Introduction.

By reference to articles published by Cassirer and Lévi-Strauss in the journal *Word* at the end of the Second World War, I first try to situate 'structuralism' philosophically prior to considering the subsequent function of the phenomenological movement in enabling an intellectual transition to 'poststructuralism' in France during the 1960s. I first consider the specific interpretation of Husserl offered by Merleau-Ponty and I then give brief accounts of the logic of Lyotard's conceptualisation of 'postmodernism' and of Derrida's development of 'deconstructionism' in relation to Merleau-Ponty's version of Husserl's work. I next consider the relationship of Bourdieu's reflexive, 'poststructuralist' sociology to that interpretation of Husserl and, finally, I examine Diana Coole's use of the work of Merleau-Ponty to ground a contemporary critical theory.

Cassirer.

Just a few days before his death, Ernst Cassirer gave a paper on February 10th, 1945, to the Linguistic Circle of New York. It was subsequently published in August of the same year in the first number of a new journal – *Word* – with the title: "Structuralism in Modern Linguistics." Cassirer traced the history of the development of modern linguistics and he attempted to place that development in its philosophical context. During the 19th Century, he argued, the emerging science of linguistics looked to physics and psychology for its models and, in each case, this meant operating with the prevailing materialism of those disciplines. The corollary was that the 'logical' dimension of language was neglected. It was Husserl who reversed this tendency. His *Logische Untersuchungen* [Logical Investigations] (Husserl, 1970, (1900)) insisted, in Cassirer's words, that 'logical truth is formal, not material, truth' (Cassirer, 1945, 103) and: 'It does not depend on special empirical conditions, it is universal and necessary' (Cassirer, 1945, 103). Cassirer argued that Husserl's attack on psychologism and his dismissal of John Stuart Mill's attempt to establish a 'system of logic' empirically necessarily caused difficulties for the development of the science of linguistics which depended on some relationship with empirical psychology. Cassirer referred to Leibniz's familiar distinction between 'truths of logic' and 'truths of fact' and he suggested, however, that 'If the adherents and defenders of the program of linguistic structuralism are right, then we must say that in the realm of language there is no opposition between what is "formal" and what is merely "factual".' (Cassirer, 1945, 104). He referred specifically to de Saussure, Trubetzkoy, Roman Jakobson, and 'other members of the 'Cercle Linguistique de Prague', as major proponents of this view. Cassirer proceeded to digress slightly to consider the 'morphological idealism' which he found in the biological work of Goethe, St. Hilaire, and Cuvier, in order to pose the question whether contemporary linguistics was in a situation which was analoguous with that of comparative anatomy in the mid-19th century. There seemed to be two critical questions: 'The first is, Is language an organism?; the second, Is linguistics a natural science or is it a *Geisteswissenschaft*?' [science of the mind/spirit] (Cassirer, 1945, 109). Cassirer found the first question to be based on a 'mere metaphor' and he concluded succinctly that 'we may say that language is "organic", but that it is not an "organism"' (Cassirer, 1945, 110). The second question re-opened the fin-de siècle debate between *Natur-* and *Geisteswissenschaft*. Cassirer expressed surprise that two of the main

contributors to this debate – Dilthey and Rickert – had not reflected on the status of language. His view was that linguistics should be considered a *Geisteswissenschaft* as long as we do not regard 'Geist' as a substance which is opposite to 'matter'. Cassirer reiterated his early rejection of substantialism[1] in order to insist that 'Geist' should be used 'in a functional sense as a comprehensive name for all those functions which constitute and build up the world of culture'. He also related this view to the notion of 'symbolic form' which had become the key to his philosophical orientation[2]: 'Language is a "symbolic form". It consists of symbols, and symbols are no part of our physical world. They belong to an entirely different universe of discourse.' (Cassirer, 1945, 114).

Cassirer's paper was a slightly inconclusive, although enlightening, ramble around the topic. He recommended the work of von Humboldt and discussed the meaning of 'Gestalt' before concluding:

> 'What I wished to make clear in this paper is the fact that structuralism is no isolated phenomenon; it is, rather, the expression of a general tendency of thought that, in these last decades, has become more and more prominent in almost all fields of scientific research.' (Cassirer, 1945, 120).

The key point, in other words, was that, in Cassirer's view, the development of structuralist linguistics simply raised in acute form the problem of the relationship between descriptive language and phenomena that had been endemic in Western European epistemology in respect of all science since the emergence of the Scientific Revolution.

Lévi-Strauss.

Less than a year before, in May, 1944, Claude Lévi-Strauss had delivered a paper to the same Linguistic Circle of New York entitled: "Application des méthodes de la linguistique moderne à l'anthropologie, particulièrement aux systèmes de parenté." [application of the methods of modern linguistics to anthropology, particularly to kinship systems]. This must have been the basis of the article which was published in the second number of *Word* (August, 1945) as "L'analyse structurale en linguistique et en anthropologie" [Structural Analysis in Linguistics and in Anthropology] (Lévi-Strauss, 1945). There is no evidence of direct dialogue between Cassirer and Lévi-Strauss, but some degree of cross-reference must have been in the minds of the editors of *Word*. Lévi-Strauss's article would become one of the most important contributions to the collection of essays which he published in 1958 as *Anthropologie structurale* – a book which, translated into English in 1963, dominated the structuralist vogue in the 1960s both in France and in the English-speaking intellectual world. From the outset, Lévi-Strauss insisted that the scientific success of linguistics should not be confined to linguistics. He said of the journal *Word* that 'It must also welcome psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists eager to learn from modern linguistics the road which leads to the empirical knowledge of social phenomena.' (Lévi-Strauss, 1963, 31).

In respect of anthropology, it should now no longer be the case that linguists and anthropologists might 'occasionally communicate' but, instead, that they should acknowledge that their operations formally resemble each other. As Lévi-Strauss commented: 'Like phonemes, kinship terms are elements of meaning; like phonemes, they acquire meaning only if they are integrated into systems.' (Lévi-Strauss, 1963, 34).

As Lévi-Strauss pursues his argument, however, it becomes increasingly clear that he was attempting to associate linguistics with the social sciences with a view to refining their analyses rather than with a view to advancing 'the empirical knowledge of social phenomena'. He argued that previous work which had tried to bring linguistics and anthropology together had analysed speech and vocabulary and had not yet understood that 'structural analysis cannot be applied to words directly, but only to words previously broken down into phonemes' (Lévi-Strauss, 1963, 36). The article proceeded to discuss the way in which structural analysis can operate in relation to kinship systems. Lévi-Strauss first differentiated between systems of 'terminology' and systems of 'attitudes', insisting that there is a 'profound difference' between the two. He argued against Radcliffe-Brown's supposed view that attitudes 'are nothing but the expression or transposition of terms on the affective level' (Lévi-Strauss, 1963, 38) and he proceeded to consider in detail Radcliffe-Brown's discussion of the 'avunculate' as expressed in his article on the maternal uncle in South Africa[3]. Radcliffe-Brown had concluded that there were two opposed sets of systems of attitudes in operation in the situation which he had observed and that the determinant in choosing between them was 'descent' – that is to say the historically diffused dispositions inherent in the particular situation. By contrast, Lévi-Strauss proceeded to offer additional evidence of the same avunculate phenomenon derived from completely different societies - the Trobriand Islanders of Melanesia, Tonga in Polynesia, and Lake Kutubu in New Guinea – in order to falsify the 'descent' interpretation. He concluded that 'in order to understand the avunculate we must treat it as one relationship within a system, while the system itself must be considered as a whole in order to grasp its structure.' (Lévi-Strauss, 1963, 46). Lévi-Strauss anticipated some objections to his conclusion and, in particular, he tried to counter the objection that his structural analysis would suppose that the avunculate should be present at all times and in all places. Lévi-Strauss's response was to argue that kinship systems do not have the same importance in all cultures and hence that the first task of the structuralist anthropologist is to ask, in relation to the observation of any culture, the preliminary question: 'Is the system systematic?' (Lévi-Strauss, 1963, 48). In this defence, Lévi-Strauss appears to have renounced the ambition of cultural anthropology in pursuit, instead, of the more circumscribed interest in analyzing the intrinsic systematicity of systems. The article ends with a clear confrontation with the research tradition associated with Radcliffe-Brown. Lévi-Strauss cites a passage from Radcliffe-Brown's 'The Study of Kinship Systems' (Radcliffe-Brown, 1941) in which he argued that kinship systems are constructed genealogically, and Lévi-Strauss argues in opposition:

> 'Of course, the biological family is ubiquitous in human society. But what confers upon kinship its socio-cultural character is not what it retains from nature, but, rather, the essential way in which it diverges from nature. A kinship system does not consist in the objective ties of descent or consanguinity between individuals. It exists only in human consciousness; it is an arbitrary system of representations, not the spontaneous development of a real situation.' (Lévi-Strauss, 1963, 50).

and comments, finally, that we must 'never lose sight of the fact that, in both anthropological and linguistic research, we are dealing strictly with symbolism' and we must recognize that 'any concession to naturalism might jeopardize the immense progress already made in linguistics, which is also beginning to characterize the study of family structure, and might drive the sociology of the family toward a sterile empiricism, devoid of inspiration.' (Lévi-Strauss, 1963, 51).

Merleau-Ponty.

Lévi-Strauss returned to France from the United States in 1948. Refugees from Nazi Germany had already imported phenomenological thinking to the United States and social philosophers such as Alfred Schutz and Aron Gurwitsch had made attempts to assimilate the legacy of Husserl to indigenous American pragmatism. Marvin Farber was instrumental in managing this process of intellectual assimilation, editing, in 1940, *Philosophical Essays in memory of Edmund Husserl* (Farber, ed., 1940), and then, in 1943, *The Foundation of Phenomenology: Edmund Husserl and the Quest for a Rigorous Philosophy* (Farber, ed., 1943). Most of this first American reception was of 'early' Husserl. There is no evidence that Lévi-Strauss engaged philosophically with this work and it is clear from Cassirer's article that he still regarded Husserl primarily as an idealist critic of psychologism who contributed beneficially to the rejection of the influence of materialism on linguistic theory in the 19th Century. On returning to France, Lévi-Strauss would have found that there was already great and increasing interest in the work of Husserl and that there were several competing strands of interpretations of phenomenology – in part a consequence of the posthumous publication of his texts from the archive established during World War II at Louvain.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty had been one of the first to take advantage of the archive at Louvain. He went to Louvain first in April, 1939 , and retained access to unpublished material all through the 1940s[4]. His *La structure du comportement* [The structure of behavior] (Merleau-Ponty, 1965) had been published in 1942 and his *Phénoménologie de Perception* [The Phenomenology of Perception] (Merleau-Ponty, 1962) in 1945. As well as *Ideen I* [Ideas I] (Husserl, 1983, (1913)) this cited other early works of Husserl; late published works such as *Erfahrung und Urteil* [Experience and Judgement](Husserl, ed. Landgrebe, 1973, (1948)) and Part I of *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie* [The Crisis of European sciences and transcendental phenomenology](Husserl, 1970, (1954)); and unpublished works, including Parts II and III of *Die Krisis* [The Crisis]which had been consulted at Louvain. Merleau-Ponty's course of general psychology at the Sorbonne in 1950/1 was on *Les sciences de l'homme et la phénoménologie* [Human sciences and phenomenology], reissued in 1958 (in Merleau-Ponty, 1964a). In April, 1951, he gave a paper entitled "Sur la phénoménologie du langage" [on the phenomenology of language] to the first international colloque of phenomenology which was published in 1952 in *Problèmes actuels de la phénoménologie* [contemporary problems of phenomenology] and subsequently reprinted in his *Signes* [Signs] in 1960. In July, 1951, the *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie* published his "Le philosophe et la sociologie" [the philosopher and sociology], which was also reprinted in *Signes* [Signs]. In "Sur la phénoménologie du langage", Merleau-Ponty made the important distinction between 'early' and 'late' Husserl, suggesting that in the former period Husserl had regarded 'les langues empiriques comme des réalisations 'brouillées' du langage essentiel' [empirical languages as 'muddled' realisations of essential language] (Merleau-Ponty, 1964b,(1960), 137). By contrast, Merleau-Ponty argued that in his late period Husserl represented language

> 'comme une manière originale de viser certains objets, comme le corps de la pensée (*Formale und transzendentale Logik*)... ou même comme l'opération par laquelle des pensées qui, sans lui, resteraient phénomènes privés, acquièrent valeur intersubjective et finalement existence idéale (*Ursprung der Geometrie)*.' [as an original way of targeting certain objects, like the body of thought ([Formal and transcendental Logic]) ... or even like the operation whereby thoughts which, without it, would remain

private phenomena, acquire intersubjective value and, ultimately, ideal existence ([Origin of Geometry)] (Merleau-Ponty, 1964b,(1960), 137).

Husserl had begun, in *Logical Investigations*, by opposing the view that our knowledge is dependent on our psychological makeup and by seeking to emphasize instead the importance of logic. This was what still seemed to Cassirer to be the essence of Husserl's *a priori* idealism or transcendental phenomenology. The influence on Husserl of his pupil Heidegger was that Husserl gradually seemed increasingly to countenance an emphasis on historically-situated Being (*Dasein*). In the posthumously published 'late' Husserl texts (especially *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, (Husserl, 1970, (1954)), and *Experience and Judgment: Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic*, (Husserl, ed. Landgrebe 1973, (1948)), he seemed to emphasize that logic is grounded in our experience of the social world, or what he called the 'life-world'[5]. Merleau-Ponty was among the first of Husserl's followers to appreciate the significance of this apparent shift. In the passages quoted above, Merleau-Ponty referred to Husserl's *Formal and transcendental Logic*[6], published in 1929, and to his *Origin of Geometry*, first published posthumously in 1939[7]. Merleau-Ponty's contention was that Husserl had moved away from an emphasis of a pre-existing, *a priori*, ideal, or essential language form towards the view that linguistic expression is a material, bodily function within the world, an instrument of behavioural adaptation, an activity of corporeal interaction or inter-subjectivity, which has the effect of *constructing* the ideal. In the specialist terminology of phenomenology, Merleau-Ponty advanced the view that Husserl had moved from transcendental to constitutive phenomenology or, better, to a phenomenology in which transcendentalism is constituted. For Merleau-Ponty, wrestling with his relationship to Marxism at the time of the death of Stalin (1953), this interpretation of Husserl enabled him to render dialectical materialism compatible with idealism rather than antagonistic towards it. It also enabled him to distinguish his position from that of Sartre, whose *L'Étre et le Néant* [Being and Nothingness] (Sartre, 1958. (1943)), sub-titled 'an essay in phenomenological ontology' still presupposed the view of the primacy of the individual ego that he had outlined in his first publication which appeared in 1936 as *Un essai sur la transcendance de l'Ego* [an essay on the transcendence of the ego] (Sartre, 1972, (1936)).

The post-war generation in France.

Lyotard.

Merleau-Ponty had been influenced by the lectures which Aron Gurwitsch had given in France during the period at the end of the 1930s after he had left Germany and before his emigration to the United States in 1940. In an essay entitled "The Perceptual World and the Rationalized Universe", probably written in 1953, Gurwitsch wrote:

> 'In the final period of his life, Husserl did, more and more, call attention to the perceptual world, such as the latter plays a role in everyday, natural life. That is the world in which we find ourselves, in which we act, react, and work. It is in that world that we encounter our fellow human beings, to whom we are bound by the most diverse relationships. All our desires and hopes, all our apprehensions and fears, all our pleasures and sufferings (in short, all our affective and emotional life) are related to that world; all our intellectual activities, both practical and theoretical, also refer to it. In describing and analysing the perceptual world, one must take it such as it, in

actual fact, offers itself to the natural consciousness of everyday life, such as it appears prior to the idealizations entailed by scientific interpretation and explanation.

The world is conceived by modern civilized human beings in the perspective of the physical sciences, such as they have been established since the seventeenth century. Even when we happen not to be physicists, or when we are not very familiar with the theories of physics and with the results arrived at by it, we conceive and interpret the world in relation to the very existence of physics.'
(Gurwitsch, ed. J. Garcia-Gomez, 2009, 411-2)

Following late Husserl, Gurwitsch argues that we all go about our lives in a perceptual world and that the explanations of the sciences are rationalizations or idealizations which are superimposed on our everyday perceptions. However, Gurwitsch does not suppose that our perceptions remain experiential in an unchanging way. The second paragraph in the quoted passage indicates that, historically, past rationalizations become incorporated into taken-for-granted present perceptions. This can be described as an acceptance that, trans-culturally and trans-historically, primary perception is susceptible to rational modification. The essential emphasis of constitutive phenomenology, therefore, is that, in every generation, the *process* of constituting understandings of the world remains the same in deriving rational explanation from primary experience, but that, historically, newly constituted meanings redefine primary experience for every succeeding generation. This is not to say that the historical constitution of meaning is inevitably 'progressive' or cumulative. On the contrary, every generation has the capacity inter-subjectively to construct understandings which are valid for itself by manipulating those which it inherits. Rationalizations have no absolute referential value. Explanations do not develop autonomously in differentiated discourses but are mediated by continuous reference to primary experience but, equally, that primary experience is not grounded humanistically in a transcendent ego. Primary experience is continuously collective or inter-subjective rather than individualistic or egoistic. The title of a 1941 article of Gurwitsch – 'A non-egological conception of consciousness' (Gurwitsch, 1941) – highlights the differentiation of constitutive phenomenology from Sartrean existentialism. Although Sartre advanced the view that existence precedes essence, he did so by presupposing that all individual human beings constitute themselves in absolute freedom rather than by supposing that constituting 'individuals' are already systemically pre-constituted - saturated with inherited or socially mediated attitudes and dispositions.

This is the background to the situation in which Lyotard, Derrida, and Bourdieu began their intellectual careers. Lyotard was the oldest of the three (born in 1924) and graduated from the Sorbonne at the end of the 1940s. Derrida and Bourdieu were both born in 1930 and both entered the Ecole Normale Supérieure in 1950.

Shortly after completing a Master's thesis on 'Indifference', Lyotard taught in Algeria for two years, returning to France in 1952. In 1954, he published his short introduction to phenomenology in the Que Sais-je series of the Presses Universitaires de France (Lyotard, 1991, (1954)). Importantly, Lyotard recognized that any response to phenomenology demanded that it should be understood as a movement rather than as a fixed philosophical position. He tried to outline the 'common style' of phenomenology after 'having rendered to Husserl that which is Husserl's: *having begun*' (Lyotard, 1991, 34, (1954)). The first part of the book, devoted to Husserl, was followed by a short 'note on Husserl and Hegel'. Lyotard acknowledged that it was Hegel who had originally given 'phenomenology' its meaning, but he argued that the crucial distinction between the two thinkers was that 'Hegelian phenomenology *closes* the system' while 'Husserlian description inaugurates the grasping of

the "thing-itself" before all predication' (Lyotard, 1991, 68, (1954)). In other words, to use Lyotard's later terminology, Hegel's dialectic was wrongly subordinated to an historical grand narrative. In this early text, therefore, we can find Lyotard's latent hostility to totalizing systems of thought. The second part of the book is devoted to discussion of 'Phenomenology and the Human Sciences' which offers, first, a general discussion of the relationship and then subsequent chapters considering phenomenology and psychology, sociology, and history. Lyotard accurately contended that

> 'Phenomenology constitutes at the same time both a "logical" introduction to the human sciences, in seeking to define the object eidetically prior to all experimentation; and a philosophical "reprise" of the results of experimentation, insofar as it seeks to retrieve fundamental meaning, particularly in proceeding to the critical analysis of the intellectual apparatus used.' (Lyotard, 1991, 76, (1954)).

What was missing from Lyotard's discussion in 1954, however, was any critique of the status of cognition. He had absorbed Husserl's commitment to the development of 'philosophy as a rigorous science' (to use the title of a text of Husserl of 1911) and explored the consequences of this position for the human sciences. In the late 1960s, Lyotard studied at Nanterre and came under the influence there of Mikel Dufrenne whose *Phénoménologie de l'expérience esthétique* [phenomenology of aesthetic experience] had been published in 1953 (Dufrenne, 1953). The influence was apparent in the thesis which Lyotard wrote at that time which was published in 1971 as *Discours, figure* [Discourse, figuration] (Lyotard, 1971). Whereas Lyotard's *La Phénoménologie* quotes Merleau-Ponty's *La phénoménologie de la perception* favourably, *Discours, figure* considers the shortcomings of Merleau-Ponty's posthumously published (1961) reflections on the work of Cézanne: *L'oeil et l'esprit* [Eye and Mind] (in Merleau-Ponty,1964a). Merleau-Ponty rightly maintained his opposition to the dualism of Descartes' *Dioptrique* [Dioptrics] but, in Lyotard's view, he remained trapped within a commitment still to the primacy of cognition and consciousness. In the reflections of these two early texts of Lyotard on Husserl, mediated in part by Merleau-Ponty, we find, therefore, most of the ingredients of what he was to articulate briefly in *La condition postmoderne* [the postmodern condition] (Lyotard, 1984, (1979)) and in more detail in *Le différend* [the differend] (Lyotard, 1988, (1983)). This is not the place to explore the development of Lyotard's thinking in detail, but I simply suggest that some of the main characteristics of 'postmodernism' – skepticism about the grand narrative of history, opposition to the repression of art by rational analysis, espousal of small narratives as modes of individual communication – derive from his reading of Husserl.

Derrida.

By 1957, Derrida was planning a state doctorate on 'The ideality of the Literary Object'. This was never completed but, instead, he gave a paper in July, 1959, on '"Genèse et structure" et la phénoménologie' at a conference held at Cerisy-la-Salle which was subsequently published in revised form in de Gandillac, ed., 1965. This paper was followed, in 1962, by Derrida's *Introduction* to Husserl's *The Origin of Geometry* (which was one of the 'late' Husserl texts cited by Merleau-Ponty) (Husserl, int. Derrida, ed. Leavey, 1989, (1962)). In his paper of 1959, Derrida argued strongly against the prevailing tendency of the time to differentiate the 'late' from the 'early' Husserl. He juxtaposed passages from Husserl's first work – *Philosophy of Arithmetic* of 1891 - and his *Formal and Transcendental Logic* of 1929, and then analysed the argument of *Ideen I* (1913) so as to suggest that Husserl would never throughout his career have recognized any choice between 'structural' and 'genetic' analysis, would never have considered that genetic analysis superceded structural. On the contrary, Husserl's constant quest was, in his own words, to identify 'the structural

aprioris … of genesis itself' (de Gandillac, 1965, 245). In so far as Husserl did move towards 'constitutive' phenomenology, this seemed to cause him, according to Derrida,

> 'to renounce the purely descriptive space and the transcendental pretention of his research in favour of a metaphysic of history where the solid structure of a *Telos* would allow him to recover … a primitive genesis which became more and more invasive and which seemed to accommodate phenomenological apriorism and transcendental idealism less and less.' (de Gandillac, 1965, 246).

 In short, Derrida suggested that Husserl, perhaps under the influence of Heidegger, had succumbed to a self-betrayal. Derrida was, therefore, intent on restoring the dialectic which he believed informed Husserl's procedure, from 'early' to 'late', a dialectic, however, which emphasized the primacy of structures as a prioristically present as preconditions for experience. From the very beginning, in his *Philosophy of Arithmetic,* Derrida argues, Husserl refused to locate the origin of the universality of arithmetic discourse in any 'heavenly sphere'. This necessarily seemed to push him towards locating the discourse empirically as grounded psychologically, but it was 'psychologism' that he sought to combat and, unlike some of his contemporary philosophical psychologists, such as Wundt, he never went as far as suggesting that the recognition of the genetic constitution of ideality amounted to its 'epistemological validation' (de Gandillac, 1965, 247). Derrida proceeded to clarify his reading of Husserl by differentiating Husserl's approach from those separately taken by Dilthey and the Gestalt psychologists. My use of the word 'ideality' in respect of Derrida's interpretation of Husserl's view of arithmetical language indicates the relationship between Derrida's paper and his proposed doctoral thesis. Derrida was interested in the philosophical grounds for claiming that literary discourse might transcend the particular conditions of its production. Derrida pursued the same implicit enquiry in his subsequent introduction to Husserl's last text, emphasizing the affinity between Husserl's earliest discussion of arithmetic and his latest discussion of geometry. He argues that 'the origin of arithmetic was described in terms of *psychological genesis'* in the early text – specifically not as a *history* of arithmetic, while in the late text, Husserl repeated the same project in respect of the origin of geometry 'under the species of a *phenomenological history'*, (Husserl, int. Derrida, ed. Leavey, 1989, 28) that is to say, under the species of a non-empirical history. Underlying this endeavour over a period of 50 years lay Husserl's attempt to deploy history categorally rather than empirically, and Derrida devotes much of his introduction to the *Origin of Geometry* to consideration of the validity of Husserl's understanding of history. Derrida's conclusion is that Husserl made a shift towards an emphasis on language which is an 'historical incarnation' which 'sets free the transcendental, instead of binding it' (Husserl, int. Derrida, ed. Leavey, 1989, 77). Again, this is not the place to explore Derrida's work in further detail. My point is simply to illustrate that Derrida's response to Husserl was anti-empirical in form and content. He operated within philosophical discourse and emphasized the quest for a non-empirically defined notion of genesis. His discussion of speech and writing in the introduction to Husserl's *Origin of Geometry* anticipated the development of his own 'deconstructionist' thinking.

Bourdieu.

Bourdieu made some cryptic remarks about his thinking during his student years at the Ecole Normale Supérieure (1950-54) in an interview of 1985 with, amongst others, Axel Honneth. Asked whether he had never been interested in existentialism, Bourdieu replied:

> 'I read Heidegger, I read him a lot and with a certain fascination, especially the analyses in *Sein und Zeit* of public time, history and so on, which, together with Husserl's analyses in *Ideen II,* helped me a great deal – as was later the case with

Schütz – in my efforts to analyse the ordinary experience of the social. But I never really got into the existentialist mood. Merleau-Ponty was something different, at least in my view. He was interested in the human sciences and in biology, and he gave you an idea of what thinking about immediate present-day concerns can be like when it doesn't fall into the sectarian over-simplifications of political discussion … he seemed to represent one potential way out of the philosophical babble found in academic institutions …' (Bourdieu, 1990, 5, (1987)).

Unlike Merleau-Ponty, Lyotard, and Derrida, all of whom were inclined to offer their thinking as 'philosophy', Bourdieu, by contrast, was always disposed to take the view, as he later expressed it, that 'tout est social' [everything is social] (Bourdieu, 1992), including the foundations of philosophical discourse. Merleau-Ponty's inaugural lecture at the Collège de France was 'in praise of philosophy'(Merleau-Ponty, 1963, (1953)) even though traditional philosophers thought that his contribution was an aberration[8]. In spite of their positions at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales and the experimental university centre at Vincennes, respectively, Derrida and Lyotard were also instrumental in the establishment in 1983 of the Collège international de philosophie which, although opposed to the 'state-philosophical' model of institutionalized philosophy, nevertheless sought to revive acts of philosophizing. In the year that the college opened, Bourdieu made a contribution entitled "The Philosophical Establishment" to a collection of essays on *Philosophy in France Today* (Bourdieu, 1983). Bourdieu took the view that philosophical discourse operates with its own rules within socially constructed institutional contexts. Its value was dependent on its practical relevance and it is significant that he gave 'Fieldwork in philosophy' as the title for the interview of 1985 quoted above.

Bourdieu's position-taking in respect of philosophy was consistent with the interpretation of the work of Husserl which always lay at the back of his thinking. It was consistent with Lyotard's recognition that phenomenology established an open movement rather than a species of institutional philosophy, but Bourdieu chose to pursue the implications of this perception in his social scientific research whereas Lyotard sought to actualize his view of the potential of non-cognitive artistic activity. Bourdieu's post-structuralist social science developed out of his awareness of constitutive phenomenology and, as suggested in the quote above taken from Gurwitsch, it was completely logical that his post-structuralist position should emerge gradually after he had assimilated a structuralist approach, that, in other words, his post-structuralism was never an anti-structuralism but, rather, a position consciously constituted from what it superceded.

Bourdieu was conscripted to serve in the French army in Algeria in 1956. After de-mobilisation in 1958, he taught at the University of Algiers for two years during which time he wrote *Sociologie de l'algérie* (Bourdieu, 1962, (1958)) and carried out the research which led to the publication of *Travail et travailleurs en algérie* (Bourdieu, Darbel, Rivet, & Seibel, 1963) and *Le déracinement, la crise de l'agriculture traditionnelle en algérie* (Bourdieu & Sayad, 1964). The first two publications were elements of a combined 'acculturation' project. Trained as a philosopher, Bourdieu absorbed the methodology of acculturation studies developed in the United States by, among others, Melville Herskovits. This involved an attempt to measure cultural adaptation by assessing attitudinal changes in relation to base-line characteristics, but Bourdieu approached a task which was intrinsically defined in social psychological and cultural anthropology terms with his own particular phenomenological orientation. He was confronted with the problem of how to communicate his findings within the accepted intellectual frameworks of existing discipline discourses. *Sociologie de l'algérie*

was translated into English in 1962 as *The Algerians* (Bourdieu, 1962). Bourdieu took the opportunity to elaborate his original account of the traditional social organization of Algerian tribes by introducing a series of diagrams which represented genealogical practices structurally. In short, Bourdieu adopted the descriptive procedures which had become dominant in France as a consequence of Lévi-Strauss's publication of his *Structural Anthropology* (1958). Bourdieu was invited back to France in 1960 by Raymond Aron who had established a research centre and was in need of active young researchers to pursue sociological enquiries related to the positions which he had outlined in his courses of lectures since his appointment to the chair of sociology at the Sorbonne in 1955. In other words, Bourdieu was constrained in the 1960s both by the domination of structuralism within the field of anthropology and by the circumscribed parameters assigned to sociology by the anti-Durkheimian Aron. Bourdieu worked within, and then beyond, these 'censures'. After publishing several books arising from his Algerian research, Bourdieu then directed three major research projects – on student culture, on museum and art gallery attendance, and on photography. These projects generated texts which seemed to have involved detailed empirical work and they were quickly categorized as contributions to the sociology of education and culture. However, the meticulous way in which the procedures adopted in these projects was always specified in appendices suggested that Bourdieu was seeking to articulate his sense that his findings were not comprehensive representations of social reality but logical consequences of those 'problems' which corresponded with his own attitudinal dispositions. His objectifications were grounded subjectively, although he also argued that his 'subjectivity' itself was systemically generated.

In the second half of the 1960s Bourdieu wrote several key articles which show that he was exploring the relationship between forms of explanation and forms of prior experience. The first of these – 'Champ intellectuel et projet créateur' [intellectual field and creative project] (Bourdieu, 1971, (1966)) – was published in a special number of *Les Temps Modernes* devoted to the 'problems of structuralism', edited by Jean Pouillon. In his 'presentation' of the special number, entitled 'un essai de définition' [an attempt at definition], Pouillon, an anthropologist who shortly afterwards was to edit a collection of articles in honour of Lévi-Strauss on his 60th birthday, articulated the fact that 'structure' was being used in two different ways. As he puts it: 'En fait, la structure est à la fois une réalité – cette configuration que l'analyse découvre – et un outil intellectuel – la loi de sa variabilité.' [in fact, the structure is at the same time a reality – that configuration which analysis uncovers – and an intellectual tool – the law of its variability]. He usefully argued that French has two adjectives which are spelled differently: '"Structural" renvoie à la structure comme syntaxe, "structurel" renvoie à la structure comme réalité' ["structural" relates to structure as syntax, "structurel" relates to structure as reality] (Pouillon, 1966, 779-80). This differentiation corresponds with the distinction between 'formal' and 'factual' structuralism to which Cassirer referred. I argued that Lévi-Strauss's critique of Radcliffe-Brown and of diffusionism in anthropology suggested that he was primarily concerned with 'formal' structuralism. Bourdieu's article introduced the concept of 'field' as a way of securing a dialectical relationship between the formal and the factual. In doing this, Bourdieu began to deploy constitutive phenomenology and, perhaps quite specifically, the concept developed by Gurwitsch in his *Théorie du champ de la conscience*, translated as *The Field of consciousness* (Gurwitsch, 1964, (1957)). In his first paragraph, Bourdieu announced that all products of intellectual creativity – whether of art, literature, science, or theatre – derive their meaning within an exchange system of values – 'fields' – rather than as expressions of individual intention. He deployed a factual structuralism to try to discredit subjectivist individualism. Lévi-Strauss had suggested that the validity of this kind of factual

structuralism depended on the intrinsic susceptibility of observed phenomena to be analysed systematically, whereas, in his second paragraph, Bourdieu hinted that the validity of factual structuralism rather depended on the artificial construction of past fields of reality by present structuralists disposed to impose a meaningful system on inchoate facts. There was a structuralism in fact in historical situations but this was the immanent construct of historical agents. There is no necessary connection between the factual structuralism of the past and the interpretive impositions on that past of present formal structuralists. Present-day formal structuration just happens to be the strategic activity of a minority of structuralist linguists exchanging their interpretations within the constituted and circumscribed field of structural linguistics.

Even while he was, in collaboration with Jean-Claude Passeron, preparing the publication of *La reproduction* [reproduction], sub-titled 'Éléments pour une théorie du système d'enseignement' [elements for a theory of the educational system] (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, (1970)), Bourdieu continued to explore the nature of the correlation between factual and formal structuration. His 'Condition de classe et position de classe' [class condition and class position] (Bourdieu, 1966) implied that explanations of social phenomena, such as peasantry, in terms of unitary, universal class condition are formal impositions on the factual constitution of class relations through position-taking practised immanently by social agents in diverse contexts. His "Sociology and Philosophy in France since 1945: Death and Resurrection of a Philosophy without Subject", written with Jean-Claude Passeron (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1967), suggested both that the humanist tendency of Sartrean existentialism was historically constituted in some kind of systemic, structural affinity with the Resistance and the subsequent Liberation, and that, fallaciously, American neo-positivism contrived in response to be a-philosophically objective. For Bourdieu, constitutive phenomenology opened up the possibility that there could be an ongoing dialectic between subjective and objective social perceptions, whereby there might be recognition that all subjects differentially objectify experience and that all objectifications are grounded in subjective experience. Knowledge and experience constitute each other bi-directionally. Differentiation between the two is not a matter of kind but of relative power. Bourdieu's orientation towards acceptance of a constitutive dialectic was reinforced by his reading of Cassirer at the time, stimulated by his work on Cassirer's pupil, Erwin Panofsky[9]. In his "Structuralism and Theory of Sociological Knowledge" (Bourdieu, 1968), Bourdieu began by acknowledging that the influence of structuralism had been beneficial in exorcising subjectivist or social psychological interpretation from social scientific explanation, but this negative achievement was not sufficient. Bourdieu cites Cassirer's article in Word in making his case for a theory of sociological knowledge which would assimilate formal structuralism by situating it within the practice of social agents.

Bourdieu's attachment to constitutive phenomenology enabled him to articulate a post-structuralist position which, by definition, had to be advanced through sociological engagement with the social rather than through philosophical detachment. It was in the 1970s that Bourdieu consolidated his skepticism in respect of 'natural attitude' social sciences in favour of constitutive assumptions which would finally lead to his commitments to 'reflexive sociology' and to 'socio-analytic encounter'. The transition from his *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique* (Bourdieu, 1972) to its 'translation' as *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Bourdieu, 1977) is indicative of Bourdieu's crucial advance towards a post-structuralist position. The first text offered three 'structuralist' articles about Algeria written in the early 1960s (one of which – "La maison kabyle ou le monde renversé" [The Berber House or the World Reversed] - was included in Pouillon's publication in honour of Lévi-

Strauss, Pouillon & Maranda, eds., 1970). Bourdieu then proceeded to provide a critique of the shortcomings of his earlier, structuralist, articles. By contrast, Bourdieu took the opportunity provided by an English translation to reorganize the text. The new book incorporated the three articles into the discussion in such a way that it offered a positive blueprint for future research rather than a rejection of earlier achievement. One crucial section of the changing text was published in English in 1973 as "The Three Forms of Theoretical Knowledge" (Bourdieu, 1973). Here Bourdieu outlined his view that social research requires two 'epistemological breaks'. To become constituted as 'science', the unarticulated primary experiences of people have to be re-presented objectively according to the socially constructed rules of relatively autonomous discourses. In order that this necessary break should not privilege objective understanding as absolutely valid or superior, there has to be a second break whereby the social conditions of production of objective explanation are subjected to scrutiny. As he was to put this in 1973 in "Sur le pouvoir symbolique" [on symbolic power], there are 'structuring structures' (factual structuralism) and there are 'structured structures' (formal structuralism), (in Bourdieu, 1991). Bourdieu's post-structuralism represented an attempt to retain a dialectical relationship between the two kinds of structures. It was not simply that Bourdieu was adopting a constitutive methodology in his projected researches. The essence of Bourdieu's post-structuralism was that he accepted that his new research orientation had been constituted cumulatively from his earlier research. Bourdieu wrote several articles in which he explored the 'structure' and 'genesis' of his thoughts or those of others. Unlike Derrida, however, Bourdieu was not drawn to philosophical deconstruction, but, rather, to an acceptance of a continuing process of social historical construction to which his own work was just one socially motivated contribution. He does not appear to have had reservations about 'empirical history' in part because, like Merleau-Ponty, he saw it more as a process of corporeal inter-generational transmission in which cognitive behavior is an instrument of adaptation than as an intellectual progression.

Post-structuralism after Bourdieu.

Constitutive phenomenology entails constant re-constitution. Post-structuralism was the product of a particular historical moment when structuralism was re-constituted. During his lifetime, Bourdieu was able to sustain a correlation between his contributions to structured discourses, such as those of anthropology, sociology, philosophy, linguistics, literary and art criticism, and the structuring social conditions of his personal trajectory. The short autobiography which he wrote in the last few months of his life (Bourdieu, 2008, (2003)) attempted to remain true to the anti-humanist orientation of "Intellectual field and creative project" in that he presented his self and his intellectual work as the products of the social systems in which he had participated. The phenomenologically constitutive dimension underlying his reflexivity has been hard to preserve and his post-structuralism has been absorbed, as methodology, into resurgently autonomous discourses. Apart from attempts to counter this trend in relation to the post mortem appropriation of Bourdieu's work, one of the most promising reconstitutions of the phenomenological basis of post-structuralism has emerged in the work of Diana Coole. She concluded her first book on *Women in Political Theory*, published in 1988 when she was a Lecturer in Politics at the University of Leeds, with a chapter discussing 'Contemporary Feminism and Political Thought'. She argued that there was a need for feminist thinking to transcend the supposed duality of gender characteristics – the supposition by which male domination had perpetuated itself. She recommended that feminists 'need to engage in the demystification and deconstruction of patriarchal culture' (Coole, 1988, 276), but she insisted that recourse to genetic differentiation would be a mistake. As she put it:

'To the extent that (the contribution of women) is defined in terms of an essential female corporeality and psychology, however, the opportunity to emancipate women while redefining the world in which they live, will be lost. For then they will simply come full circle, voluntarily embracing those qualities which the earliest expressions of Western culture imposed upon them, when it structured its thinking in terms of sexual polarity in which the male principle was superior and central.' (Coole, 1988, 276-7)

In short, women need to become engaged in an ongoing, post-structuralist re-constitution of their social roles. It was only in her *Merleau-Ponty and Modern Politics after Anti-Humanism* (Coole, 2007) that her indebtedness to Merleau-Ponty became explicit even though she mentioned in her acknowledgements that she had 'had an abiding interest in Merleau-Ponty's work ever since I discovered it as a doctoral student in Toronto (Coole, 2007, vii). She justified her detailed study by submitting that Merleau-Ponty's politics 'suggests a way of returning to politics after poststructuralism, anti-humanism, and the demise of the subject.' (Coole, 2007, 1). She also asked early in her study whether Merleau-Ponty should be viewed as 'a thinker who combined phenomenology with poststructuralist sensitivity or, alternatively, a poststructuralist *avant la lettre …*' (Coole, 2007, 10), preferring herself to take the former approach. These comments suggest that Coole's perspective was shaped by the forms of post-structuralism which she wanted to oppose – forms which operated on the assumption that post-structuralism, anti-humanism, and the demise (death) of the subject were mutually reinforcing positions. My view is that Bourdieu 'combined phenomenology with poststructuralist sensitivity' and it was this that defined his poststructuralism – achieved perhaps on the basis of the way in which he effected an operational co-existence of formal and factual structuralisms. The consequence is that I concur with Coole's representation of Merleau-Ponty's position and think that Bourdieu's work and political activism manifested precisely what it was she wanted to celebrate in the achievement of Merleau-Ponty. In her discussion of the development of the work of Judith Butler, Coole has cautiously welcomed Butler's apparent recognition, in her *Undoing Gender* (Butler, 2004), that agency suggests a relational process which is at odds with her 'earlier emphasis on subjectivity as the constituted effect of power'. (Coole, 2008, 27). Coole comments that this shift in Butler's position, restoring some of the original phenomenological characteristics of her thinking, has important implications. She says of Butler's reference to phenomenological apprehension that

'It is the careful analysis of unfolding events and social trajectories this entails, together with the sociological sense of a complex social field on which it relies, that suggests a more engaged politics than poststructuralism is able to sustain.' (Coole, 2008, 27).

For me, it was the phenomenological apprehension underpinning his sociological work that defined the alternative post-structuralism which Bourdieu offered.

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[1] See Cassirer, 1923, (1910)
[2] See Cassirer, 3 vols., 1953-7, (1923-9)
[3] See Radcliffe-Brown, 1941.
[4] We know from H.L. van Breda's account, precisely what kind of access Merleau-Ponty had to the Husserl archives which had been moved to Louvain after Husserl's death in 1938. (see Van Breda, 1962)

[5] This impression may have been the consequence of the editorial work of his assistant Ludwig Landgrebe who had carried out his doctoral research on Wilhelm Dilthey and was subsequently to indicate his attachment to Heidegger's thinking

[6] For the circumstances in which Husserl wrote *Formal and transcendental Logic* and its relation to *Experience and Judgement*, see Landgrebe's introduction to *Experience and Judgement* (Husserl, ed. Landgreber, 1973, (1948).

[7] In *Revue internationale de philosophie*, edited by Eugen Fink who, like Landgrebe, was responsible for emphasizing the Heideggerian character of Husserl's late work.

[8] See Robbins, 2012.

[9] See Bourdieu's Postface to his translation of Panofsky, (Bourdieu, 1967).

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