Husserl on the Life-World

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Husserl’s *Crisis* became famous in particular for its introduction and extensive yet somewhat formal treatment of the concept of the ‘life-world’ or ‘world of life’ (*Lebenswelt*). In this paper, I sketch the key aspects of Husserl’s conception of the life-world (as found primarily in *Crisis of European Sciences* and in Husserliana 39 entitled *The Life-World. Explications of the Pregiven World*) in order to highlight some problems associated with Husserl’s conception and to explore some interpretations of it. Jan Patočka and Alfred Schütz were among the first to adopt and develop this concept in a manner that influenced Jürgen Habermas and others. For Patočka the life-world belongs to what he calls ‘manifestation’ which is something humans are involved in but which requires more than human engagement. I shall explore Husserl’s conception and the reaction of Patočka and Schütz.

**Introduction**