

Modern Philosophy – Topic No.13.

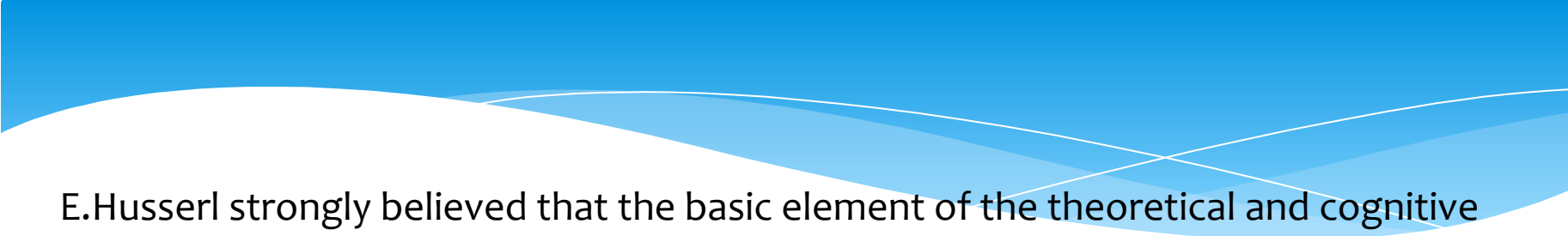
Edmund Gustav Albrecht Husserl; April 8, 1859, Prostějov, Moravia, Austrian Empire – April 26, 1938, Freiburg, Germany) was a philosopher and mathematician who is deemed the founder of phenomenology. He broke with the positivist orientation of the science and philosophy of his day, yet he elaborated critiques of historicism and of psychologism in logic. Not limited to empiricism, but believing that experience is the source of all knowledge, he worked on a method of phenomenological reduction by which a subject may come to know directly an essence.

In his philosophy E.Husserl put forward a motto: “Back to the things!” We should understand it as the reverse to the real state of things. The followers of Kant guessed that it was possible to construct the reality by means of notions while the neopositivists based their suppositions on the experimental perception. E.Husserl worked out some direct insight into the matter.

With the critical approach to the two quite approximate and wrong judgments he confronts the two notions: Knowledge (Gnosis) and Opinion (Doxa). The crisis of the European culture was seen by him as the lack of the obvious difference between these two notions. Opinion according to E.Husserl was clouded and divorced notion from a human. As something confronting to opinion he puts forward the Greek word “theory” with the primary as “clear and objective contemplation. It is only the based on the theory can be of help in getting to the universal extent of the reality.

His created objective was the purification of the human consciousness and getting to its virgin structures not related to the human experience. The target was the obvious, direct and straightforward phenomena of the consciousness. Phenomenology as his teaching was directed at ideal essence which was given by the intuition. The ideal essence is conveyed through the language. It is the track for emotions and feelings that come to a human soul.


The peculiar feature of the pure consciousness is its **intentionality** (intentio – Lat. – direction). At any moment the consciousness is directed at something, such a thing as consciousness in general terms does not exist. Perception, memory, imagination, desire, form of thinking have the “thing” incentive. Intentionality fills up the consciousness with different senses and contents. In everyday life a human does not notice how he imposes different senses to different things and then he treats them as something existing independently and being objective part of the reality. In fact we should drive away everything which is outside of the consciousness as it is the only pot where the subject and object are mixed up. Thanks to the consciousness a human perceives the world and translates the sense and gets in touch with different things. On the one hand it is the activity that gives way to cognition and the content which is generated in the process of cognition.



E.Husserl strongly believed that the basic element of the theoretical and cognitive process was the “world of life” the reality which is familiar and in the actual turn-over. This is the fixed reality with the boundaries that comes to the attention of the people long before a human takes up the cognitive attempts to get the bottom of life. The cognition brings in some incomplete knowledge. The true knowledge comes with the senses imposed by people with clear consciousness. That is the reason why phenomenology studies the emergence of the senses in consciousness. To achieve the put up goal E.Husserl takes up the method of phenomenological reduction that excludes all the connections of the things in space and time. It is helpful to get to stage of “Aidos” – pure sense and the flow of pure consciousness. That is the frame to set up the reality.

E.Husserl does not accept any side of being which are outside of the consciousness. Consciousness has the capacity of self cognition and identifies as the pure phenomena.

The philosophy of E.Husserl had a great influence on the Hermeneutics and Existentialism.




Structuralism as the philosophic trend emerged in the first half of the XX-th century in France. By its essence it was close to neopositivism. The philosophers who developed the ideas of structuralism were Clod Levi Straus and Michel Foucault and some others. These philosophers looked into the complicated phenomena of Linguistics, Psychology, History and Ethnic studies and discovered some basic invariant structures. They stayed unchanged irrespective in spite of the numerous combinations. These combinations however could bring to some modulations and transformations of the forms of the objects. The careful study caused the extent of change and stability as to the invariant base and the rotating change. As the result of the structural study some basic elements of the homogenous structures were found out in the human thought of the created myths and fairy tales by the peoples' divorced by the continents and seas.

Pragmatism originates from the Greek word *pragma* that means benefit. The founders of this philosophy were W. James and G. Dewey. They denied the possibility of the cognition of the basics of being, intuitive knowledge, some inherited ideas and other gnoseological theories.

The true cognition comes from the summarized experience and contributes to the solution of some vital problems that a human faces in everyday life. The true knowledge is the one that brings in some practical success. The notions are quite changeable with the course of accumulation of the human experience. We can not talk of some absolute and complete knowledge as it is relative and hypothetic and can be repudiated in the future. The experience is exactly the point that tells what the practical sense of cognition is. The criteria of the cognition is driven by the necessity and eventual success that defines whether it is true or not.

The founders of this philosophy make a point the success in cognition comes when a human is absorbed with problems in solution of the problems in hand. Using the available possibilities of science like categories of science and the intellectual resources the researchers are kept within reason and stay away from the subjective extremes being adequate in targeting at the final result.



Neo-Kantian philosophy came into being on the verge of the XIX-XX as the attempt to rehabilitate the main ideas of Kant. The kernel of their ideas is the presumption that potential of the Kant's ideas has not yet been exhausted and they can be the “oil” in the solution problems of to-day. Following the arguments of Kant they are of opinion that the cognition is not the reflection or description of the object, but construction of the subject area.

Some of the adepts of the Neo-Kantian philosophy trying to modernize his teaching took up an effort to involve the logics of the up-dated science. The others suggested that there should an input of values in the research of the surrounding world.

Hermeneutics (germeneon – Greek – understand) emerged as the science of getting to the essence of the ancient Greek texts. Later on it got to the point of being the art of understanding and interpreting of the texts of the Bible. In the epoch of Renaissance there was the need for translating of the ancient texts into the modern language that gave up the boost to further development of Hermeneutics.

In the Newly Modern Times it turned out to be a trend in philosophy. **Frederich Schleiermacher** – the founder of this trend of philosophy considered that it was some special way of grasping some unique properties of persons ever lived in the history. The point was that it was not the matter of the flow of the generated ideas, but the manner of description.

The process of interpretive inquiry established by Schleiermacher involved what Dilthey called "the Hermeneutic circle," which is the recurring movement between **the implicit and the explicit, the particular and the whole**. The "general hermeneutics" that Schleiermacher proposed was a combination of the hermeneutics used to interpret Sacred Scriptures (e.g. the Pauline epistles) and the hermeneutics used by Classicists (e.g. Plato's philosophy). Dilthey saw its relevance for the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*) in contrast with the natural sciences.


The idea of Hermeneutics developed by Wilhelm Dilthey is the obvious difference between the experimental knowledge and the creator of some masterpieces with his feelings and motives. It can not be translated as a mere piece of information. To achieve this one should get to the aura of the epoch and pretend to be as one of the ancient Greeks to be able to read the works of Plato.

According to Husserl one should be plunged into the atmosphere of the time to be able to describe the “the world” of that particular being. That is the only possible way of the adequate evaluation of the cultural heritage.

M.Heidegger made some special distinctions of the **“language as the home of being”**. It means that the Hermeneutics should be involved in the analysis of the language disclosing the meaning of the words which are out-of-date and bringing them in into modern verbal turn-over. He believes that the language is not just some auxiliary vehicle, but the actual essence and sense of life. Most people are quite unconscious of this exceptional role of the language. Quite few people with the talents of feeling the language can be the students of Hermeneutics. Some special emphasis is made on the poets who are the true masters of the verse who can reflect some sharp aspects of the being.

The greatest contribution to Hermeneutics was made by **Has-Georg Gadamer**. His philosophical project, as explained in [Truth and Method](#), was to elaborate on the concept of "[philosophical hermeneutics](#)", which Heidegger initiated but never dealt with at length. Gadamer's goal was to uncover the nature of human understanding. In the book Gadamer argued that "truth" and "method" were at odds with one another. He was critical of two approaches to the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*). On the one hand, he was critical of modern approaches to humanities that modeled themselves on the natural sciences (and thus on rigorous scientific methods). On the other hand, he took issue with the traditional German approach to the humanities, represented for instance by [Friedrich Schleiermacher](#) and [Wilhelm Dilthey](#), which believed that correctly interpreting a text meant recovering the original intention of the author who wrote it.

In contrast to both of these positions, Gadamer argued that people have a 'historically effected consciousness' (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein*) and that they are embedded in the particular history and culture that shaped them. Thus interpreting a text involves a [fusion of horizons](#) where the scholar finds the ways that the text's history articulates with their own background.



Truth and Method is not meant to be a programmatic statement about a new 'hermeneutic' method of interpreting texts. Gadamer intended *Truth and Method* to be a description of what we always do when we interpret things (even if we do not know it): "My real concern was and is philosophic: not what we do or what we ought to do, but what happens to us over and above our wanting and doing".

His understanding of Hermeneutics was developed along the lines that it was impossible to penetrate into the ancient epoch, but set up the bridge between history and modernity in terms of understanding the dominating ideas. He realized that the people of different epochs are different enormously. We can not be in the position of reconstructing the reality of the past what we can do is we can construct some new senses and essences on the basis of the history passed by.

This sort of philosophy creates the plurality of opinions and view points as no one can get the complete truth. It requires permanent dialogue with the idea of understanding some other people with their truth.

Sigmund Freud. The XX-th century was the time of some intensive interest to the issues of unconsciousness as the state of mind. Sigmund Freud was the first to draw his academic attention to this issue. Being a medical physician, psychologist and philosopher he revealed a great role of the unconscious impulses in the behavior of the people. As the result of his academic observation psychoanalysis reached the point of being a branch of the academic study. It was of great help in the course of the medical treatment of people with the ill state of mind. It was very helpful in some other way as the impact on the studies in the personal life of a human, social life of people and culture.

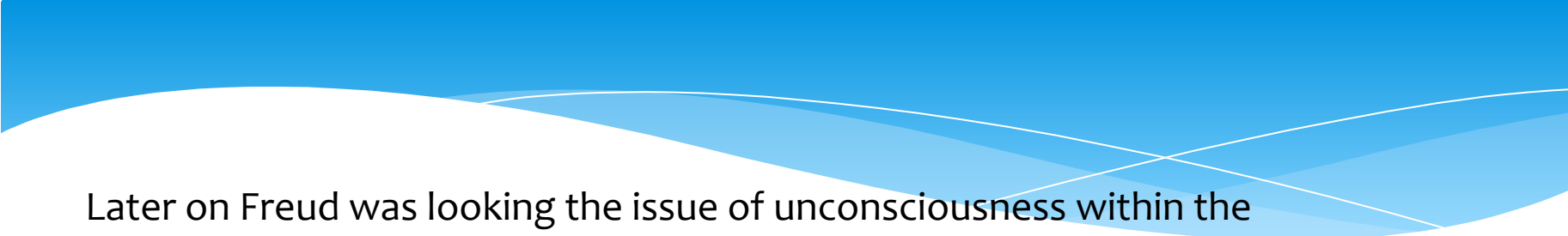
According to S.Freud the state of a human mind consists of the three levels:

Ego (Latin – I) – self-identification of a personality

Super ego (Latin – super I, as the generated summary of social norms and values and accumulated in the mind of a person in the process of socialization and perform as the vehicle of regulation.)

Libido Latin – desire). This state of mind is inclusive of the instincts, desires which are driven quite unconsciously. He fixed libido with the two letters “Ld”.

If “Ld” aspires to reach the point of the desire, the self consciousness of a human is targeted to comply with facts of life. There should be a reasonable balance Super ego and Ld. If the former prevails it can create some problems with the nervous system, while the latter can drive a human to the extreme.



Later on Freud was looking the issue of unconsciousness within the boundaries of the two major instincts = Eros and Tanatos. If Eros inspires the love of life, the other drives him to death with aggression and destruction.

No matter how strong is the impact of unconsciousness it can be converted into the consciousness. Being aware of the problem is half of its solution. In fact the greatest vehicle of keeping the instincts under control is Culture.

The values are very helpful in setting up the reasonable pattern of relationships with Nature and people. But the instincts ousted to the back of the mind are not dead and can revive and be quite a problem.

In general the teaching of Freud is of twofold character for the contemporary western countries. On the one hand the psychoanalysis as the science contributed to the treatment of people physically and mentally. On the other hand it gave way to the sexual revolution that had a very negative effect on the people.

The two instincts figured out by Freud were supportive to the creative role of the cultural values and undermined the same scope of values with the excessive focus on the sexual energy of a human.


Carl Gustav Jung (26 July 1875 – 6 June 1961) was a [Swiss psychiatrist](#), an influential thinker and the founder of [Analytical Psychology](#). Jung is often considered the first modern psychologist to state that the human psyche is "by nature religious" and to explore it in depth. Though not the first to analyze dreams, he has become perhaps one of the most well known pioneers in the field of [dream analysis](#). Unlike Freud *et al.* he was a self-described natural scientist, not a theoretical psychologist. For Jung this salient distinction revolved around his initial process of deep observation followed by categorizations rather than the reverse process of imagining what categories exist and then proceeding to seek for proof of and then discover that one was correct, always correct. While he was a fully involved and practicing clinician, much of his life's work was spent exploring tangential areas, including Eastern and Western philosophy, [alchemy](#), [astrology](#), and [sociology](#), as well as [literature](#) and the arts; all of which were extremely productive in regard to the symbols and processes of the human psyche, found in dreams and other entries to the unconscious.

He considered the process of [individuation](#) necessary for a person to become whole. This is a psychological process of integrating the opposites including the conscious with the unconscious while still maintaining their relative autonomy. Individuation was the central concept of analytical psychology.


Some Jungian ideas are routinely discussed in the introductory psychology course curricula of major universities, and although rarely covered by higher-level course work, his ideas are discussed further in a broad range of humanities. Many pioneering psychological concepts were originally proposed by Jung, including the [Archetype](#), the [Collective Unconscious](#), the [Complex](#), and [synchronicity](#). A popular [psychometric instrument](#), has been principally developed from Jung's theories.

Apart from Freud Jung has singled out the “collective unconsciousness”. If the individual consciousness represents the feelings and emotions of the passed days of a single individual the “collective unconsciousness” accumulates the compressed experience of the mankind. Here we can also see the sentiments of the beasts prior to the human conscious history. These images are called by Jung as the “archetypes”. The archetypes have a general and symbolic form but it can be stuffed with the concrete essence respective to the experience of a concrete individual. The archetypes are the integral part of the ethnic or national psychology. They are translated from one generation to the other one in the form of customs and traditions. They are very conservative and stable if even the causes and reasons for the self determination are gone. This sort of self producing memory is done through the genetic vehicle of the general outlook of a human.

The other followers and disciples of S.Freud – A.Adler (1870-1937), K.Horni (1888-1959), E.Fromm (1900-1980) were trying to comply the arguments of freudism with the norms of life of a society.



A.Adler introduced the notion of “**compensation**”. A human who is deformed or misshapen in the physical sense can be miserable. In attempt to overcome this state a person takes up some excessive efforts to be someone of full value. It can come out of love of life followed with some exceptional efforts. Adler calls it compensation for being handicapped. If a human takes up some super active efforts he achieves much. According to Adler this stage is “**super compensation**”. We can recollect in the memory a great deal of examples of super compensation (Hitler, Napoleon and others).



K.Horni analyses the development of a human within the boundaries of “norm” and “pathology”. The stressful situations accumulate the negative phenomena that cause eventually the nervous crisis. The cause of all these problems is the social factors – crisis of the society, the wrong treatment and relations of parents and children, the search of the sense of life, the wrong way of self determination.

This sort of social pathology can create the following models of relations:

- Adaptative when a person tries to be comfortable for anyone around.
- Cynical and aggressive when one tries to get the authority by all means.
- Isolating when a person tries to stay away from the vital issues.

The greatest neofreudist was **E.Fromm**. He came up to critical position of people with the negative mental effect from the social factors as the key ones. One of the reasons of the problems of a human was the invention of the machinery and computers that alienate people from the actual and real aspects of life.

The contemporary societies have worked out the idol which is capital and the ways to generate it. It alienates most of the people and some of them “escape from freedom” by means of drugs and alcohol and some other form of pathology.

What is the way out? E.Fromm suggests the model of “humanistic planning” and do away with the psychology of “possessing” and the forms of manipulative management. This “humanistic planning” would bring people to the rise of the interest to the social aspects of being with the introduction of some constructive values and self realization vehicle.