Endnotes

1 This brief account does not capture other themes in Descartes' thinking which have had currency in the development of contemporary thought. For example, his division of ontic substances into mind and body led to the debate between Empiricism and Rationalism.

2 Descartes' attempt to overcome the solipsism of this line of thought involved a version of the ontological

argument for the existence of a non-deceiving God, a detail ignored in the dominant modern philosophies.

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Po-Mo : Professor Mary Klages Return to English 2010 Home Page

repossess technology as a function of choice for human good. The value of economic development for its own sake may be transformed by claiming it in the service of human persons.

Insofar as phenomenology breaks free of modernity, it encourages, in Robert Sokolowski's words, "a restoration of the convictions that animated ancient and medieval philosophy. Like premodern philosophy, phenomenology understands reason as ordered to truth" (Sokolowski, 2000, p.202). In addition, according to Sokolowski, phenomenology neither rejects modernity nor rebels against the perennial tradition in philosophy. Rather, phenomenology is "a recovery of the true philosophical life, in a manner appropriate to our philosophical situation" (p.203). Sokolowski notes the urgency of the need to develop a phenomenological political philosophy firmly rooted in corporeality and personhood.

Post-Modern thought in the West bequeaths a range of epistemologies, some of which include sentiment and emotion as well as reason. Its *laissez faire* attitude can open up pervasive values that transcend cultural differences, since post-modernist ethics prohibits valorizing particular principles. Someday, we may work our way back to differentiating between cultures on the grounds that some cultures make it easier to live a good human life than others. The objectivity that modern thinkers so readily assumed was available need not be replaced by pernicious subjectivity. Though the knower be a subject, some knowledge may be intersubjectively and thus objectively appreciated. Differences need not be homogenized; they can be prized on the basis of shared human strivings.

A return to rationality does not require that reason assume the role of highest value.

Reason can lead us together to a realm of mutual freedom. A real "post" modernism opens up historical and cultural goods and possibilities by retrieving and respecting the aesthetic, political, scientific and spiritual achievements of others of various times and places. To do less fails to keep the philosophic faith in truth by replacing it with sophisms that claim more than humans can know about what truth is or deny the possibility of truth at all. Alain Badiou, a neo-post-modern critic of postmodernist platitudes, writes "Thus the ethic of truths, relation or un-relation, between the construction of a truth and its potency, is that by which we take the measure of what our times are capable of, as well as what our times are worth. Such is, in a word, the very task of philosophy" (Badiou, 2005, p.51).

be re-understood, reassumed with the recognition that reading any text involves interpreting it. A variety of interpretative schemes abound only because the proper theme of post-modernity is the necessity for justifiable interpretative theory.

Post-moderns are indebted to Husserl, as he is indebted to the earlier tradition. The infinite tasks which Husserl describes as the future of philosophy involve the whole of intellectual endeavor. We must re-think the presuppositions of the various times, since we are self-consciously located at the turning of an age. Thus, our time is a time of confusion, although we can see with a depth which goes beyond the skepticism of the late Greeks or the exaggerated individualism of the late Moderns. We withhold submission to the "facts" of earlier ages, because we recognize that all facts are selected facts. None of this is to claim, with the Post-Moderns, that truth is not the aim of reason and the hope of peoples is to reason together in search for it.

Perhaps to overcome modernity is finally to see that we must dwell in a world which we inform as we receive it. The belief in a truncated rationality, which reached its zenith in the eighteenth century, but continues to dominate the intellectual scene in the West, can dupe us no longer. We understand that rationality is a technique for interpretation of that which is pre-given for us to experience. More, reason provides intersubjective grounds for mutual recognition among peoples of different cultures and beliefs.

What difference does it make to post-modernism to slide over differences among contemporary thinkers and schools of thought, to find their unity in the radical questioning of modern assumptions? If we understand this to be our direction, can we then decide where we are to go? If we are to agree on the initial task of re-thinking modernity and its completion in post-modernity, we may be encouraged to organize a more thoroughgoing critique than we have to date. Modernity needs to be examined because its operative presuppositions contaminate all of our endeavors. The metaphysics of naturalism in the guise of materialism cannot contain human meaning. The failure of modernity finally was its inability to gain access to what is properly human or to provide any grounds for so doing. Mathematics is not suitable for establishing a dialogue which can disclose appropriate human values. Without any such guidance, modern technology became an exercise in realizing its capacities. Perhaps to see the human being as cut loose from fundamental experience, at sea in the vastness of possibilities, is the presupposition of the moderns most in need of challenge. We may then

sense in which I am employing it. Feminists suspend the modern interpretation of male and female in order to engage in discussion about historical and actual alternate possibilities which rest upon the lived *experience* of gender rather than what men lately have thought about women or how women are now constructing their gender identity in the West. Glib assumptions that notions of "nature," as in human nature or woman's nature must be retrograde are one of the aspects of our times that this paper argues against. The emphasis on personhood in third-wave feminism may be an occasion to glimpse the human essence manifested in differently sexed persons.

In Derrida's deconstruction, in Irigaray's feminism, in Thom's mathematical theory, in Gadamer's hermeneutics, in Wilson's sociobiology, in Magritte, Frank Stella and Jasper Johns's paintings and so forth, the nouveau is not simply more of the same, or is it? The post-modern age claims to signal radical discontinuity. We are presently engaged in describing that which we are disengaging, the presuppositions of modernity. Insofar as we are skeptical or critical of modernity, we have and are reducing the world of the modern age to an historical manifestation of one set of possibilities, not necessarily to be privileged in a grand historical scheme. Now that world intellectually is a world of an earlier time during which quantitative rationality, it was assumed, provided the means to a well-lived human life. We can reflect back upon that world view critically only if we no longer take its assumptions for granted.

The very inquiry into the Modern or the Post-Modern demonstrates how the technique of phenomenological suspension applies to history and culture. To the extent that the stirrings of post-modernism are unified, contemporary intellectuals suspend historicism. Still the prejudice of the present holds sway. We understand ourselves to be located at the threshold of a new world, yet too inclined to limit its expanse. We stand, thus, between worlds; we can remember and imagine earlier worlds, but our real experience demands new categories, new institutions, and new beliefs. All of this is to say that some of the divergences of thinkers such as Derrida, Gaudier, Heidegger and Husserl are more apparent than real. Their fundamental thinking runs along like lines. Their questionings share a starting point: the modern is at an end. Modernity can provide no further new direction; it has led to a *cul de sac*. Where modernity sought to overthrow the tradition, the new task is rightly to assimilate it all through disclosing its various contexts and guiding *arche*. The text of the intellectual history of the world remains to

which post-modernism represents is a break with the immediate past, but not an assumption of other possibilities hidden in the history of philosophy. We cannot advocate a return to an earlier golden age, since time is real and history is efficacious only insofar as it summarizes and includes its past. To say that history repeats itself is to say that humans fail is understand where they come from and replay previous attempts. This kind of activity is needless and wasteful. Surely, post-modernism will not fall prey to the error of romanticizing any past era. If my thesis, that what distinguishes post-modernism from its antecedents is its suspension of earlier assumptions in a systematic fashion in the various disciplines, holds then what is remarkable about our time is its consciousness of the intellectual complexities involved in a renewal of archaic experience.

The hermeneutical endeavors which the 19th and 20th centuries rehabilitated have taken over the frontiers of historical, literary and philosophical thought. They make sense if meaning is bestowed in interpretations and the nature of intentional meaning is to cover up its presuppositions. Intentional consciousness overlooks that which it does not mean to see. Similarly, to deconstruct meaning is finally to suspend traditionally sedimented meanings in favor of a process of emancipation. Basically, deconstructive activity is dependent upon withholding conventional interpretations in "higher" levels of reflection or meta-criticism. Even Derrida's objections to Husserl's "metaphysics of presence" and what he sees as Husserl's ontologism, reveal Derrida to be performing a reduction which is more far-reaching than his interpretation of Husserl allows. I think that rather than a rejection of phenomenology, Derrida guides us to a clearer understanding of the application of Husserl's infamous reduction to intentionality and perhaps even to metaphysics. Derrida's larger issues concerning the possibilities and the interplays of meanings are available only when a move on the order of the phenomenological reduction removes the thinker from the givenness of pre-interpretations and allows him to question meanings and tissues of meanings as intentional events.

Much of the same kind of observation can be made about contemporary feminism. Its great interest to both men and women is due to the range of the critique which it provides of the inherited gender attribution and the sedimented power structure which depends upon such role attribution. Contemporary feminists provide insight because they have seen through the inherited wisdom in order to question its presuppositions. Surely, such a move is phenomenological in the wide

reliance on an impoverished sense of reason as calculation enabled great conquests and discoveries. These achievements were expensive, as are all conquests and discoveries. They required alienation of human beings from ourselves and others and nature.

More truthfully, however, western history should be seen as a continuum wherein new themes are interwoven with those of earlier times, present in its past. Augustine, Avicenna, Moses Maimondes and Thomas Aquinas, for instance, had little difficulty assimilating Greek metaphysics for the service of the new set of presuppositions present in the religions of the peoples of the Book. Meanwhile, pagans lived on in Europe and other peoples established and continued cultures in the East. Phenomenology itself owes debts to the intellectual achievements which preceded it. After all, in order for a suspension of beliefs to be possible, there must be beliefs in place first, as well as thinkers who are working their way through them. Thus, despite Immanuel Kant's attempt at a thoroughgoing apology for science, his thinking implies an acknowledgment of perspectivity which can become ironically one of the avenues for escaping the confines of modernity. Kant and later Albert Einstein renewed Plato's insight that the activity of the philosopher, scientist or mathematician was never possible from a deity's point of view. Within the confines of a shared rationality, we can discover only what we are capable of seeing from a human vantage point. The situation of the knower or experimenter colors what his results will be. Renaissance and Modern "Objectivity" is possible if and only if the anonymous functionary of the quantified sciences is not a human functionary. Otherwise, the knower effects what he knows as the net which the fisherman uses effects his catch. To take this insight seriously is, of course, to question the cherished hope upon which modernity feeds. If it is not possible to know the world as it "really is" and if, more seriously still, the notion of "really is" is incoherent, the future of that design is unfulfillable. This line of criticism is that in which post-moderns in various endeavors are engaged. The end of modernity means, then, the abstention from the contexts of modernity which are no longer the only ways open to us.

To find instead the roots of interpretation in the intentionality which Abelard, Avicenna, Thomas Aquinas and Mulla Sadra glimpsed is to discover the roots of post-modernism already embodied in the tradition. It makes as much sense to say that the seeds for the rebirth of the tradition are present in Socrates and Plato as to say that the seeds for its flowering and decline are included in its beginning. The discontinuity

God's sensorium, can be described mathematically by anyone who leaves his perspectivity aside in order to engage in such description. Hosts of mathematicians, scientists, and philosophers expanded the range of human knowledge and the concomitant scope of human power. For the moderns, what it means to be human is to be able to calculate from the deity's point of view. The "objective" universe of science and mathematics is humankind's new home, which seems to have no bounds. Knowledge was sought and evaluated by its service to technique and, thereby, the (technological) power (not knowledge) gleaned through this mode of understanding. The difficulties of the human condition can be surmounted if the human, in symbiosis with his instruments and inventions, assumes their power. The Moderns doubt whether the earth is, in fact, the appropriate home for human kind. Can the race not expand beyond the boundaries of the known universe? Yet, how could it be possible to adapt a stance outside of or other than that of the world? Surely, calculative reason alone cannot lead beyond the ontic.

During the Middle Ages, those involved in the western tradition understood themselves to have a fixed place in a geocentric universe. The human was held to be a creature among other creatures and equally subject to divine law. Moderns are each individuals with the awesome responsibility which derives from the radical freedom which the Existentialists formalized. The modern view lays claim to mutual brotherhood with each other still but can no longer point to a central notion of human nature in which all peoples partake. So the notion of brotherhood is a remnant of an earlier belief yet institutionalized more fully than ever before in American rhetoric. Brothers (and sisters) must live together freely in a democratic world order. Maybe, but the ready notion of freedom must itself be subject to analysis. And, the goal of democratization seems to be unchallenged by issues of social justice or cultural views of human nature.

To return to a past golden age, albeit classical or ecclesiastical, is always not only sacrificial, but also impossible. Such is never the task of a new age. Renewed appreciation of a dimly recalled period of history is an essential ingredient in the story of the past which the new age will tell. But practicing a variation of an historical reduction provides the means for suspending all prior world views as historical possibilities which need no longer be activated. If we simply withhold belief in the notion of progress which characterized the practical defense of modernity, this age reveals itself as, like any age and like any story which we can tell about a time, both comprehensive and deficient. The Modern Age and its

heliocentric universe is superior because it is more "objective." This "objectivity" requires a perspective impossibly outside of the space and time of the world where humans dwell.

The myths of objectivity became established in the western intellectual tradition through a paradoxical restructuring of Descartes' thought. His effort began, we recall, with a rigorous attempt to flee from doubt into certainty by the technique of methodological doubt. In his self-examination, Descartes could find only his solipsistic existence to be indubitable. His *Cogito* is an epistemological claim about the certainty of the experience of his own subjective existence. Thus, this claim can only be made through the thinker's activation of the insight through which he recognizes his own existence. The self-responsibility which this move entails is, of course, phenomenology's real debt to Descartes. Reflection may again rest upon the self-evidence gleaned by the thinker's experience of his thought experiments. Nevertheless, the Modern Age must be traversed before the virtue of Descartes' thought can be recovered since the Moderns themselves concentrated upon Descartes' next move.2 Therein, he discovered that along with his existence, he could be certain also of the clear and distinct ideas which he was aware of entertaining. Foremost among these ideas were mathematical ideas. Since Descartes, the mathematician, could translate these ideas into a description of *res extensa*, the physical universe could be known by quantification. What follows is that qualities become secondary, i.e. unimportant.

With John Locke, qualities became merely subjective, i.e. of no moment whatsoever. The presupposition which contaminates this line of thinking is obvious to us. The physical universe can be described mathematically if the thinker, now paradigmatically mathematician, can assume the position of anonymous observer. This position seems not to be one in which the human fits comfortably. The discomfort may be a function of the sacrifice of the basis of theorizing. Husserl diagnoses the modern crisis as a crack in foundations of thought, by which he means that the basic entities of modernity are over-theorized and not drawn from direct experience, i.e., electrons and quarks and other basic particles are not directly experienced but available heuristically only through the theories which postulate them.

Descartes began in doubt and subjectivity, but denigrated them for the sake of system. His intellectual followers of all disciplines condoned his oversights. Descartes' concept of objectivity and the cluster of motivations which such a notion fulfills became sedimented in the western tradition as the touchstone of knowledge. Newtonian space,

employed shows these views as possible constructions among others and, thus, susceptible to reflection that is freed from the clout that accompanies a valorized hypothesis.

Before turning to a more detailed discussion of the developments in the various fields, I shall provide a brief synopsis of what I take the relevant aspects of phenomenology to be. Chief among its tenets for our purposes here is its technique of suspending belief in ordinary, sedimented meanings in favor of the consciousness which must intentionally participate in its meanings. The pre-given world must be passively and actively accepted if its meanings are to continue saliently. Phenomenological reduction provides an awareness of the necessity to disconnect with the glib, careless assumption of an easily accessible objectivity which modernism in its positivistic guises institutionalized. If meanings are bestowed by the active consciousness, consciousness can withhold such bestowal. The view disclosed by phenomenological technique presents intellectual, artistic and political endeavors as interpretations. So-called post-modernism will volunteer in addition that all that passes for knowledge can only be interpretative products of cultures, power structures and perspectives. To anticipate, such an addition is a presupposition of post-modernism, born of its despair of meaning. This presupposition is also available for scrutiny when we engage in the method of phenomenological reduction.

Phenomenological method consists of two basic steps: (1) the reduction which releases objects from pre-interpretations and opens them to their origin in the foundational intentional experiences of the meaning-bestowing consciousness; and (2) constitutive or genetic analysis which traces the historical attribution of meanings from their origin in givenness to their familiar constitutions. Husserl's analysis of Galileo's work in *The Crisis of European Sciences* employs both aspects of this methodology. Husserl finds the geometrization of nature to be a result of the reductionistic application of Descartes' notion of *res extensa.* Galileo's genius transformed the belief in the capacity of mathematics to describe a homogeneous space into an artificial structure, which became more privileged than the space of the *Lebenswelt.* The mathematical world view comes to displace the lived world that persons actually experience in their sensations and emotions. Lived worlds are doubtlessly culturally stratified, but the world that is available to enculturation must itself be underlying its various cultural constructions. The moderns believe, however, that the geocentric, sensorially experienced universe is not intellectually interesting, while the mathematically more elegant

history, post-modernity presents compelling motivation to suspend, to withhold belief in the presuppositions about the nature of knowledge, the universe, and the dual nature of human being upon which modernity rests. To move beyond the modern is first to call its arche to task. An attempt to understand any historical period relies upon a generalized application of Husserl's transcendental phenomenological reduction. The thinker suspends presuppositions in order to recognize them as such and thus to strive to return to phenomena with renewed insight, released from historical and cultural prejudices. To see one's age as a discrete stage in an historical continuum rather than as the culmination of history is already to withhold belief in the blinding fallacy of historicism: one's time has a priority beyond its particularity. The avowed modern goals of novelty, comfort and efficiency find their roots in a metaphysic of materialism as naturalism, the presumption of which limits the full human potentiality by denying its spiritual dimensions.

We can see this effort at work in the major developments of our times in the intellectual and artistic fields. The suspension of the set of presuppositions which characterized modernity is at work in the hermeneutical effort itself, in deconstructionist literary theory, in the self-understanding of post-modern scientists that science may be descriptive, and, perhaps most readily, in contemporary feminist thought. All of these endeavors, as well as avant-garde art and music, have found new starting points which became available only after working through the assumptions of earlier post-Renaissance culture. Thus, the unity of post-modernity resides in is various versions of the phenomenological method of reduction. If we withhold belief in the idea of progress which is the goal that characterizes the Modern way of life, our thinking can open up into a more reflective consideration of human being and its origin.

None of this is to say that Husserlian phenomenology <u>is</u> post-modernism. Rather, I mean to observe that Husserl formalized a technique for radical questioning of the inherited wisdom, for recognizing the functioning of linguistic and practical pre-interpretations in what we take for granted, and for understanding modern science and its theorizing to be contaminated by unexamined presuppositions. These motifs are central threads in the texture of post-modernism. Whatever objections one might have with Husserl's debt to the Cartesian legacy or to his own seeming infatuation with rationality, phenomenology may provide a remarkably effective direction for the future of contemporary thought. The historical advent of the meanings that the Moderns

must substitute the idea of the plurality of meanings. This opposition between the classical ideal of truth and...the polyvalence of meaning is,...an essential opposition" (p.34).

The new beginning, so bravely heralded in Descartes' radical attempt to achieve systematic certainty through the method of doubt and the ontological division of ontic substances, provided an avenue for the ascendancy of calculative reason. We recall that "clear and distinct ideas," i.e. mathematical shared in the certainty that Descartes derived from the Cogito.[1] Privileging mathematical methods resulted in the neglect of qualitative imagination and historical memory.

Heidegger's critique of the history of philosophy finds the motivation for its destruction from its inception in Parmenides' neglect of Being. No philosopher interested in modernism can ignore the power of this critique. But Heidegger's more significant contribution may have been to awaken us to the phenomenon of hiddenness, which reminds us to seek for truth beneath cultural forms. Although we need not tell the same story of the history of philosophy that Heidegger does, we can see that the work of philosophy always includes its anti-work. For every understanding which the pursuit of truth unveils, another is covered over. We renew the awareness that truth is not readily available; it must be wrestled out of its hiddenness. The sensible can never encompass the intelligible; one of Plato's teachings that philosophers do well to preserve.

Intellectual history has reached a turning point; it is the aspects of its development that have been covered up which now intrigue us. Modernism, as a project, is completed, though its proponents persist in playing a major role on the world's stage. Nevertheless, the ontological difference is the central oversight which signaled the failure of the modern age. In the analysis that follows, I shall submit a somewhat different version of the history of philosophy than Heidegger's, while acknowledging that any such thinking is heavily indebted to Heidegger and the phenomenological way of thought.

Both a definition of post-modernism and any description of its concerns must themselves be products of history. If Descartes' thought came out of the conflict between the medieval description of reality and the possibilities exhibited by the new sciences, if modern man is to be distinguished from his medieval counterparts by his reliance upon his own authority, how is the post-modern best described?

To cast the question as a quest for description is already tacitly to employ the phenomenological method. To a thinker at this stage in

of Greece and Rome was turned to other purposes by the Medievals. The Middle Ages, beginning with Plotinus, the neo-Plotinians and St. Augustine, transformed the legacy of the earlier period into a system equivocally shared by the peoples of the Book. The philosophies and religions which flow from the Greeks were typically metaphysical systems that attempted to account for more than we can know empirically. Thus, they are not totalizing or at least not completely so in so far as they allow for First Principles or Causes that provide their own *raison de etre*, with a concomitant inscrutability about the ground of the origin. To recognize that the most real is "outside" of being presents an advance in the totalizing of the Pre-Socratic philosophers whose search for a univocal ground of being leveled all being to ontic being.

During the early and middle periods of the Middle Ages, there was much interchange among religious thinkers. St. Thomas Aquinas' Aristotle came into the West via Avicenna, for instance. The onset of Modern Philosophy, usually traced to Rene Descartes, began with the deliberate attempt to begin again, anew. His famous "Cogito, ergo sum" appropriated a starting point in what he took to be indubitable self-experience. He, thus, sought to justify the "New Science" of the Renaissance and to provide a measure of certainty to epistemological difficulties which came to be the central philosophical issue of the age. Descartes' methodological doubt had as one of its effects the rejection of old beliefs in favor of new. Indeed, enchantment with novelty and contempt for history still figure prominently in modern and postmodern thought. The 18th century Enlightenment thinkers with their brand of reason marked a turn towards what would become Positivism, based on Empiricism, and disdainful of intangible reality. The recognition that modernism led to conundra best characterizes the central insight of the end of the period. Philosophy, with its radical questioning of the nature and efficacy of the modern understanding of reason, quantum mechanics with the principle of complementarity or undecidability, mathematics with Godel's incompleteness theorem, music made by the silence of the musician and the sounds of the audience, anti-art, with its return to realistic pop or fractured abstractions, as dominant development of the visual arts--all these impulses point to the unhappy end of modernity. Its limits seem to have been reached in its technologies which may reek as much destruction as improvement for humans and the planet. The sense of the end, of history, of subjectivity, of philosophy and so forth dominates post-modernist thinking: "the ideal of truth as it was put forth by classical philosophy has come to its end. For the idea of truth we

thinkers substitute "rationalities" for rationality. Indeed, different results derive from alternative presuppositions, yet the conclusion that reason is thus jeopardized and truth is therefore defunct need not be drawn.

Recognizing degrees of validity in various perspectives is certainly a reasonable effort for finite beings to engage in. But, at least according to Alain Badiou, "the postmodern orientation holds the aim of philosophy to be the deconstruction of the accepted facts of our modernity. In particular, postmodern philosophy proposes to dissolve the great constructions of the nineteenth century to which we remain captive—the idea of the historical subject, the idea of progress, the idea of revolution, the idea of humanity and the ideal of science" (Badiou 2005, p.32). These are outdated. No longer can we subscribe to a grand narrative for history or for thought. Yet, a vacuum must result. If rejecting its intellectual inheritance leads the West to discrediting the idea of or the search for truth as no longer a legitimate pathway, again power can fill the void left after the retreat of reason.

Many Post-Modern thinkers credit Nietzsche with being the herald of the movement, since he questions the possibility of truth and advocates the will to power in truth's stead. By and large, Post-Modernity accepts that, as Nietzsche holds, truth is but a vital lie. "We thus find the Nietzsche beloved by the postmoderns, the Nietzsche conceived as a pluralist, the Nietzsche who by unmasking the fiction of a `real' world validates multiple perspectives" (Mensch, 1996, p.194).

Where are we now on the map of the intellectual history of the West? What might come next? Abandoning meaning, eschewing caprice, exploiting power and so forth seem an extravagant reaction to the muddles of contemporary thought. I do not propose to pronounce upon such a weighty issue except to suggest that we can see a common thread uniting the efforts which are occurring presently in the various disciplines as well as in the arts and politics. The unity of post-modernity may reside exclusively in its objective: "to deconstruct the idea of totality—to the extent that philosophy itself finds itself destabilized" (Badiou, 2005, p.33). I begin with a version of the history of ideas in the Western Tradition in order to trace the path that led to the post-modernist orientation so that we can wonder about how far it really is from the modernism it overtly rejects.

General agreement dates the beginnings of Western Culture to the achievements of the Greeks, which triumphed in the fifth century BC in Athens with Plato and Aristotle. Their learning was appropriated by the Romans, and together these civilizations are called Classical. The heritage

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Phenomenology and Post-Modernity

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Abstract

The challenge to re-think Post-Modernity opens up if we see modernity in the light of the phenomenological reduction. Suspending belief in the central tenets of Modern Philosophy discloses that the so-called post-modernist philosophy merely extends the earlier project. The failure of calculative reason trumpeted by po-mo thinkers need not result in the end of the project of rationality. Rather, rethinking the philosophic tradition in a radical fashion leads to greater inclusion of other perspectives and faculties and more possibilities for reasoning together in the search for truth.

Keywords: *post modernity, phenomenological reduction, rationality, reasoning, truth.*

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Modernity has achieved its zenith; the golden age is past. John Cage has written his music; Samuel Beckett his plays; "Les jeux sont faits." Though Mary Klages' topic is literary theory, her recent description of the climate that prevails among too many of the intellectual elite in the West suits this essay well. She writes, "Postmodernism... doesn't lament the idea of fragmentation, provisionality, or incoherence, but rather celebrates that. The world is meaningless? Let's not pretend that art can make meaning then, let's just play with nonsense" (Klages, 2003). Po-mo

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