There is currently a lot of talk about what we might call the everyday. One finds more and more analyses of everyday world, everyday language and everyday thinking in different disciplines such as sociology, ethnology, psychiatry, linguistics, literature or art theory. But one could also go back to the labyrinthical world-everyday James Joyce pictured in his *Ulysses*. The slogan of the triviality of the everyday, which once could supply the stumbling sage's revenge on the laughing milkmaid, now tends to catch in the throat of even the philosopher. But in spite of this reversal, there remains the danger that an old opposition may well continue to burden our discourse. On the one hand, we would have the analyses of the everyday as an example of empirical spade-work or perhaps even a subversive activity (both with a touch of ecological green these days), and over this would arch the Golden Gate of Reason which gives the appearance of solidity in spite of the fact that its foundations are being thoroughly shaken.

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In the following paper I shall try to cast a bit of light onto the background of this situation starting from Husserl's late work on the Crisis of European Sciences, since—reinforced by the influence of Alfred Schütz, Aron Gurwitsch and Maurice Merleau-Ponty—it has made decisive contributions to the development of this problematic.\(^1\) In this book Husserl carries on a sort of law-suit in which three parties are involved, namely, everyday knowledge (doxa), scientific-methodical reason (episteme\(^1\)) and universal philosophical reason (episteme\(^2\)). I want to intervene in these proceedings, pushing them in another direction. What is at stake here seems to be not merely a further field of research, but rather a transformation of what knowledge, and especially rational knowledge, might mean.

In the first part of my paper I shall briefly clarify the concept of the everyday. In the second and third parts I shall try to reconstruct the twosided process in which Husserl first revalorizes doxa with respect to scientific reason only to finally devaluate it with respect to philosophical reason. This ambiguous defense of the doxa's honor is solidly anchored in a time-honored tradition which goes back to Plato, but whose limits are becoming increasingly visible. My reflections close with a confrontation between the so-called doxa and a new form of rationality (episteme\(^3\)), which would no longer take the overwhelming form of western universal reason. In this fourth step we are lead to a revision of Husserl's position. This revision should not be taken as a watering down but rather as a radicalization of phenomenology whereby the sense of what Husserl called 'doxa' and 'phenomenon' is also changed.

1. The everyday in contrast to the non-everyday

The contrast between the 'everyday' (Alltag) and the 'non-everyday' first appears in German in the second half of the 18th Century. The significance of these terms can only be understood in terms of their contrast. In order to thematize a few important aspects, I shall distinguish three fields of contrast, accepting a certain vagueness for heuristical reasons.

In a first sense, the everyday is the usual, the ordinary, as opposed to the unusual, the extraordinary. The former is characterized by reproductivity, uniqueness and innovation; this holds for the biographical level (birth, stages on life's way, love, death) as well as for the historical level (the founding of cities, war, revolution). This first contrast exhibits a variety of individual aspects. We must distinguish between the various