

Some Questions Concerning Husserl's Critique of the Epistemology of Kant

Abstract

By Goran Sommardal (瑞典)

The argumentation of this paper pivots around Immanuel Kant's groundbreaking endeavour to sublimate [aufheben] the metaphysical dualism represented by Descartes, by employing a basically epistemological approach to replace the archaic and historically overlapping and competing dichotomies of body & soul, matter & mind, inner & outer, object & subject. Kant accomplished this by applying a *non-empiricist critique of classical rationalist philosophy*.

The seemingly strict title does not reveal the fact that the line of reasoning in the paper only initially is concerned with Husserl's outright critique of Kant's foundation for his theory of epistemology, and successively develops into a crafty strategem in defence of Kant's first principles and furthermore provides with a substantial contribution to Kant's enduring relevance. To this end Can Xue employs what she considers to be Husserl's misfired criticism of Kant as a point of departure for elucidating some of the ambiguities she finds in Kant's account of the interconnectedness between das Ding-an-sich and the coming-into-being of the observing Self. Thus the reader is also presented with her foremost arguments in favour of Kant's theory of knowledge pitted against philosophers such as Husserl, Hegel och Sartre. She especially appreciates the former's unwobbling affinity for the worldly, the mundane: "In Kant's epistemology there is a secular tendency to the material, which is embodied in the definition of experience as the fundamental element of cognition."

In gradually broadening the scope of her quest to a philosophy of life, Can Xue also touches the probability of finding parts of the rhizome of Husserl's critique of Kant not only within philosophy as such but within the broader and more perilous realm of historiography and its underground of discursive practices. Thus, philosophy will be required to perform its impeccable service to logos as well as contribute to the self-perception of philosophers, humans as it were.

In her concluding remarks Can Xue demonstrates why she trusts that the inadequacies of what she sees as Kant's unintentional or even mistaken dualism of man's faculty of understanding and the conceptualization of das Ding-an-sich "can be transformed into a new type of dialectical contradiction theory, which will enrich the structure of contemporary man's view of nature and make it glow with new vitality". Thus, this could be considered to be the obvious viewpoint of the philosopher as a writer, with the goal of "reaching the essential being of things through the joint efforts of flesh and spirit."

In the same vein as the *Literature Study Group* in the twenties made *Literature is the study of man* their guiding slogan, nearly a hundred years later Can Xue echoes the existentialist catchphrase of *Philosophy is anthropology*, neatly summed up in: "Humans should build up real confidence in their own selves and view the individual selves and the selves of the world they have built as a coherent whole." Thus she highlights an urgent issue in today's chaos of ideas -- the problem of communication and interfluence between

spirit and body. To reach that level of communication she envisages a world | 境界 where mind and body exist as a both divisive and uniting contradiction, being as we are children of nature, taking at least one step away from anthropologies as defined by e.g. Kant, Husserl and Sartre.