we now ask what its relationship is to transcendence. We have traced Existenz to what Jaspers calls a boundary situation. Boundary situation is equal to Existenz because it is in motion and points to transcendence. Elsewhere we have said that Existenz has meaning because of the being of transcendence. This is an indication that there is a movement from transcendence to Existenz and to empirical existence. If both Existenz and transcendence cannot be objectified, how then does Existenz, a non-objectifiable mode, make known the being of transcendence that is equally non-objectifiable? The solution to this problem might be a pointer to us as how to proceed with the phenomenology of religion.

To tackle this problem, Jaspers proposes transcendental metaphysics in place of an ontology. This metaphysics will preserve the original awareness of the fragmented character of reality and will not try to discuss being as if being too were structured in an objective system. It will recognise that objects are not justifiable by objective knowledge, that is, it cannot become the correlate of an intentional group.

Paradoxically however, it is the awareness of this limitation that permits us to go beyond boundary situation which tends towards transcendence. Existenz at the boundary situation meets transcendence. How does it gain access to transcendence?

Existenz gains access to transcendence through taking as ciphers certain of the representations, images, and thoughts that appear as objects as understanding. While anything can be a cipher, the ciphers that we employ always derive in large part from our historical situation. Ciphers have a kind of meaning, but they never mean any specific objects for what they refer to cannot be objectified. A similar account which Sartre gives of 'natural symbols' illuminates - though it could never confirm Jaspers' account.

Put in the words of Mary Warnock, "It is not at all difficult to understand what Sartre means by a thing being a natural symbol. There are many things especially perhaps natural phenomena, like sea or trees, which seem to us immediately to signify something, and about which it would be very reasonable to say that the distinction between the thing and its meaning disappears".⁴² While facts are the same for all, ciphers like natural symbols, are personal and unstable, and only meaningful or transparent to those who have learnt to respond to them. In order to explain ciphers, Jaspers distinguishes symbolization from all the other means of indirect signification, such as signs, images, similes, comparison and allegories.

The basic difference between symbolization and these other ways of indirect representation lies for him in the manner in which all of them relate to that which is signified through them. Whereas the latter group more or less

translate into pictures or gestures, something which can itself be grasped intellectually as an objective meaning, a symbol simply presents a dimension of reality which is inaccessible to any other mode of apprehension.⁴³ A symbol is specifically an "objectification of the non-objectifiable".⁴⁴ As such, it stands for a reality from which it is radically different yet inseparable in the sense that the reality symbolized is nowhere outside the symbol. It is the symbol alone that mediates its presence. In order to fill this mediatory role, the self-consistency of symbol must become transparent. It must vanish in its own right and become a pure medium. Since symbols stand for non-objective meaning, it cannot be translated or interpreted except through other symbols.⁴⁵ This idea is like Jaspers first principles of interpretation of symbols. It governs the whole of his hermeneutic doctrine. The fact that the interpretation of a symbol is itself symbolic has far reaching implications for Jaspers' views on reason and rationality. Among other things, it already suggests that the aim of metaphysics is not to convey objective knowledge about ultimate realities, but to mediate the profoundly human experience of relatedness to transcendence.⁴⁶ To put it another way, the primary purpose of metaphysics, and of philosophy in general, is not cognitive but experimental or existential. Metaphysical reflection is the work of reason, but reason understood in its infrangible relationship to Existenz.

For Jaspers all metaphysical expressions are symbols rather than concepts.

They are not correlates of intentional consciousness. They speak only to absolute consciousness "In the disappearance of their objective character, they make authentic being manifest to Existenz".⁴⁷ Symbolization in general is understood to be in indirect mode of signifying something. The reality symbol is usually something absent, complex, or abstract, so that it can be only in this indirect way. In this, symbol already differs from diagrams and models, whose reference is open to direct access (at least in principle) but for reason of style or convenience, it is presented indirectly. Diagrams and models are abbreviations and stand for the really signified. Symbols on the other hand incorporate in themselves the reality symbolized. Within the general class of symbols, Jaspers further distinguishes between symbols that can be converted through proper steps of interpretation into univocal designations and symbolism that can be interpreted only through the conveyance of other symbols. He calls them interpretative (deutbar) and intuitive (schaubar) symbols respectively. It is important to note that ciphers belong to the latter group.⁴⁸

The distinguishing factor between the two kinds of symbols is seen to consist in their different relationship to ultimate interpretation. On asking what a given symbol means ultimately, the first type of symbol names such as ultimate. Taking a general theory of myths for example, this would tell us that a given symbol in myths, re-enacts such a nature, or such a natural process, or such

and such gestures. The common feature of these modes of symbol interpretation is found in the fact whatever they designate as the ultimate is no longer considered a symbol of something else; but reality itself.⁴⁹ By making the complete tour of all the manifestations of this ultimate, they are able to show by what surveyable process this ultimate diversifies itself. Whatever its nature may be, the ultimate reality is univocally determined in the end.⁵⁰ This kind of symbolism exists for general consciousness and serves the ends natural knowledge. It is objective and its meaning is univocal. Paradoxically though, at the end of the manifold interpretation these symbols remain polyvalent and indefinite, insofar as they signify any and everything.⁵¹

In such a system of interpretation, there is nothing to which the symbol of ultimate reality would be inapplicable. The meaning of intuitive symbolism or cipher sign cannot be resolved into univocal meaning. In a cipher, sign and the signified are fused in such a way that their separation is impossible. "Since a cipher is always the unity of immanent and transcendent dimensions, it ceases to be a cipher whenever it is taken for a univocal symbolism of transcendence. The separation of symbol from what is symbolised is impossible in cipher-script. It renders transcendence present but it is not interpretable".⁵²

Cipher is being which makes transcendence present without making the being

of transcendence object being and without making the being of Existenz subject being. The cipher and the cipher-script are inseparable. This is because they are more of meanings than a set of objects, and more of a movement of subjects than a knowledge of something. Ciphers keep alive the continuous suspended relationship between Existenz and transcendence. At a glance, cipher can be said to be that of symbolization which objects acquire when they become expressions of transcendence for us. Their symbolic character is such that 'symbol of...' cannot be completed properly by designating an ultimate reality of meaning. The completion of the phrase can only be done by further symbols. Whereas in ordinary symbolization all the elements of interpretation converge towards a certain univocity. The elements of cipher reading leads towards an 'unknowable univocity', "a cipher can always be read differently".⁵³ The reading of ciphers have no final act even for the same person let along a universal conclusion for everyone.⁵⁴ There is nothing in the world which is not capable of becoming a cipher All ciphers point beyond themselves and this veiled language of cipher is cipher-script, the cryptography of ciphers, the language of transcendence. It is that which can no longer be interpreted in terms of another. If there were no ciphers, then there would also be no transcendence. For Jaspers, cipher is the only way through which transcendence opens for our existential consciousness. It is the sign that for existenz transcendence is veiled but not absent. It is true that everything in the world hides itself in transcendence,

transcendence for him is a presence which would disclose itself through ciphers, making the ciphers a language of transcendence. Ciphers on the other hand, cannot be identified with that which appears to us. What appears to us can become an object of the empirical existence and consciousness as such. Ciphers according to him are rather the language of transcendence spoken through the appearance, not to consciousness as such, but to Existenz. What consciousness as such is to the empirical world, Existenz is to the world of ciphers. While consciousness as such is the mediator between our empirical existence and the world; the reading of cipher is the mediator between Existenz and transcendence. Cipher stands for meaning that every particular entity is more than we can experience about it and in that sense, it is always more than itself.

Cipher reading can only take place if there is an awareness of the different levels of language. For Jaspers, there are three such levels. Firstly, there is the immediate incommunicable language of transcendence, the experience of which cannot be verified. Any such attempt to verify it falsifies the original awareness. It is the metaphysical experience prior to its predication and formulation, an experience which becomes falsified when formulated in mere objectivity or mere subjectivity. Secondly, the mediated universal in the form of myth, revelation (religion) and the actual mythical. In this language, compared with the first, the metaphysical and the prelogical experience

becomes formulated, structured and mediated in the great classical myths especially the Greek myths, and in revelation encountered in great world religions. "Echoing the language of transcendence which is audible only in the immediacy of a fleeting moment, man produces other languages in the form of pictures and images, these languages try to communicate what has been heard. Next to the language of Being comes the language of man".⁵⁵

In this language, the immediate experience of Being passes into mythical transmission in a cipher form. For man to express this, he does it in terms of sublime and the sacred. For Jaspers this expression takes place on three levels corresponding to three cycles of mythology, religion and Art. Whereas the first language is immediate and personal, the second is perpetuated through the historical tradition and community. The myth is the will to communicate transcendence through specific forms which bring transcendence more close but at the same time falsifies it. Jaspers sees the typical characteristics of myth in Greek mythology. In this the transcendent and the natural elements are not yet separated. The Greek Gods for instance are still part of this world. Nevertheless, as social figures alongside the natural reality, they supplement and personify natural reality in order to indicate their transcendent dimensions for man. They add human accent to the language of nature. In the second kind of human language, the language of religion, the transcendent and the natural aspects of reality are strictly distinguished, or set apart. The latter is entirely overshadowed by the former.

For the religious mind, the natural takes the second place to the supernatural. True reality, so to say is above the natural. It exists in another world. From this other dimension the supernatural or the divine reality enters into this world in the form of visible signs (revelations) and wonders as invisible grace. Throughout history, alleged revelations, mythical formulations and speculative constructs have been ways of knowing which attempted to give meaning to deity as personality. Religion in this case tries to listen to another - worldly reality which, so the claim goes, has disclosed itself in direct revelation. But whether revelation is regarded as accomplished or as a continuous process, the world drama is assumed to derive its real meaning not from within itself, but from this other world.

The actual mythical type, typical of art which can take the form of an aesthetic experience is neither mere empirical existence nor authentic transcendence. It is the merging of the actual and the transcendent. For Jaspers, this is illustrated in the work of Van Gogh. In his work landscapes, things, and persons in their actual presence at the same time become mythical. If the content of sensory experience does not give rise to transcendence, it is the case that under certain conditions, it awakens passionate desires or longings which must find a different form of response or expression. Its passion is not to transcend things into new dimensions or ciphers. The language of Art is

said to be the highest form of mythical communication because, by an almost complete circle, it returns to the original language of Being, to all but absorbed in it.

In contrast to the immediate cipher language of Being, myth in general is mediated language of tradition and shared inheritance. As such, it possesses a greater degree of internal unity and universality than the first language. This universality nevertheless is not absolute. For Jaspers there are no universal myths, no prime religious patterns, no uniform vision in art. The multiplicity of intuitive ciphers is replaced here by a multiplicity of traditions; the first reply of man to the appeal of transcendence is already broken up into several languages.

Myths and religions are integral elements in the life of a cultural community. Each myth and religion is lodged in its own language and tradition. Inside each language there reigns a certain relative universality of belief which permits its adherents to comprehend the myth in or more or less the same way. Belonging to that community of belief is essential for the understanding of its myths.

Having discussed the first two ways of man's response to transcendence that is the immediate and mediated language, we can mention at least in passing

what Jaspers calls the third language. This is the language of metaphysical speculation. For Jaspers the language of metaphysical speculation attempts to read and communicate the original cipher script through systematic formulations. The cipher script is transformed into a new cipher of speculative thought. In so doing it would think transcendence as analogous to the observable and the logical in empirical existence. Like the second language, it becomes the mediator of that which can be grasped in immediacy. It is motivated by the persistent urge to establish the cipher as a speculative thought. There is always the tendency or the propensity to turn cipher into being itself and cipher reading into knowledge of being. There may be no need to say more here, but all that is clear is that the three languages of immediacy, of myth and revelation (mediated) and of theoretical speculation are different ways of approaching the ciphers. The first language, the immediate givenness of transcendence, does not follow any method. The other two have complex and elaborate methods.

As stated earlier in the second language, man's response to transcendence takes the form of myths, religion and art. It can however, be seen that the three languages examined can find expressions in religion. If in the second response, the mediate language passes into cipher, it then means that myth, religion and art are ciphers. From our studies we have come to see that all ciphers are ciphers of transcendence. Of the three in this language of

response, religion is the one that can accommodate at the same time myth and art. We can talk about both religious art and religious myth. Without prejudice to the definition of religion which we have not given anywhere in this work, we could say that religion in this context is a way in which men have always given expressions both to their own transcendence and the transcendence of being beyond the natural world. Here being beyond the world should not be understood to mean the objectification of transcendence nor 'Supreme Being' as is common in theistic conceptions. This is because reality as we have come to believe is more than an objective knowledge reveals it transcends all the immanent levels of conceptual thought which in turn may be viewed as appearances of transcendence.

From the work so far, we have come to the view that transcendence is grasped by man through ciphers which could take as their medium anything in the universe. If religion according to Jaspers is a cipher, and all ciphers are ciphers of transcendence. Could the understanding of ciphers not pave the way to the understanding of the nature of religion? If religion is a cipher and a cipher has all the characteristics we have indicated above, is it any wonder then that religion has existed as long as human beings and has varied as much as it has? This approach may aid us in the search for a way forward in the phenomenology of religion. What then has Jaspers to say about religion as it is today.

Karl Jaspers and Religion.

We begin our discussions of Jaspers and religion with two quotations "Religion is no enemy of philosophy, but something that essentially concerns it and troubles it".⁵⁶

Again, "Jaspers, this philosopher, scientist and social scientist is single-minded in exposing and denouncing all forms of objectification when they are applied to transcendence".⁵⁷ The two quotations show what Jaspers thinks of religion and what is to be his treatment of it.

As we proceed in the work, we should bear in mind that both religion and philosophy of Karl Jaspers have to do with existential situations. One familiar with the philosophy of Jaspers can hardly be surprised at what he says about religion for the treatment of religion is an extension of his philosophy. As a philosopher, Jaspers cannot abstract himself from the position from which he addresses religion. His philosophy is not neutral because knowingly or unknowingly, every philosophy of Existenz is said to stand on the territory of what one would call religious inquiry. "What is referred to in mythical terms as soul and God and in philosophical language as Existenz and transcendence is not of this world".⁵⁸ Both religion and philosophy share a common language.

Most of the confusions that have arisen between the traditional conception of transcendence and Jaspers' understanding of transcendence can be attributed to the problem of communication. Jaspers, in a bid to make himself understood, uses language that seems purely theist. In many places, he identifies God with transcendence in order to make himself understood. The basis of Jaspers' criticism of religion is his conception of freedom. "The man who attains true awareness of freedom gains certainty of God...The highest freedom is experienced in freedom from the world, and this freedom is a profound bond with transcendence".⁵⁹ What then is transcendence? Jaspers answers "Transcendence beyond the world or before the world is called God".⁶⁰

Any one reading the work of Jaspers superficially might be tempted to conclude that Jaspers uses the word transcendence in a religious sense. It is however clear that he wants to reject immanence both as a view of man and a general world-view. If this is to be understood, he has to resort to religious language by speaking comprehensively about God, whose being is the rejection of immanence. It is then certain that Jaspers' use of religious language is for the sake of communication. "Those who respond to the language about the soul of man or the being of God are not likely to fall into a purely immanentist view of reality".⁶¹ He is of the view that it is for this

reason that Jaspers appears like "a defender of religion against its detractors".⁶² Though apparently Jaspers tended to be in agreement with the traditionalist who identify transcendence and God, the fact remains that for Jaspers transcendence is different.

Jaspers' view of transcendence is neither the unknown x of the Kantian nouema nor the transcendence of traditional theology. For the latter, transcendence is inescapably related to revelation and associates it with the idea of movement from the unknown to the known, from God to man. Jaspers' use of transcendence moves in the opposite direction, namely from experience to that which is unknown and concealed, yet makes itself present in everything and everywhere. Theology places the initiative of disclosure of the being of transcendence on transcendence. Jaspers on the other hand believes that the disclosure of the being of transcendence arises out of human impulse, initiative and achievement. At a certain level, both theology and the philosophy of Jaspers run in parallel but not for long.

Jaspers sees the chief defect of religion as the tendency to objectify transcendence. For Jaspers transcendence cannot become an object of thought. "Religion contrasted with philosophy reveals the following characteristics; Religion has its cults, is bound up with a peculiar community of men, arising from cult, and its is inseparable from myth. Religion always

embodies man's practical relation to the transcendent, in the shape of something holy in the world, as delimited from the profane or unholy".⁶³ This localises transcendence, the absence of such localization implies the absence of religion. Philosophy on the other hand knows no cult, no community, no priesthood, no entity invested with a sacred character and set apart from other existent in the world.

A religion is of historical magnitude, a stable, continuous, authoritarian system. To really understand fully philosophy's opposition to religion one must begin with the sociological wrappings of religion, the cult which makes transcendence into a sort of real presence. Through the cult, transcendence falls into the circle of objectivity, this of course is abhorrent to Jaspers. In calling religion the supreme objectivity. Jaspers criticism of religion becomes more severe than that of Hegel, who placed religion among the forms of objective spirit, but saw in it at least a moment of absolute spirit.

Jaspers does not doubt the importance of religion. "Almost the whole of mankind, as far as historical memory extends, has lived religiously, and this is an indication that can scarcely be ignored, of the truth and central importance of religion".⁶⁴ For him both philosophy and religion have the same source by they arrive at different conclusions. For example "What religion localizes in a specific place, can for philosophy be present everywhere

and always...Philosophy has no rites, no roots in a primitive mythology. Men take it from a free tradition and transform it as they make it their own. Although pertaining to man as man, it remains the concern of individuals. Religion is intent upon embodying its truth in tangible symbols, philosophy pursues only effective objective certainty".⁶⁵ The two however can be useful to each other. Referring to the work which philosophy can do for religion, Jaspers claims that "Philosophy should do its level best to bring reason into religions thinking of the churches, so that it may become believable to the informed masses".⁶⁶ From this the usefulness of philosophy cannot be doubted. Though the manifestations of religion and philosophy seem to clash, there are many areas of contact, notwithstanding mutual suspicion. "To religion the God of the philosophers seem threadbare, pale, empty; it disparagingly calls the philosophical state of mind 'deism'; to philosophy the tangible symbols of religion seem like deceptive veils and misleading simplifications, religion denounces the God of philosophy as a mere abstraction, philosophy distrusts the religious images of God as seductive idols, magnificent as they may be".⁶⁷ This notwithstanding, Jaspers sees the origin of the Western idea of God in both Greek philosophy and the Old Testament. Here a good deal of work of abstraction is done but in different ways.

The rise of monotheism in both Greek philosophy and the Old Testament is

seen thus "In Greek philosophy monotheism arose as an idea, it was postulated from ethical considerations, it imposed itself on the mind in an atmosphere of philosophic serenity. It did not set its imprint upon masses of men, but upon individuals".⁶⁸ This resulted in men that have what he calls 'a high type of free philosophy'.

Contrasted with the Old Testament however "Monotheism grew up in the passion of battle for the pure, the true, the one God...This cult of the one, living God was won in the battle against the Baals, against immanent religion with its shallow optimism, its festivals and orgies, its self-complacency and moral indifference".⁶⁹ The God meant here cannot be objectified hence "This true God suffers no image and likeness, sets no store by cult and sacrifice, by temp and rites and laws, but only by righteous actions and love of our fellow men (Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah)".⁷⁰ It follows that the God of the Old Testament is not based on the development of an idea "but upon the word of God, upon God himself, who was experienced in the word which the prophet imparted as the word of God".⁷¹ Here the difference between philosophy and religion can be seen in these modes of God's presence that is to say, these two modes described.

For Jaspers it is the force of God's reality in the mind of the prophet not the power of the idea that brought forth the monotheism of the Old Testament.

The coincidence of the two monotheisms to Jaspers is 'miraculous'. The 'one' of philosophy cannot be said to be the 'one' of religion. However, for centuries these two ideas of monotheism have dominated the Western idea of God and they are seen to interpret each other. This interpretation "was possible because the faith of the prophets effected an abstraction that is analogous to philosophical abstraction".⁷² This notwithstanding, Jaspers sees prophetic faith as more powerful than the philosophical idea "because it arises from the direct experience of God. But in intellectual clarity it is inferior to philosophy hence it was lost in the subsequent religious development, even in the bible".⁷³

Jaspers sees another area of contact between religion and philosophy in prayer. Contrasting cult with prayer, Jaspers views the cult as acts of the community and prayer an individual's act. He sees cult as existing everywhere while prayer is here and there in history. In the bible it becomes distinct to Jeremiah. The liturgy in which the cult is embodied he sees as containing a number of texts called prayers because they "invoke, praise, and supplicate the godhead".⁷⁴ Due to their long history, the texts become authoritative and permanent. This of course is not the same with prayer which is individual and existentially present. If it is as a subordinate element of the cult, "it is performed by the individual in a fixed form and then he remains entirely within the sphere of religion".⁷⁵ However, if it is to be really

personal and primal, it stands according to him in the frontier of philosophy. It becomes philosophy in the moment when it is divested of any pragmatic relation to the godhead or the desire to influence the godhead for practical ends. At the moment of contemplation prayer shares the same ground with philosophy.

The event of revelation which religion places at the centre of cult appears to Jaspers essentially as a way of localizing transcendence hence guaranteeing transcendence which subsequently persists among men by means of authoritarian instructions. The content of religion is derived from revelation. This implies that the content is not valid in itself but only with the community, the congregation, the church which becomes its guarantor. The word of God lends authority to certain human words which hence forth release the anguish of decision through objective consolation. "Revelation is a direct communication or act of God in space and time, definitely placed in history. It is regarded as a reality that has a profanely historic side but is essentially sacred history seen only by the believer. To the believer, the sacred and the profane history coincide".⁷⁶ Elsewhere Jaspers sees revelation as "the immediate utterance of God, localized in time and place and valid for all men, through word, commandment, action and event".⁷⁷ So for the believer "any attempt to arrive at God by thought is vain, and that man knows God and can know God only through revelation".⁷⁸ So God gave the law, sent the

prophets and he descended in the form of a servant to redeem us on the cross. Revelation seen this way however, has definitely a mundane form. Once the facts are stated it deteriorates into finiteness and man in the use of his reason and his understanding can make of it what it will in trying to bring it across in speech the meaning is perverted. What is said is not what is meant because the "word of man is not the word of God".⁷⁹ The God man case of the Council of Nicea is a case in point but there are many examples in traditional theology. For Jaspers that part of revelation that concerns man as man becomes a content of philosophy and as such is valid without revelation. While Jaspers can accept revelation as a disclosure of transcendence somehow, he does not agree with the 'Almighty acts of God'. He sees similarities between ciphers⁸⁰ and revelation, and takes time to distinguish between biblical faith and ecclesiastical religion. For him the elements of the biblical faith provide powerful ciphers of transcendence.

The embodiment of the commandments which Yahweh gave to Moses and the children of Israel is for Jaspers, one of the most awesome ciphers of biblical belief. "Now when all the people the thunderings and lightnings and the sound of the trumpet and the mountains smoking, the people were afraid and trembled; and they stood afar off, and said to Moses, 'You speak to us, and we will hear; but let not God speak to us, lest we die'. And Moses said to the people, 'Do not fear; for God has come to prove you, and that the fear

of him may be before your eyes, that you may not sin'. And the people stood afar off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was".⁸¹ From what we know of Jaspers, transcendence can no longer be transcendence when captured in images, "we understand its language only as ciphers". However, transcendence itself is to be "beyond all ciphers".⁸² Even though God does not permit the use of images, as human beings, certain things make his presence obvious. Though He is not embodied in anything, He is recognized as Jaspers says "Wondrous the happenings on Sinai. The commandment is: No image or likeness, therefore, no embodiment of God. Nevertheless bodily happenings take the place: volcanic phenomena, Moses' entry into the thick of darkness of the cloud, his communication of the Ten Commandments. But God himself is not embodied. He assumes no shape. The People do not see and hear him".⁸³ The cipher is said to remain when the embodiment drops away from us. Sinai is one example of ciphers. For Jaspers "the science of religion and mythology collects ciphers and classifies them into types. It shows us the transformation of the gods. Yahweh the war God of the song of Deborah is not the God before Job appears as plaintiff, and not the God to whom Jesus prays".⁸⁴ Against the background of comparable universals we see the always individual, incomparable figures of the past; besides those of the Bible, first of all the world of Greek gods, then of the Indian, Chinese, and the Nomadic myths. Ciphers like languages have their origin in tradition. They are appropriated

not invented. This could be the possible explanation of the reason for every culture having its own cipher of transcendence which for that culture embodies what it regards as truth. When man in his freedom experiences transcendence as authentic reality, he needs ciphers to elucidate it. Perhaps this will bring us nearer to discovering the root of religion.

From what has been said, it is likely that what in the present day we regard as religion may be a cipher. And if all ciphers are ciphers of transcendence. How then should we approach the phenomenology of religion?

NOTES

1. This account is based largely in part upon E. B. Asthon's translation of the Philosophische Autobiographie" in Karl Jaspers Werk and Wirkung (Munich R. Piper 1943) and Felix Kaufmann's translation of "Uber meine philosophie" Rechenschaft und Ausblick (Munich R. Piper 1941).
2. Philosophical memoir, p.267.
3. Jaspers K, Rechenschaft and Ausblick (Munich: Piper Verlag 1958) 2nd edition p.386.
4. Jaspers Philosophical Autobiography in Schlipp. The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers (New York 1957) p.18.
5. Samay Sebastian, Reason Revisited: The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers (Gill and McMillan 1971) p.xvi.
6. Lauer Quentin, The Triumph of Subjectivity (New York 1958) p.119.
7. Ibid, p.125.
8. Ibid, p.121.
9. Jaspers K, Philosophy vol I, pp.104-108.
10. Kurt Hoffman, Basic Concepts of Jaspers Philosophy The Library of Living Philosophers vol. 9. p.98.

11. Samay Sebastian Opus cit. p.89.
12. Philosophy vol 1., p.91.
13. Ibid, p.91.
14. Ibid, p.89.
15. Loc. cit.
16. Dufrenne Mikel and Ricoeur Paul, Karl Jaspers et la philosophie de l'existence (Paris: Edition du Seuil 1947), p.81 note 4.
17. Samay Sebastian Op. cit. p.105.
18. Jaspers Karl, Von der Wahrheit, Philosophie Logik vol. (Munche: Piper Verlag, 1947) p.312.
19. Loc. cit.
20. Ibid, p.328.
21. Ibid, p.344.
22. Blackham H.J. Six Existentialist Thinkers (London 1961) p.47.

23. In the words of T. S. Elliot 'Little Gidding' (see complete poems and plays of T.S. Elliot, Published by Faber, London 1969 'we shall not form explanation and the end of all explanation will be to arrive where we started'.
24. In one of his rare references to Thomism, Jaspers charges that in that school "Particular and total knowledge are distinguished, but both are regarded as knowledge, whereas in the Kantian school, all knowledge is particular and belong to the world of appearance and total knowledge is impossible". Library of Living Philosophers p.800.
25. Jaspers on Science and Philosophy Library of Living Philosophers Op. cit. p.125.
26. Jaspers Karl and Bultmann Rudolf, Science and Philosophy: Jaspers: The Issues Clarified in Myth and Christianity An inquiry into the possibility of religion without myth (Noonday Press: New York 1960), pp.105-106.
27. Philosophy and Science Partisan Review xvi (1949) p.881.
28. Ibid.
29. Loc. cit.
30. Philosophy In the light of this question, the charge made by Heidegger namely that Jaspers had sidestepped the problem of Being altogether appears unfounded. Cf Bulletin de la societe Française de Philosophie xxxvii (1937) p.193.

31. Von der Wahrheit Philosophie Logik, vol. 1., p.36.
32. Der Philosophische Glaube p.28.
33. Gerhard Knauss, The Concept of Encompassing; Library of Living Philosophers Karl Jaspers p.152.
34. Von der Wahrheit p.50.
35. Jaspers Karl, Reason and Existenz p.59.
36. Ibid, p.6.
37. Karl Jaspers Basic Philosophical Writings Ed. E. Enrilich et Al.
38. Young-Bruehl Elizabeth, Freedom and Karl Jaspers Philosophy (Yale University Press 1981) pp.19-20.
39. Philosophy II, p.11.
40. Ibid, p.56.
41. Ibid, p.12.
42. See The Philosophy of Sartre (London Hutchenson 1965) p.104.
43. Philosophy III, p.16.

44. Loc. cit.
45. Loc. cit.
46. Loc. cit.
47. Philosophy I, p.33.
48. Philosophy III, p.147.
49. Ibid, p.145.
50. Ibid, p.147.
51. Ibid.
52. Loc. cit.
53. Ibid, p.149.
54. Ibid
55. Ibid, pp.131-132.
56. Jaspers K, The Perrenial Scope of Philosophy p.77.
57. Kee A. Transcendence and God in Being and Truth, Essays in Honour of John Macquarrie. Edited by Alistair Kee and Eugene T. Long. (S.C.M. Press Limited, 1986), p.70.

58. Philosophy vol. II, p.3.
59. Jaspers K. Way to Wisdom, p.45.
60. Perrenial Scope, p.34.
61. Kee A. Op. cit. p.71.
62. Ibid, p.72.
63. Perrenial Scope, p.78.
64. Ibid, p.79.
65. Ibid, p.79.
66. Jaspers, K. Philosophical Faith and Revelation, p.358.
67. Perrenial Scope, p.79.
68. Ibid, p.80.
69. Ibid.
70. Loc. cit.
71. Loc. cit.

72. Ibid, p.81.
73. Loc. cit.
74. Ibid, p.82.
75. Ibid.
76. Philosophical Faith and Revelation, p.56.
77. Perrenial Scope, p.83.
78. Loc. cit.
79. Ibid, p.84.
80. The issue of ciphers has been treated elsewhere in the work.
81. Exodus 20: 18-21 Quoted by Jaspers K, in Philosophy is for Everyman: A Short Course in Philosophical Thinking. Translated by R.F.C. Hull and Grete Wells (Hutchinson of London, 1969), p.87.
82. Ibid, p.88.
83. Loc. cit.
84. Ibid, p.89.

CHAPTER SIX

**SOME MODIFICATIONS IN THE APPLICATION OF HUSSERLIAN METHOD
IN THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF RELIGION.**

Modifications in the Application of the Method of Phenomenology to the Phenomenology of Religion.

As we draw near to the end of our investigations, it becomes increasingly clear that the phenomenological method which has been very useful in other fields of research has not been fruitful in the study of religion on account of the peculiar nature of religion. In this last chapter, we shall look at the possible modifications that can be carried out either in the concept of religion or that of phenomenology to make possible the application of the method in the phenomenology of religion.

In the first chapter, where the idea of phenomenology is discussed, it can be seen that though Husserl is responsible for the prominent place given to phenomenology, the works of Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and others seem to be the natural development of his phenomenology. Though opinions vary as to the truth and falsity of this statement, nevertheless, in this work, we shall take the phenomenological method as seen by Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty as a logical development of Husserl's work. Seen in this light, it is assumed that any one claiming to apply the phenomenological method can either appropriate the method as developed by Husserl or as understood by his successors. That is what we expect when we see the title of works on the phenomenology of religion.

It is however surprising that the works that hitherto go by that name seem to ignore this basic premise. The fact that phenomenology of religion as hitherto known has ignored the application of the phenomenological method has led to doubts as to the validity of its claim to be phenomenology. The excursus discusses this dilemma of the phenomenology of religion and comes up with a different historical background which might be responsible for the neglect. Without going into details that have been discussed in the excursus. The quotation below from Mircea Eliade can be helpful in establishing the fact that the phenomenology of religion as hitherto known does not set out to apply the phenomenological method as proposed by Husserl and other phenomenologists. In the Sacred and the Profane he says "The phenomenology of religion had its first authoritative representation in Gerardus van der Leeuw (1890-1950)".¹ Although Eliade is writing about the phenomenology of religion, he does not mention Husserl at all and he seems to ignore the fact that phenomenology has anything to do with him. Elsewhere C.J. Bleeker eager to distance the phenomenology of religion from that of Husserl says that phenomenology of religion is "an investigation into the structure and the significance of facts drawn from a vast field of the history of religion arranged in systematic order".² Raffaele Pettazzoni on the other hand is of the view that pure phenomenology has nothing to do with the phenomenology of religion. For him the aim of phenomenology of religion

is to "seek to co-ordinate religious data with one another, to establish relations and to group the facts according to these relations".³ These and other evidences described in the excursus indicate that the phenomenology of religion did not set out to appropriate the phenomenological method.

Since the phenomenology of religion, as hitherto known, does not use the phenomenological method as a way of approaching the religious issues, one comes to the conclusion that the phenomenology of religion that appropriates the principles of the phenomenological method is still to be done. If the phenomenology of religion is to be achieved, the essence of religion is to be established. This is because phenomenology as proposed by Husserl describes the essence-intuition of the phenomenon. In Husserl as stated in the first part of this work, the phenomenon which phenomenology describes is reached through the process of epoché and this is a state of consciousness. Since essence-intuition is necessary for phenomenology, discovering the nature of religion becomes necessary if our aim is to be achieved. The treatment of the phenomenologists of religion so far has not indicated the true nature of religion. This might be one reason for the failure to construct a proper phenomenology of religion. To describe the essential structure is one of the basic demands of phenomenology. For this, help is sought from fields other than the field of the general history of religion. This is necessary because an outside view is important if an overall view of a

subject is to be determined. As the works of Ludwig Feuerbach, Thomas Luckmann and Peter Berger show, religion is not identical with the institutionalized forms. It has a unique character and for that any attempt at the phenomenology of religion requires that the essential nature of religion be known. This is necessary because of Husserl's advice to the phenomenologists "To claim nothing that we cannot make essentially transparent to ourselves by references to consciousness..."⁴ Knowing the nature or the essence of religion then is bound to put the phenomenological method in the right direction to tackle the phenomenology of religion.

Wilfred Cantwell Smith's treatment of the history of the concept of religion soon makes it impossible to look for the essence of religion. He notes that the word religion has undergone certain transformation during the course of its history. This he says has led to the loss of the of the original meaning. Only by returning religion to its original meaning, according to him, are we able to make anything out of religion. Knowing that the work is looked at extensively in chapter four, we quote some part of his work to remind ourselves of his thoughts on the nature of religion. Of religion in general he says, "I mean rather that religion, and each of what used to be called 'the religions', is inherently human; and integrally so...It is not an entity to be postulated, one that can be legitimately conceived in itself or considered analytically. It is not a thing, but a quality; of personal life (both social and

individual)".⁵ Referring to other people's understanding of religion he says "...when one came to understand the data of other person's religious life not objectively but humanely, as symbols, not as objects of nature or of observation, merely, but as symbols of transcendence..."⁶, he is indicating that one should not look for the essence, for no single essence can be determined. Concluding, he points the way in which the misconception of religion has progressed through history. "What used to be the conceptual pattern, through which one looked, has become 'a religion', at which one looks. What used to be the context of transcendence, within which one responded, has become an empirical item among the several objects of one's inquisitive scrutiny, which some people 'believe' - while increasingly many do not: for what at that level are, quite apparently, almost good reasons".⁷ The indication here is that there has been a shift in the understanding of the word 'religion'. It has shifted from being a form of consciousness of transcendence to being an object of consciousness with which one aims to identify. As an object of consciousness, it is not surprising that the phenomenologists of religion have given us nothing other than the manifestations of religion. This makes the phenomenology of religion that appropriates the phenomenological method impossible. As an object of consciousness, the need to get to the essence becomes necessary for the application of the phenomenological method. Since arriving at the essence is an impossibility as no essence exists, the application of Husserlian principle stalls on account of the fact that

one cannot think of the essence - intuition where no essence exists. Seen as a form of consciousness of transcendence however, the phenomenology of religion can go further by-passing the manifestations which are inherent in religion as an object of consciousness. It is as a form of consciousness of transcendence that one can understand, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam for example being categorized as religion. Religion as a form of consciousness of transcendence makes its position unique and different from other fields where essences can be contemplated. Application of the phenomenological method in the description of the form of consciousness of transcendence which religion is becomes the beginning of the phenomenology of religion.

Having accepted religion as a form of consciousness of transcendence, the implication must be accepted that no one essence can be contemplated. Since this is the case, the phenomenological method advocated by Husserl has to be modified in order to approach the phenomenology of religion. Since we see modification or development of Husserl's idea in the works of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, we shall examine the way in which the phenomenological method as understood by these two scholars will be useful in the phenomenology of religion. Calling to mind what has been discussed about Heidegger and phenomenology, we can say that for Heidegger, phenomenology is a term which "expresses a maxim which can be formulated as 'To the things themselves'. It is opposed to all free-floating constructions

and accidental findings..."⁸ For him, however, the phrase 'back to the things themselves' does not mean to that stage in consciousness. If by advocating the need to go back the phenomenon he is in line with Husserl, he however has differed from him by not regarding the phenomenon at that stage in consciousness. Elsewhere Heidegger talks of phenomenology as not a 'standpoint' but as the way in which the research will be carried out. A phenomenon for him is that which shows itself or that which is manifested. It is also seen as an autonomous entity with power of its own prior to our thinking. It is the science of the phenomena. Phenomenology for him is our way to the ground, that is, to the phenomenon before being clouded by our natural conceptions. For Heidegger, the point of departure of this way to the ground which is phenomenology is the hermeneutic interpretation of Dasein, which is Being-there. For him it is phenomenology which seeks to delineate the structures and explicate the meaning of Being. As the interpretation of man in his historical existence is the point of departure of Heidegger's phenomenology, we shall see in what way this can be applied in the phenomenological description of the form of consciousness of transcendence which religion is. Before turning to the actual application of the Heideggerian modification of the phenomenological method, we shall once more recall the way Merleau-Ponty whose work is equally a development of Husserl is related to Husserl and Heidegger. For Merleau-Ponty, phenomenology is the study of essences. "But phenomenology is also a philosophy which puts essences

back into existence, and does not expect to arrive at an understanding of man and the world from any starting point other than that of their facticity".⁹ By saying that phenomenology is "a transcendental philosophy which places in abeyance the assertions arising out of the natural attitude, the better to understand them",¹⁰ he is in agreement with Husserl who regards the bracketing of the natural world as a necessary condition for arriving at the phenomenon. In referring to phenomenology as "a philosophy for which the word is always 'already there' before reflection begins as an inalienable presence",¹¹ he is almost echoing Heidegger. Without going further into the agreement and the disagreement of the phenomenologists, for this has already been discussed, it is clear that in spite of the differences that seem to emerge on the way to the phenomenon, the basic stratum, to the phenomena themselves remain the same. Phenomenology whether seen from Husserl's point of view or Heidegger's and Merleau-Ponty's point of view is phenomenology. If the phenomenology of religion is to be approached, one or the other of the methods has to be applied. Whichever is used however has relations to the other views. As said earlier, the phenomenology of religion as hitherto known has not appropriated either of these methods. In what way then can the phenomenological method be appropriated in the phenomenology of religion? This will be the beginning of our phenomenology of religion. Since the concept of religion which we have accepted as true for the purpose of this work does not arrive at any essence as a basis, our

phenomenology of religion should not aim at the description of essence-intuition, this in effect implies that we are bound to look for the modification in the works of Husserl if we are to proceed. At the thought of this our mind goes back to the phenomenological method as modified by Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. We have already seen Heidegger's phenomenology as a way of access to the ground whose point of departure is the hermeneutics of Dasein. Having said this, we now look for a way in which Dasein relates to the form of consciousness of transcendence which religion is. This will be the phenomenology of religion all be it as modified by Heidegger's understanding. It is this relationship between Heidegger's Dasein and Smith's form of consciousness of transcendence that takes us to the works of Karl Jaspers. Jaspers' works are chosen for reasons which are quite obvious. His interest in phenomenology as a method and in transcendence and religion makes his works important for consultation. Like a good number of philosophers, Jaspers' starting point is the problem of Being which he sees as all Encompassing. Jaspers divides this all Encompassing which Being is into two, namely the encompassing which we are as empirical existence, consciousness as such and spirit and the encompassing which Being is. This has been fully discussed in chapter five. The sketch on that part of this work tells the story of Jaspers' division of the Encompassing. As stated earlier, the point of departure of Heidegger's phenomenology is Dasein. The ground as we can see here is the form of consciousness of transcendence and the point

of departure is Dasein. From the work of Jaspers, it can be seen that Heidegger's Dasein is contained in the encompassing that we are. Taking this as another modification, we can now go on to see the way in which Dasein which is now seen in the encompassing that we are gains access to the ground. For Jaspers, the encompassing that we are is not all reality. Experience according to him shows this. There is something more than the reality which is seen in the encompassing that we are. That more in the encompassing that we are, that relates to it but is not part of it he calls Existenz. It relates the encompassing that we are to the encompassing that Being is as transcendence. It is not transcendence but cannot exist without transcendence. It relates the immanent to the transcendent. The qualities of Existenz have been fully discussed. It suffices however, to remind ourselves that we are never Existenz in the mode of reality but in the mode of potentiality. Existenz in the last analysis can be the capacity of man to transcend that meets transcendence. Existenz participates in transcendence, and transcendence is in a way present in Existenz. The implication of what we have been discussing is that the form of consciousness which religion is, is present in transcendence among other forms of consciousness. Since Existenz is potentiality, like transcendence it cannot be objectified. Acknowledging the present of Dasein in the encompassing that we are implies that it relates to both Existenz and transcendence. Since it is Existenz that relates the immanent to the transcendent, it implies that the description of

Existenz and its relationship to transcendence will pave the way to the description of that form of consciousness which religion is. It can be said that to do this is to do the phenomenology of religion. We already know that both transcendence and Existenz cannot be objectified. If Existenz makes real the presence of transcendence and both of them cannot be objectified, our problem now becomes how to objectify the non objectifiable. It is here that Jaspers comes up with an apparent solution. Existenz he says gains access to transcendence through taking as ciphers certain representations, images, and thoughts that appear as objects of understanding. While everything can be a cipher, most ciphers we employ derive from our historical situation. Continuing, it can be said that ciphers have a kind of meaning but they never mean any specific object for what they refer to cannot be objectified. Ciphers have been fully discussed in the work of Jaspers, but we should recall that while facts are the same for all, ciphers like natural symbols, are personal and unstable. They are only meaningful and transparent to those who have learnt to respond to them. From the foregoing, it can be seen that the form of consciousness which religion is fits well into the description of ciphers. It thus can be said that religion is a cipher of transcendence. The qualities of ciphers which we have already seen gives us the freedom to assert that only as a cipher of transcendence can religion be meaningful. Ciphers as said elsewhere do not exhaust transcendence. As a form of consciousness, individual interpretations and backgrounds can account for the varieties and

diversities in what comes to be called religion. No one cipher can claim finality, nor can any claim to be the cipher of transcendence in perpetuity. In this way, sacred objects, sacred acts, sacred places can be understood. Further, it can be seen that only as ciphers of transcendence can Buddhism, Christianity and Islam all claim to be religion.

It is also on this account that one cannot talk of the truth or falsity of any religion for the truth or the falsity depends upon the conformity or the non-conformity of the individual or the community to their interpretation of transcendence. From this our conclusion follows thus:

- 1) Phenomenology of religion has been inconclusive and inconsistent on account of the fact that it has never applied the phenomenological method as advocated by Husserl and expanded by his successors. This has left the phenomenology of religion on the level of yet another religious manifestation.
- 2) For a phenomenology of religion that appropriates the Husserlian principles to be possible as in other disciplines, certain modifications are necessary on account of the peculiar nature of religion.

The first is the redefinition of the concept of religion from being an object of

consciousness to being a form of consciousness of transcendence. This takes care of all that can at present be called religion.

Secondly, there is the need for the modification of Husserl idea of phenomenology. This is because, if religion is seen as a form of consciousness of transcendence, it therefore does not have and cannot have an essence which is necessary for the description of the essence-intuition which Husserl advocates. This leads to the natural modification of Husserl found in the works of Heidegger.

Thirdly, referring to the modification of the phenomenological method by Heidegger, a further modification is necessary if we are to arrive at the phenomenology of religion. This comes in relating the Dasein of Heidegger to the Encompassing that we are of Karl Jaspers. This enables us to relate Dasein to the form of consciousness of transcendence, the outcome becomes the beginning of the phenomenology of religion which is seen as the phenomenology of the cipher of transcendence.

NOTES

1. Eliade Mircea, The Sacred and the Profane pp.202-203.
2. Bleeker C.J. "The Relation of the History of Religions to Kindred Religious Sciences, Particularly Theology, Sociology of Religion, Psychology of Religion and Phenomenology of Religion". Numen 1 (1954) p.148.
3. Pettazzoni Raffaele, "History and Phenomenology in the Science of Religions", in Essays in the History of Religions, p.215.
4. Husserl Edmund, Ideas pp. 176-177.
5. Smith Wilfred Cantwell, Towards a World Theology p.53.
6. Ibid, p.89.
7. Ibid, p.93.
8. Heidegger Martin, Being and Time, p.50.
9. M. Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, p.vii.
10. Loc. cit.
11. Loc. cit.

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