

PHENOMENOLOGY: Nature, Significance, Limitations.

1. Nature
Phenomenology is an account, description, presentation of the data structured by insight.
 - (a) Of data, what is given, what is manifest, what appears
Not just external data, phenomena but also inner; hence, opposition to mechanism, behaviourism
Not exclusively inner data: the inner intentional act terminates at the outer datum; and the outer datum is just the term of an inner intentional act.
No exclusions: not primitive as opposed to derived natural as opposed to cultural, sensitive as opposed to intellectual, cognitional as opposed to emotional, conative
 - (b) Data structured by insight (my way of putting it)
Selective: not exhaustive description of all and any data significant: seeks basic universal structures; "Eidetic" "Wesensschau, "Aristotle's parts of form in Metaphys., Z.
Takes effort, time: not first bright idea, calls for scrutiny, penetration, contrasts, tests; may have to overcome spontaneous tendentiousness, systematic oversight, common over-simplification, preconceptions arising from "scientific", "philosophic" or other sources
 - (c) Not insight as such
Extremely elusive
Would lead immediately to unity (viewpoints, higher viewpoints, theory of judgment)
There is no such tendency towards unity in Husserl (forever discovering new fields to be explored) and similarly there is no such tendency in his successors
 - (d) The data as structured by insight and not the subsequent conceptualization, definition, theoretic statement of the data in their essential features
Perpetual appeal to prepredicative manifestation
Basic distinction between what is given, manifest, appears, and thematic treatment of the given by the phenomenologist (Phainomena legein).

SIGNIFICANCE

- (a) It provides a technique for the exploration and presentation of the whole realms of matters of fact that are significant and have been neglected or treated superficially.
Bias in favor of outer data, in favor of measureable, countable: "Scientific" psychology, comparable in this respect to the opening of new vistas and fields effected by Freud
Traditional psychology: either rough and ready statements of what was presumed to be obvious or, when effort for precision attempted, bogging down in account of "indefinable something"

Husserl on perception: Abschattung and Horizont

F.J.J. Buytendijk. *Phenomenologie de la Rencontre* (Desclee 1952), *La Femme* (Desclee 1952 or earlier), perhaps *Wesen und Sinn des Spiels* (Berlin 1933)

S. Strasser, *Das Gemut*. Freiburg i.B., Herder 1956 *Le problème de l'âme*. *Etudes sur l'objet respectif de la psychologie métaphysique et de la psychologie empirique*, French Trans. by P. Wurtz. Desclee

M. Merleau-Ponty, *La structure du comportement*, 1942; *La Phénoménologie de la perception*, Paris, Gallimard, 1945. (Brilliant on significance of one's own body in one's perceiving; sentient and sensible (spatio-temporal); neither purely pour soi nor purely en soi; not ghost in machine but incarnate subject; neither subject nor body intelligible without the other)

(b) It provides philosophical psychology and philosophy with a powerful instrument

Husserl's Quest: Logische Untersuchungen; Ideen zu einer reinen Phanomenologie; Formale und transzendente Logik; Erfahrung und Urteil.

Strasser; Merleau-Ponty (Une philosophie de l'ambiguité)

z / Heidegger: A man's understanding of himself as implicit in his projects is the intelligibility of that man, the de facto Sein of that Seines; just as phenomenology has to get beyond obvious and superficial, so must each man; hence inauthentic and authentic living, and priority of inauthentic

L. Binswanger (Traum und Existenz) dreams of night (somatic determinants) dreams of morning (the human subject begins the projection of a world; interpretation of dreams in terms of itself vs interpretation as fragmented waking, conceptualization of dream symbols)

R. Bultmann Pistis is christliche Seinsverständnis; the rest is myth (objective is science or myth, and Xtianity is not science

H.W. Bartsch. Kerugma und Mythos. I, II, III, IV, V, and Beiheft to I-LL. Hamburg 1948-55.

R. Marle. Bultmann et l'interprétation du Nouveau Testament. Paris Aubier 1956. Théologie 33.

LIMITATIONS

As phenomenology is essentially prepredicative so also essentially it is pre-conceptual and prerational

It provides the evidence in which the phenomenologist and his reader can grasp the virtually unconditioned; but as far as I know it has not penetrated to the analysis of that reflective rationality; and so it fails to give it due weight in psychology and in the consequent philosophy.

Hence, its criterion of true is the manifest, the evident; what becomes manifest, evident, when one lets the phenomena appear, does not brush them aside, is not living the life of an escapist.

Per contra, as affirmation based on manifestness of what is, so negation based on manifestness of what is not, of nothing. In Heidegger and Sartre, the basic role given to the anxiety crisis as the manifestness of Nothing.

Hence, possibility of Husserl's Epoche: withdraw from interest in, concern with the "really real"; concentrate on intending and intended

Radical difference between direction and redirection of attention, and the "als ob" of suspension of judgment; possibility of Epoche connected with this ambiguity.

Hence, impossibility of returning from Epoche.

If by intentional acts I regard the given as just what appears (and I can do so), then by what sleight of hand can another intentional act of affirming or anything else restore the "really real" H.J. Pos

Cf. Problèmes actuels de la phénoménologie. Colloque internationale de phénoménologie. Bruxelles, 1951. Desclee 1952, H.L. Van Breda.

Real difference between

a / (a) naturliche Einstellung, Santayana's "animal faith"

(b) reaching absolute "is" thru grasp of virtually unconditioned

Hence, incapacity of phenomenology for dealing with issues of speculative thought. E. Fink. loc. cit.

d/ "... das Seiende ist Phanomen und weiter nichts. Eine Prufung dieser
Urentscheidung liegt gar nicht im Bereich der phanomenologischen Methode, weil sie
alle und jede Prufung grundsatzlich als Ausweisung daf selbstgeben Phanomen versteht"
p. 72

s/ "Dass das Ausweisbare allein ist... kann nicht weiderum durch Ausweisung
dargetan werden. Das Ercheinen des Seiendes ist nicht etwas, was selbst ercheint"
p. 70

Hence, Heidegger bogged down in remote criteria of truth and untruth: "being
in the truth" "being in the untruth"

A. de Waelhens. Une philosophie de l'ambiguité. L'existentialisme de M.
Merleau-Ponty. Louvain 1951.

M. M-P preparing a book "L'origine de la vérité". A. de Waelhens.
Phénoménologie et Vérité, Paris PUF 1953.

Das Seiendes: brute existence. Sein: its intelligibility which is in man and
from man. Heidegger confined to art.

Lotz. H's method excludes the possibility of his proving the existence of God.