

THE LIFE WORLD OF THE MARGINALIZED TOWARDS AN EMANCIPATORY PROJECT

Beyond Subjectivity towards Inter-Subjectivity

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Phenomenological inquiry

The discussion in this paper broadly speaking attempts towards an application of phenomenological analysis with reference to the ‘speaking’ of the lifeworld of marginalization. The application of phenomenology to the revelatory rendering of the lifeworld of the marginalised stems the backdrop of the reflection. To this let me formulate the queries as follows:

- *How phenomenological engagement be conceived as the way of ‘doing phenomenology?’*
- *Has phenomenological inquiry anything to do with the life-world of the marginalised and if it has anything to do with the life-world of the marginalised, how or in what manner such phenomenological-doing is possible and if it is possible, what is the purpose of its possibility?*
- *What are the authentic applicable sensibilities of phenomenological analysis that can be culled out as to apply, analyse and understand the lifeworld of marginalization?*
- *The broader concern of this paper is - If and when phenomenology is a way of ‘making sense’ from the ‘context of the world’, (namely the system-being construed through the ontological systems), then the query is - how the ontological contexts refers or relate to the lifeworld of the marginalised?*
- *To think the very thinking, in the spirit of phenomenology, if it means to render the question of the subjectivity existence in*

terms of authenticity, then - how or in what manner such a phenomenological engagement can be done with reference to the understanding of the subjectivity of the marginalised?

- *To what extent can we establish a phenomenological grounding on the basis of which it elucidates the lifeworld consciousness of marginalization? Is the ‘science’¹ of phenomenology potential of the revelation of the marginalised consciousness towards the accomplishment of the subjectivity of the marginalised ?*
- *How can we understand the sensibilities of the existence of the marginalised? What is the authenticity of their existence and how the marginalised reveals itself to re-affirm existence?*

By way responding to these queries the singular augment is that phenomenological analysis is the native and navigating point to explore the lifeworld of marginalization and such phenomenological engagement purports towards a phenomenology of emancipation –of emancipation of consciousness itself from its boundaries and subjectivised objectifications.

Clarifying the terms ‘marginalised’ and ‘lifeworld’

The terms marginalised and marginalised are used interchangeably in this paper. The very naming/identification of the marginalised or marginalised preconditions a position that there is something antithetical to the marginalised , something eidetic towards or against which the ‘marginalised ’ has to be conceived. The term marginalised is used in a relative sense and not necessarily in an absolute sense with the claim that the marginalised or marginalization is ontological in the sense of a pure essence. phenomenology if it is meant to be the way(s) reflecting/becoming conscious of/restoring the origin of the origin, the

¹ Phenomenology as a philosophical engagement is treated ‘science’ in the sense of providing foundations to all science by letting the science free from its presumptions. Opp.cit..p.10.

true nature, then the ‘description’ marginalised or marginalised itself needs to be bracketed and this simultaneously implies the bracketing of what has been preconditioned as un-marginalised and as primary essence cum existence.

The term lifeworld is embedded to phenomenological traditions. I use the term lifeworld not in the sense of a pre-supposed or pre-given world-outlook that gifts meaning to the individual; not in the sense of a central individualistic thought frame or pre-given ideological sensibilities that provides sensibilities of life, but it is the collective lived experience (of that of the marginalised) that continue make or demand making sense of the world ethically. The marginalised lived or life-world consciousness (as used in this paper) is but a collective consciousness, enhanced by collective memory that continuously seeks a sense freedom from the very boundaries of construed consciousness. It is a freedom consciousness, or a free-from consciousness. It is not the way letting oneself to think through the pre-established *noematic* consciousness rather it seeks its own collective consciousness.

Phenomenology of Philosophy in India²

Philosophies-in-India is often presented as a matter of knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description³ if not necessarily knowledge by phenomenological and critical analysis in terms of its lifeworld descriptions. This is one of the major concerns of Prof. K.S. Murty, a renowned Advaitic Scholar of our times. He observes that philosophy in India or philosophizing in India apart from its status as

² Prof. Satichanand Murty uses this expression Philosophy in India as the title of one of his books, (ICPR Publications), the general concern of the work is but discussion (I would say a sense of lamentation on the part of prof) of the status of philosophy in India.

³ Please refer Bertrand Russell’s distinction on knowledge by acquaintance and description. Knowledge by acquaintance is foundational knowledge because it depends on one’s acquaintance with the object itself, or with properties of or facts about the object, and not on any further knowledge of truths. Knowledge by description, in contrast, always depends on some further knowledge of truths for support; as Russell puts it, knowledge by description “always involves...some knowledge of truths as its source and ground.” <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/knowledge-acquaindescrip/>

knowledge by acquaintance/inheritance/concealment/description and reproduction has the potential of a positive futuristic direction when it recasts itself to address the questions of life. His plea is that the realm of philosophy in India be 'looked' from the angle of phenomenology. Phenomenological rendering of Indian philosophy may take two directions – (i) the phenomenological sensibilities of Indian philosophies and (ii) the phenomenology of Indian philosophies.

Who has to speak for whom? The Problematic of representation

When talking about the marginalised, perhaps we 'always' bear in mind that we are talking of/for others. We seem to be talking about the other, and the otherness of the other. This means we already pre-close our subjectivity and pretend to speak about otherness of other in an objective manner. This is sort of empirical reductionism that Husserl warns us against while engaging phenomenology. Such preferential representations, perhaps the marginalised in their subjectivity might strongly resist as it is problematic by not-sufficiently representing sensibilities of the marginalised phenomenologically. It is problematic because by retaining one's privileged subjectivity within his/her self-imposed subjectivity, and to speak of/for otherness of the other remains to be phenomenologically problematic in the sense of not knowing the other minds or experience in the way the marginalised Other knows and speaks for itself. This is sort of pretention (to use Austin) a sort of engaging an infelicitous performative speech act. The deeper issue here is that –To what extent can we speak the voice of the marginalised when the marginalised is not our-own voice? Can we speak phenomenologically of the marginalised if so, how such engagement may be made?

The site of the marginalised lifeworld

Most metaphors of human origin construe story of segmentarised origination of the human. Biblical episode sets up the origin of man and the women in mutual exteriority and then proceeds to condemnation to

labour and posits 'resurrective' possibility of the condemned human. This is the way the metaphor is phenomenologically rendered or made-appeared, made sense of, from its own pre-conceived world. The origin of human is ontologically placed as the marginalised origin whose existence needs to be 'liberated' by a Supreme Being. The story is not merely a story of the western but a story of the western ontology for long. Man and woman are not born of maternal uterus but are deduced from ontological (beyond-logical) extra-territorial territory. Thus it is not the so-called racially inferior is the marginalised, the very human and by value degradation the Who-man/woman is the marginalised. This is the origin of the being of that of human. Hence the consciousness of marginalised if to alter such subordinating consciousness needs to go beyond the very origin of the system and the system itself. It calls for an archaeological excavation of the structures of knowledge in and through which 'we' beings are created/constructed. Before the philosophical world-outlooks, before we are construed of specific ontologies, before we are tamed of ideological moralities, there is and there appears the actual world, the lived world not of things but of persons, of mother, father, filial and familial human communion. When phenomenology speaks of the world of appearance, when there is the possibility of epoch-reductions, arise this sentient world of beings, as they are in nakedness and mutuality. The origin of the consciousness of the marginalised is then an anterior to, an origin of many other origins implanted in our ascribed-conscious worlds.

Before our consciousness are thematised and schematised as monistic, monotheistic, dualistic, pluralistic etc. though our historical and philosophical and political speculations, there is the status of consciousness in its appearance of the reality of world. Anterior or prior and exterior to *thematization* of our consciousness, there is the consciousness of person-to person as human persons. The marginalised consciousness by way of standing outside the territory of pre-

designated thematised consciousness, strives to open this possibility of consciousness as humans, not in disposition of caste, class, race, power etc. but as persons in humaneness. Before the activity of ideological and existential segmentation there is the ‘social’ without segmentation, and social is to mean that humans are interdependent and intersubjective of their conscious conditions.

Sensing the phenomenological sensibilities

Husserl and Heidegger⁴ would agree that authentic accessibility to the sense of being (*Dasein*/there-being) is the central concern of phenomenological tradition (fundamental ontology) because meaning is essentially linked with (human) experience and it is authentically revealed in a mode of appearance that is devoid of any presuppositions. The task is then is to engage a double reflective attempt or double positioning that include: (i) it is by the separation of the logos from and (ii) towards the way of arriving at the foundational sense of being by way of restoring subjectivity of being human in an intentional project of intersubjectivity. This revelatory sensibility is an engagement of both a sense of from and a specific sense of towards simultaneously. In the Heideggerian sensibility, it is way of letting the consciousness to its original togetherness of thinking and questioning,⁵ the phenomenological way namely ‘thinking itself enters afresh territories.’⁶

⁴The contribution of the two German philosophers Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger (Transcendental and Existential Phenomenology) in the beginning of the 20th century is central to the discussion of phenomenology both as a philosophical position and methodology of understanding. These two thinkers spearheaded the philosophical investigation known as “Phenomenological Movement”, which progressively in-sighted significant social science research methodology. Properly speaking, it was Edmund Husserl, departing from ‘factualism/positivism/verificationsim and rationalism’ as a method of philosophical analysis embarked phenomenology as a method of ‘conceptualising’ or cognising the given phenomena but Heidegger evolved phenomenology as a system of philosophy ascribing phenomenology as a world-view. The Philosophical realm of Phenomenology both as a method and as a world-view soon influenced social sciences in the 20th century and this paper explores it mostly as methodological sensibility

⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, Indiana University Press, 1994, p.x.

⁶ *Ibid.*xii.

Such a process is known as phenomenological analysis, a conscious movement away from its *situatedness* towards its origin of the origin.

Phenomenological inquiry according to phenomenological tradition is the mode by which ‘being-there’ reveals itself from invisibility or hiddenness by approaching consciousness by way(s) conscious bracketing from/of any ontological reduction of empiricism and rationalism and cultural historicism. In practical terms, it is the sense of going beyond any pre-suppositional legacies as to capture the sense of being in its authentic nakedness of truth, thereby Husserl would claim the combination of existence and truth. This is done by systemic way(s) of exposing the logo-constructs as *eidōs* and attempt towards accomplishment of the subjectivity in the givenness of life itself, characterised by existence that is ontologically relational in nature. This is the way of going away from the forms of mis-leading as to come to grip with originality.

The conscious movement towards the capturing of the origin of the origin for Husserl, is but the phenomenological engagement on the question of life-world consciousness [*of there-being* or the sense of being (*Sinn*)] in the world and it is not thinking differently or even alternatively but a way of thinking afresh, the thinking of the very thinking phenomenologically.

Methodological rendering of the lifeworld of the marginalised engaging Husserl

One of the most persistent methodology to phenomenological analysis for Husserl is to render the invisible from what has been arbitrarily construed as to be visible – that is to say – to recast or redeem the subjective cum intersubjective consciousness of those who are reduced as marginalised and as objectified as objects of consciousness by dominant *eidōs* and structures. The methodological rendering of the invisible towards visibility, Husserl calls it as a method of *epoché* or *eidetic reduction*, the “bracketing” of the assumptions of the made-

natural attitude(s) that we rely upon in everyday life in our perceptions and social relations.

The marginalised and those who deem themselves to be pro-marginalised are thus called upon to bracket, suspend analytically (employing epistemic and ethical frame) the theoretical, rather pre-theoretical assumptions of the marginalised as ‘inferior’ ‘outcaste’ the other, the mundane etc. by way of elucidating the theoretical underpinnings and social practices that constitute marginalization of the marginalised people. Such a process for Husserl is phenomenological – to recast the racial as non-racial and to restore the subjective potential consciousness as ‘essence’ of human phenomenon. The process of elucidation of the assumptions that construe the marginalised as vulnerable is embarked by what Husserl would call it – constitutive analysis – which makes its inquiry with the probing concern – how do we constitute the sensibility of what is deemed as marginalised phenomena?

Husserl makes quite intelligible observations while engaging phenomenological analysis – i.e., to bracket the very bracketing of the people as marginalised – by positioning the lifeworld of the marginalised, by situating the phenomena of the marginalised as construed and capriciously constituted by/with/within and against a social ‘context’. Marginalisation is not natural, rather made-natural by forms of visible/invisible appropriations due to transmitted ego-logical power relations. The understanding of the marginalised and for the marginalised demands a specific sense of *perception beyond the given horizon* – a sense of transcendence to see/to understand/to position not only what is perceivable as marginalised (empirically) but to ‘see’ what is hidden, what is not-presented that is constituted by *appresentation*. The intelligibility of Heidegger with reference to the understanding of the very understanding of the lifeworld of the marginalised propels the idea that marginalisation is but a constituted reality, the truth of which is interactively ideological and structural that produce the ‘vulnerable

existential'. Therefore, the phenomenological *seeing* of the marginalised calls for a type of perception that resists the culturally and linguistically construed perceptions and their attuned meaning in terms of inferiority and vulnerability and to engage how such derogative meaning is pre-predicated against the marginalised in order that they are rendered marginalised for domination and subjugation. Husserl's intention is to breathe the subjective experience and subjective consciousness by way of going beyond the exclusivism of marginalised and prioritised and by way of dispelling or working against the pre-predicative or attributive consciousness or meanings –as to reveal and realise the fact that as humans, we are conscious and we are capable of what we are conscious of and we are conscious that our consciousness is intentionally disoriented from which humans are called upon to realise the universality of being human because of the fact that they are 'conscious and conscious of' beings. Hence it is necessary as per the phenomenological invocation that our analysis is to be carried out against any presuppositions, against any vulnerability, against any political cultural reduction or appropriations but solely in favour of our subjective experience as humans in the lifeworld. Put it differently, understanding of the life world of the marginalised (understanding itself) thus constitutes (constitutive of) the triple elements – (i) the analysis or an awareness of the pre-predications or assumptions, (ii) an awareness or consciousness of how or the way such predications are attributed/appropriated and (iii) restorative consciousness away from the predicative or enslaving consciousness contributed by socialization. Put it in simple terms, (i) the philosophical or ideological underpinnings, (ii) the cultural transmitted practices and (iii) the existential conditions that construe or make-up the marginalised, engaging the methodological acumen of Heidegger) demands a praxis of consciousness of the very consciousness in and through which humans construe as privileged or underprivileged.

In Husserl's positioning it is to become primarily aware of the acts of consciousness (noesis) and the properties of our consciousness (noema) that construe both marginalisation and rationale of marginalisation in order that human consciousness is redeemed in its pure essence as universal and not conditioned by 'contexts' the cohabit conditions of marginality and un-marginality as to overcome enslaving facets of consciousness. Put it logically, if and when the philosophical (ideological-isms) and the social preconditions if and when constitute the vulnerability of marginalization and the priority of domination, then such constitutive constitutions needs to be explored – made aware of - through phenomenological analysis – not only for sake of de-marginalization but for a phenomenological resurrection away from the boundaries/bindings of consciousness itself. This is why Husserl makes a clarion call 'back to things in themselves' and we could add – back to people in themselves as people, not of some ideology, not of some creed, not of some race/caste etc. It is kind of self-knowing (egological analysis) of the way(s) humans are subjectivised to objective/subjective conditions of marginalization as experienced in their world due to an outer world that exercise and exhibit the subordination of the vulnerable. in so doing, we could become conscious of how the sense-constitution of marginalization is thus made explicit in engaging phenomenological analysis of the lifeworld of the marginalised.

Consciousness of the marginalised as consciousness of the nearness against totalizing

Going beyond the ontological determinations is phenomenological sense of capturing the realm of nearness of the other, not as other but an inter-subjective plural other. This phenomenological propel the nearness or proximity of the Other, by way of leaving from the ontological rooms. The detour into farness makes future proximity. The approach of the marginalised not as the Other, but as sense-making-being thus opens indefinite possibilities. The status of beings placed in the pre-predicated ontic territories might resist such phenomenological

approach of the marginalised, however this is the practical praxis (ethical imperative) of the birth of a philosophy of liberation – not only of the liberation of the marginalised but pointedly the liberation of the system-being, the ontic-centre from its prisms. The ontological worlds (philosophies) is different from the metaphysics of the marginalised in the sense, the marginalised when it speaks of sense-things it does speak about the non-sense things of the self-imposing thought worlds. It is not a question of the cosmos as a totality but of real things, real sensibilities of the things/relations of the world. The marginalised when speaking phenomenologically, progressively unfolds new horizons of meaning, a meaning anterior to the layers of meanings it is constituted of. Every ontology is a totality, as Wittgenstein and Kant would put it, every world is not a world of atomic facts but it is a horizon within which all human beings find meaning. The issue then is how such totalities totalise both the marginalised and the *altern* within itself.

Phenomenological sense of the marginal(s)

Phenomenologically rendered, it is inadequate to speak of the lifeworld of the marginal people, for there is no such thing as the lifeworld of the marginalized in itself and as marginal people(s) as marginal by any essence, by the simple but profound fact that all people are humans and as humans, all partake same essence in their ontological givenness; however people are deemed/reduced as marginalized not because of any ontological, essential conditions but on the contrary due to the discriminatory existential conditions⁷ construed and implored by ideological and structural pre-giveness.

The understanding the lifeworld of the marginalized must then be approached not in the sense of a world-in-itself but a world that is implored upon; a lifeworld which is not the owned lifeworld, upon those who are marginalized by structures of unjust existentiality.

⁷ 'The discriminatory existential conditions' refer to socio-economic political existential conditions such as racism, fascism, casteism, communalism, fundamentalism, whose singular expression is totalitarianism.

Authentic understanding of the lifeworld of the marginalized calls for a fundamental phenomenological probing with the spirit of phenomenology i.e., ‘*back to things (people) in themselves*’. Such an appeal is not only a phenomenological inquiry but allied, it is an existential-ethical discourse to recast the world(s) in themselves mediated through epistemological frame work. This is to say phenomenological probing is the starting point or the threshold but it is not exhaustive of the lifeworld of the marginalised or marginalization construed by forces of oppression. As primordial prerequisite, phenomenological engagement in relation to the lifeworld of marginalization attempts to resurrect the subjectivised or enslaved consciousness implored by forms of marginalization and subordination which is otherwise hitherto buried by structures of false-consciousness imbibed by the fixed patterns or ‘*aporia*’ of objectification and subjectification of the marginalized. this we inherit from Husserl’s way of doing phenomenology as he attempts to get rid of the vicious circularity of rationalistic claim of Descartes.

For Husserl, the main task of phenomenology is let the ‘fly out of fly bottle’ conceived by Descartes that fossilised the modernist frame of mind to exclusivist reduction of reality in terms of extended vs. unextended, body vs. mind, spirit vs. matter, the subject self vs. the object other, the thinking self as autonomous ego vs. the unthinking world as arbitrary and such categorization by extension construe a sense of totalitarian exclusivism of the other, namely whatever is deemed vulnerable, therefore marginalised and hence lesser being(s). Husserl invocation is that the inference of Descartes from *ego cogito* to the *ergo sum* (I think therefore, I am) as pure consciousness must be altered and recast with the concept of intentional existentiality. Put it otherwise, the extended mundane, namely the marginalised are pre-construed and intended (by forms of subordination and subjugation) to be marginalised and their consciousness is always, to begin with, a consciousness of their marginalisation vis-à-vis a consciousness away

from marginalization. On the contrary, the inclusive category that positions itself as prioritised self, as the subject-self and by social extension, the dominant is as well pre-disposed by specific systemic rationality as superior to the marginalised and its consciousness pure and hence liable to its sole existence as against the category which is relegated as vulnerable. such a rationalistic orientation and its existential disposition according to Husserl needs to eroded by recasting consciousness to its original nature. Put is otherwise, phenomenological engagement of consciousness attempts a radical sense of emancipation of the very consciousness itself from its mis-orientations.

Husserl would point out that in Descartes derivation of pure consciousness as pure existence is insufficient for it misses the fact that ego cogito is not pure but it is always a sense of *cogitatum*. For *Husserl*, *Ego cogito* cannot occur as pure consciousness but is always bound to the *cogitatum*, as something that ought to be re-cognised, resurrected, intentionally and for the marginalised lifeworld, their sense of consciousness is not only intentional as *cogitatum* but ethical – a voluntary consciousness that questions the very subjugation of their consciousness and reveal itself as emancipatory consciousness, thereby marginalised consciousness is a cognition by a specific sensibility of what s/he is conscious of, for there is ‘no cognition without consciousness. Thereby the consciousness of the marginalised and the consciousness about the marginalised demands the overcoming of the *aporia* that forms of totalitarianism has produced and conditioned the marginalised as marginal(s).

Taking Husserl seriously and applicably from the point of view of marginalisation is to be-come conscious of the consciousness of the lifeworld of the marginalised and the world that propel marginalization and to respond to it with a sense of emancipatory consciousness.

Western Ontologies as in-sufficient sense appearance to the marginalised⁸

The Greek, the Medieval and the Euro-centric ontologies is permeated with the discussion of the status and the nature of Being, placing it as the centre-stage Being. They often exalted Being as pure cognition, different from the beings of nature (physics) because Being as such is pure lumen (the light) the self-revealing lamination, in whose 'sight' the nature, the plurality of existential beings is 'objects' to be seen by the Being as such. The Supreme Being is ontologically construed as the –all seeing seer,' the seer of the Other, the Knower of the Other, and Ruler of the other, in whose sight the hierarchy of sensual and non-sensual beings let themselves to be seen. Such a predominant ontological *sight* sets aside by specific logic of exclusion an array of beings as hierarchically inferior to each other. Such ontologism conceptually construes a non-proximate relation amongst Being, beings and lesser beings and non-beings. The possibility of a poetic and proximate intersubjective sensibility is thus fore-closed by an Aristotelian logic of oppositional yet relations propositional status. The marginalised-other in most western philosophical thought frames (metaphysics of presence) is located as hierarchically excluded other in mutual oppositional subordination. The nearness to the Being of the Centre is farfetched to the beings of the non-centre, namely that of the marginalised-other.

Within and beyond such ontological centrism, lies the locus of the marginalised-Other in an non-appearance manner; in a subdued or subordinated manner; in an invisible manner; in an exiled and excluded manner. The approaching of the centre-staged being (is-being) towards the marginalised-being (the non or insufficient being and the non-being & as not-yet-a-being) is treated as to be governed in governance (in

⁸ Please refer Enrique Dussell, *Ethics and Community*, Orbis Books, NY, 1993 for an in-depth reading of phenomenology of liberation.

medievalism this governance is Church) in modern times, this governance is the dominant political state, in the recent times, this governance is the dominance of technological Euro-centred being) whose governance is predisposed as divinely ordained, self-legitimised and traditionally sanctified and passed on – by and on its own authority. Hence, the approaching of the marginalised towards the centre-staged-being is either an impossible mission or a possible strategic pilgrim by a mode of successive subordination.

Totality as absolving and appropriating consciousness

Consciousness, awareness, nearness, mutual closeness or inter subjective presence is fore-closed in/by the thought-systems of the dominant western thought/practices. The problem then is how the impassable gap between and amongst the hierarchy of beings be at least be shortened if not be completely be traversed. The phenomenological question of the marginalised Other, is how to phenomenologically render the shortening the segmentation, categorisations of the categories of understanding as to enable afresh presence in most authentic ways possible? The approach of marginalised-Other (to Philosophy and to Persons) is not approach characterised by the benevolence and gratification but one of a mutual consciousness of each other's subject as inter-subjective presence. To come closer, to the nearness of each other, the marginalised conceives is not a possibility within the ontological territory that constitutes exclusion of beings hierarchically but the origin of the origin of consciousness of the intersubjective presence starts beyond or outside the ontological systems. It is an Outside the racial ontology, outside the hegemonic cultural and ideological underpinnings, outside the 'world' of patriarchy. Such philosophical coming closer begins from beyond the beginnings of the ontological centres.

The marginalised to a major extent remains to be a non-metaphysical exteriority within territory of philosophies in India. The locus of the

being of the marginalised does not enjoy or have any 'appearance' to make sense of it. By being kept-away in exteriority, the sense-making of the marginalised, the consciousness of/about the marginalised is either absent or silenced within the classical philosophical discussions. The marginalised as the other is not even an 'appearance' or mere phenomenon or a reality within the Indian philosophical territories to the extent that the being of the marginalised is made-unnoticed, if not violently silenced. The ontological question, namely the question of being of that of the marginalised falls outside the ontological territories of many philosophies in India. As either as non-ontological exterior entity or as a bracketed being, the sight of the marginalised remains outside or the periphery of the centrality of being. The question of being is either at level of devoid of the world or system-being or relatively reduced to the level of transitory sensibility. The being of the marginalised, therefore, is both a cultural and ontic presupposition surfaced as the exclusive entity to be treated in exclusion. In so doing the centre-staged-being epistemologically enclosed to its own self-construed consciousness (objects of consciousness) absolves itself away from consciousness of the marginalised /other being. As an absolved consciousness, the ontologically pre-centre-staged-being is curtailed and enveloped to the self-imposed luxury of/to its own self-understanding. Heidegger would point out this problematic thus, "What is known through absolving is that knowledge itself is a way of knowing, is aware of itself, and is a self-consciousness. Thus in self-consciousness we realize two things: (1) that knowledge can be detached and (2) that there is a new form of knowledge which can be consciousness (whose) ...knowing insists on the I and remains entangled with itself, such that it gets tied to the self and the I. Thus this knowledge is bound and relative in two aspects: (1) this knowledge knows itself as self and (2) it distinguishes this self from existing things (marginalised-being). In this way, self-consciousness remains relative in spite of detachment that has asserted itself. Nevertheless, it is just

this self-consciousness, relative in one aspect and not relative in another, that reveals the possibility of a detachment or liberation. This liberation indeed such that it does not discard that from which it liberates itself; but in knowingly absolving itself---knowing it—it takes and binds itself, as that which frees itself. This self-conscious knowledge of consciousness is, so to speak, a relative knowledge which is free; but as relative it is still not absolute, still not genuinely free. ” obviously, Heidegger goes on to observe the danger of absolute self-consciousness of itself, that the centred self-conscious being is a ‘pure kind of non-relative knowledge that which absolves itself even from self-consciousness.’”⁹ Such absolute knowledge position, Heidegger observes, is conceived and is exclusively aware of itself only as system. Heidegger observes that the western metaphysics is predominantly ontology of the centre, (for e.g. Hegel’s Absolutism) and there by conceals/constrains self-consciousness as free-from-consciousness. In other words, the centred positioning of being (system-being) as absolute, absolves the being of the other(s) as belonging outside the system, thereby the system-being is identified with two way mediations – (1) of that of self-enclosure and (2) that of the Other-exclusion. From the sensitivity of the marginalised -Other, such dialectical meditational process of both self and Other enclosures calls for a sense of a freedom of consciousness of itself. It strives for the (1) freedom of consciousness of the consciousness itself from its systemic (ontological) absolving or absolute positioning and (2) the freedom of the consciousness of the marginalised as the non-conscious entity. Thus, when rendered phenomenologically, the marginalised consciousness operates for/at two intersecting levels – the sense of freedom of consciousness of both *self-conscious-self* (being as pure consciousness) from its systemic ontological boundaries and the freedom of the consciousness of the marginalised from being

⁹ Martin Heidegger, Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit, (Trans., by Parvis Emand & Kenneth Maly), p.15-16.

considered exterior to, as out-caste, as non-centred being. The marginalised consciousness with reference to any absolutism, ontologism, epistemic centralism, operates with a double edged sensitivity – (1) the sensitivity of the slavery of the centred being and the sensitivity of the exclusive enclave of the marginalised being. Liberation sensibility, therefore (consciousness) begins from such phenomenological bracketing of that of the centred-being and the non-centred being(s).

Against this backdrop we need to read the Husserlean sense of transcendental phenomenology which asserts the view that meaning is essentially linked with human experience and it is authentically revealed in a mode of appearance that is devoid of any presuppositions. The meaning-making or sensibility of the marginalised, by departing itself away from or allowing itself to be treated as exterior entity strives to contest against very system that construes both self and Other estrangement. Thus the phenomenological engagement is the native/starting point of disclosure, a disclosure of the enclosed-self and the disclosure of the excluded other-selves. This is a kind of disembodied consciousness (not in the transcendental/an-other world sensibility), transcendental of the system that envelops and excludes the sense of authenticity of consciousness. In the terminology of Immanuel Kant, ‘we are claimed to have access to phenomena or appearance but not to things in themselves.’

The non-accessibility to things-in-themselves, the non-accessibility to authenticity of the sense of being-with is constituted by ‘some’ ascribed consciousness, from which the consciousness of the marginalised seeks to disembody itself. The notion of the consciousness as embodied and disembodied takes newer perspective of phenomenological discussion within the phenomenological engagement in relation to the marginalised life-world consciousness. This seems to be movement from embodiment to disembodyment not in the ‘other-worldly’ sense, but in the sense of transcendence from and outside the systems of

thought that construe and constrain human consciousness within the specified ontological categories of understanding. All of these views place a great deal of emphasis on the notion of a disembodied consciousness that somehow constructs the world it perceives. The consciousness of the subaltern thus starts from the existential and of ontological fore-grounds of exteriority and conceives itself as always excluded and therefore partial or non-primary. The (Indian/western) ontologies that affirm a sense of absolute centrality of being seems to be like a lame person, able to see, but cannot walk, and the consciousness of the marginalised within the system is unfortunately entranced towards the becoming of the centrality (freedom as movement from exclusion towards inclusive primacy within the system) is like a blind person who cannot see but able to walk. What is needed is the able-ness of both the blind and the lame, so that what is phenomenological, what 'appears as' is transcended into what is actual and ethical. Phenomenology from the point of view of the marginalised is initial force (the starting point) and not the end force towards the sense of freedom-consciousness.

From Phenomenology towards a phenomenology of liberation

The lifeworld consciousness of the marginalised is thus situated and pitched from this back-drop (starting point) of what appears and how they appear in the layers of consciousness of those totalising/absolving/appropriating ontologies. The marginalised is positioned as anterior to and exterior of. If it the entire marginalised can mean anything it can only make sense by non-affirmative attribution. To begin with, from the sight of the ontological centre, the life world of the marginalised is not a knowledge by ascription or knowledge by description; it is simply a non-knowledge, a non-entity, a non-appearance because the marginalised as the Other is not a phenomenological (or phenomenal) appearance to make-sense but a disappearance from the sight of the absolute centre and therefore it does not make any sense or construed of any sensibility (consciousness)

(metaphysical meaning). The marginalised as the other is not an appearance or mere phenomenon or an object but always held to be in metaphysical and cultural exteriority. From the backdrop of the ‘world’ and the system-being, the marginalised engagement begins from there but does not end up with that. It seeks for a sense of system-being to intersubjective being. If phenomenology can provide this nativity, capturing its sensibility is important to begin with. Perhaps we can make sense of the marginalised in contrast to the *altern*. The namelessness of the marginalised, the devoid of subjectivity of the marginalised, the out-castness of the marginalised, the deprivation of the marginalised, the negations of the marginalised – all are constituted in the sense of non-affirmative categories of understanding, which amounts to the impossibility of cognising the marginalised within the predominant philosophical territories of India. No wonder, the voice of the women, the voice the subdued, the voice of the out-caste-other is either not heard or kept meditatively silenced in the voice of Indian philosophical boundaries.

The lifeworld of marginalised continuously attempts to go beyond forms of predeterminations and *a priori* perceptions so that it may be absolutely rendered unconscious to the consciousness of the ontological centre. Given to forms pre-giveness of both exteriority and centrality, the consciousness, specifically of the marginalised consciousness is constructed by the marginalised themselves within the system and by others, either in for/against the marginalised. In such situations, the marginalised does not seek its *free-from consciousness* in the hope that it can occupy the authoritarian centre or be attracted towards the politics of the centre; rather it resists any forms of hierarchical centralities of either of domination or subordination.

The consciousness of the marginalised is not fatalistic and fetish of the system of thought. By mediating against the very mediations that enslave their consciousness, the marginalised seeks to create afresh its own his/her story. The marginalised creates its own story, along with it

its own world-outlook, from the lived experience of this metaphysical exteriorities and denials. The marginalised does not and cannot afford to lament on the pain pathology for long, for it ethically implores upon itself to re-create its/his/her story from the ontological grounds that excluded it. This is a sense of hermeneutical engagement, not exactly a sense of antagonism, but sense altruism. The marginalised while creating its own histories and with it propels to its life world in time and space by transcending from the live-world enforced upon it. In so doing, the marginalised reveals itself as subjectivity not in isolated sense, but in an inter-subjective way. The excluded extend beyond themselves (go beyond their subjectivities) and do attempt to embrace those subjectivities that are subjectivised by/into the onto-logos of any totalised systems. The logic of externality axiomatised by the grounding ontologies is progressively transferred to a language of relationalities. The ontological determinations as 'being-is' and the non-being as is-not, is increasingly traversed. In practical terms, this is to uncover the principles/practices of domination of the system and the practice of subordination towards/to the system that alienates not only the marginalised -other, but the very being that it claims to enclose. The double alienation, (1) the alienation of the self that is self-imposed in the appropriating system of thought, and (2) the alienation of the Other that is externalised away from the system is alienated by the marginalised for alienation (self-isolation and other isolation) is the veil (theory of maya) with which the face of the mutual other is covered (ideologically) as not to be explored, questioned, resisted and doubted. This is the practice of epistemic self-defence, a sense of self-legitimation of truth. Thus 'suffering' is pre-determined (not fatalistic) but phenomenological of a totalised system of thought. Be it science or philosophy, such body of knowledge/consciousness needs to be practices of a *net...neti* mediations. This process of double negation, the negation of the negations construed by the system,

phenomenologically speaking, is but an ethical metaphysics of liberation.

By way of coming closer to sense-making of the totality as non-sense making to the marginalised, the marginalised -Other is directed towards the every-other-person in proximity. This implies a sense of both metaphysical and physical closeness and nearness in mutual presence, not in the sense of privileged or under privileged sensibilities. The ontological classificatory discourse is thus resisted by renderings its dubious foundations. Socrates, Descartes, Marx, Gramsci, Lyotard, Derrida exercises this phenomenological sense of reduction of the Ontic-centre in order that the metaphysical discourse leads physical (political/social) discourse and vice versa.

Husserl, in his work, *'The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology'*; (1936) embarks upon the question of meaning and authenticity of the sense of human existence. In the work, he argues that it is not the life-world (construed system/presuppositions) that pre-dispose a sense of meaning to the humans but it is human existential live-world (human lived experience) that gives sense to life. The lived experience of the marginalised human as a deprived-being, his existential conditions of deprivations is the sense-things that urges towards making sense of life. It is the conviction that human beings live in a world not in which life makes sense, but in which they must make sense of life. The marginalised human and for that matter, the human is not a passivity, 'a given-being' but a 'giving-being,' a plural inter-subjectivity that gives meaning from the existential struggle against irrational, insufficiently sensible positions such as irrationality of rationality of that of the medieval ontologies and objectivism of positivism. By way of a practice negation of meaningless permeated by these categories, Husserl posits a non-pre-suppositional understanding of life. The marginalised lifeworld consciousness is one such attempt to let itself free from the already-assumed layers of consciousness.

The marginalised lifeworld consciousness is then a movement from the 'world as appears' to the 'worlds in themselves'. It is to think about thought that subordinates the self and other; it is consciousness as reflective consciousness which is different from merely being in the state of consciousness or experiencing the consciousness of pain, the denial. The phenomenality of consciousness is moving towards reflexivity. It is in this sense; may I call it, a specific movement from phenomenology towards a phenomenology of liberation. This is both and at the same time philosophical and practical, neither of it is an exclusive sophistication or categorisation. The social (knowledge) is at once philosophical and the philosophical is at once social, the aesthetic synchronization of both is the way (hopefully) of directional Indian philosophizing.

A question on morality

Can we speak of an ethic of phenomenology? Does our phenomenological rendering be ascribed of ethics? We have many moralities, of that of systems, thoughts and societies and religions. The multiplicities or the multiple appearances of moralities is rich but complex, rich by their cultural profundity but complex by their claims as absolute morality against other moralities. 'These multiplicities of moralities must not be measured by epistemic yardstick of yet-another morality. The temptation to epitomise a morality against other morality is the way ontological system make/made their colonizing appearance and practice. These moralities need to be subjected ethical-epistemological scrutiny. The morality of caste, the morality race, the morality of colonising agency though garbed in moral propositional status quo, they by their differentiations are not moral with reference to interventional point of view of the marginalised. Moralities do undergo change. They pass through history. What is 'good' in a specific time and space need not be 'universally good.' Relativism of moral claims is not universal ethic. Hence, the consciousness of the marginalised focussed towards its emancipation propels a sense of ethical and

prophetic critiques of moralities in order that ethics is restored to its origin.¹⁰ Take for instance, the tragedy of Chennai floods simultaneously brought forth precarious moment of togetherness of the people of Chennai and world across, beyond the partitions of caste, creed, and status.¹¹ We do need to celebrate this precious moment of togetherness but that is not enough. We need to wonder why this does not last. Whenever calamity has struck people across society's partitions, just for a short period, human beings share a profound sense of universality and inter-actionable possibilities (Intersubjectivity). During conditions of a calamity, we, as humans began to see in everyone the same fear, anxiety that we are experiencing and realise that our philosophical adherences, religious beliefs, caste affiliations or fancy homes are not safe havens to respond to the problem of estrangements. Briefly, we come in contact with humanity and we embrace every living being.

Conclusion

In fine, we may infer that the marginalised -lifeworld consciousness posits a (radical) sense of moving away from, a sense of liberation not purely phenomenologically but practically and in poiesis manner. Taking the side of the marginalized and the underrepresented or misrepresented remains to be engaging dimension of very phenomenological probing against militant forms of ideological hegemony because phenomenological analysis perceives every hegemonic ideology as something other than ideology, veiled as objectivity or as form of truth beyond human nature and conditions, in which the voice of the marginalised, however rightfully epistemic and ethical demanding justice, it is often interpreted as biased. Phenomenological inquiry thus is let the elephant speak for itself, not the blind-men to speak and name the elephant even though in the

¹⁰ Enrique Dussell, *Ethics and Community*, Orbis Books, NY, 1993, p.27-35

¹¹ <http://scroll.in/article/775495/chennai-floods-dissolved-many-social-barriers-but-can-the-city-make-the-sense-of-solidarity-linger>

language of it is pluralistic relative. Beyond any totalitarianism and beyond any relativism there lies the 'revelation,' the liberation of both subjectivised and objectivised self. Such liberation-consciousness emanates from the ontological system that abnegates both the construed self and the construed marginalised -other. this philosophical engagement is not a inevitable Hegelian dialectics, not a Marxian inevitability of classless society by 'war positioning of classes against each other' but intra-systemic and inter-subjective conscious action that attempts negate or subvert the very negations and subversions constituted by our philosophical ontologies first and simultaneously the social sense of liberation. A freedom that is situated for human is always a 'situated being in the world'. In the practical senses liberation consciousness of the marginalised is both a freedom from and a freedom to; freedom of the subordinated nature and the subjugated people. This liberative epistemological act calls for specific mediation on the part of the philosophical community from an ethical basis. "Liberation is not a phenomenal, intra-systemic action; liberation is the praxis that subverts the phenomenological and pierces into a metaphysical significance is the critical total provisions, fixed, standardized, crystallized, and dead. Beyond phenomenology way will have the revelation of the other down her face. The release subverts the very phenomenological metaphysical transcendence toward criticizing everything set, being able to speak of an epistemology of liberation ethic, an ability towards voice/pain of the marginalised s, rises from the layers of excluded periphery and accept their questing and thinking devoid of any absolutized/culturally standardised discretions. It a sense, this is to go-beyond phenomenology itself. It is ways towards the authentic revelations of the sense-humans to make sense of life. This would be a closure of the system that negates and disclosure of afresh possibilities of beyond the phenomenology of the systems. It opts for a sense of togetherness in conditions of self-other estrangements. There is a phrase in Sanskrit, "*smashana vairagyam*", which refers to people's

philosophical ramblings on the impermanence of life and the futility of all material things when they attend a funeral. We hold on to this feeling for about a day, only to return to self-aggrandisement. This is no different.¹² From self-imposed subjectivity (cogito ego) (marginalised in the face of deprivations are ethically implored to gain momentum towards a collective consciousness, a sense of intersubjective consciousness, the revelation that they are ontologically of the same essence – namely their fragility, and the very fragility calls for interdependence. The consciousness of the fragility of the marginalised-human thus opts for an intersubjective presence beyond any naming and tagging, and cultural positioning. Perhaps it is not far from truth if we say that when faced with disastrous/discriminatory space and temporality, perhaps, Husserl's subjectivity or consciousness of oneself as self-consciousness turns out to be intersubjective. The marginalised-other is thus the subject-other per se in/for justice. For this what is required of is a sense of atheism of the system that construes exclusivist hierarchical positioning of human beings. Would philosophy or philosophers bring about such intersubjectivity in the face or claims against totalitarian systems of philosophy by pronouncing erosion into the very world of philosophical outlook as to promote insurrectionary proximity-praxis of the inter-subjective existence.

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¹² Ibid.

