

Introduction to Volume 5 (Continued)

PHENOMENOLOGY BEYOND PHILOSOPHY

by

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When the essays selected for this volume by local North American phenomenological organizations stopped coming in there were 38 of them and the need to separate this volume into two parts was clear. Reviewing the essays, the volume editors found that half were fairly traditional interpretations and critiques of thought from giants of the past of our phenomenological philosophical tradition with some attempts at original phenomenologizing and that an equal number of these essays were focused on phenomena arising beyond the usual framework of philosophical phenomenology.

I. The Genre

This difference is not new. It was already distinctly recognized in the introduction of the North America volume of *Phenomenology 2005* and the history of this sort of research in our tradition going back to phenomenological psychiatry done before World War I was reported in the Editors's Introduction to the Northern Europe volume of *Phenomenology 2005* under the title "Phenomenology in Europe: The Promise of Interdisciplinarity or Philosophy and Beyond." The only difference this time

is quantitative: now half of the 38 essays from North America pertain to what can be called “Phenomenology beyond Philosophy.” This development may mark a new and fruitful stage of our tradition, at least in North America, and something can be said about the genre before some comments are offered on how the 19 essays in this part belong to it.

In terms of the difference just adumbrated, some essays are less different than others. It is not a difference between essays written by philosophers and essays written by colleagues trained in other disciplines because five of the essays here in Part II are by philosophers. (It has been becoming increasingly clear of late that phenomenology is not exclusively a philosophical school of thought but instead a multidiscipline also including phenomenological communicology, phenomenological sociology, phenomenological psychology, and many other disciplinary forms of phenomenology. In other words, philosophical phenomenology is only one discipline among others even though it is arguably the most advanced and influential in this time of ever greater interdisciplinary communication.

Where the sorting of the essays in this volume into the two parts is concerned, some may think that gender, for example, is not a traditional philosophical problem—after all, the title “Feminist Phenomenology” was not coined until 2000—and thus that essays focused on gender belong in this rather than in the first part of this volume. But this is to forget not just the work by Simone de Beauvoir in the 1940s but also that of Edith Stein on gender in the 1920s. The case is similar with phenomenology of the body and technology, which begin in the work of Max Scheler before the first World War. In contrast, however, “eco-phenomenology,” which first had a volume devoted to it in 2003, does not have such deep roots and does belong in this second part.

Phenomenology beyond philosophy approaches relatively new problems in our multidisciplinary tradition. In it there is

much less scholarship on texts and much more investigation of things themselves. The methods of phenomenology relied on can appear different when not related to the usual philosophical problems. Many concepts are imported, so to speak, from philosophical phenomenology and adapted in new contexts and this would seem the most conspicuous feature of phenomenology beyond philosophy, i.e., originally philosophical concepts used in contexts beyond the traditional scope of philosophy in our tradition.

As intimated, more investigation in rather than scholarship on phenomenology is done in this expanding area and hence the beneficial influence back upon philosophers who resolve “to walk the walk” rather than merely “to talk the talk” of interdisciplinarity should increasingly occur as time goes by. But of course benefits of this sort are also not new in our tradition, Gurwitsch and Merleau-Ponty, for example, having learned much from Gestalt Psychology and the psychiatric thought of Kurt Goldstein in the 1930s and the tendency of Hermeneutical Phenomenology having learned much from Greek philology beginning before then. Non-philosophical phenomenology can help advance philosophical phenomenology.

II. The Essays Here

It did not prove possible to arrange the essays in this part in just a few groups as was possible in Part I, so they are arranged alphabetically by author. Nevertheless, some essays can be commented upon together in pairs and triplets, which leave three that need commentary alone and they can be commented on briefly first.

Alfred Schutz reflected on marginal-utility or “Austrian” economics since the 1930s and there has been a continuation of that economic tendency in the USA that sometimes characterizes its work as hermeneutical and even phenomenological. How

these “Austrians” will find Dennis Skocz’s contention that John Maynard Keynes was, unknowingly, a phenomenologist will be interesting to see. Husserl’s “problematic possibilities” and Schutz’s “biographically determined situation” seem in effect recognized by Keynes, who was also appreciative of the subjective meaning of affectivity.

Richard Zaner has pioneered a novel phenomenological philosophy of medicine in which patients are carefully listened to and then penetrating narratives composed. Pertinent concepts are regularly imported by him from Aron Gurwitsch, Edmund Husserl, and Alfred Schutz.

Despite work going back to the first half of the last century, especially including Jan Patočka and Hannah Arendt, “political phenomenology” has yet to be established as a named specialty within phenomenology either within or beyond philosophy. The essay here by political scientist Hwa Yol Jung recognizes sources in Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and Emmanuel Levinas for the “responsible politics” of Patočka’s fellow traveler and widely influential political leader in Eastern Europe Václav Havel.

The essays of Gary Backhaus and Scot Cameron can be said to contribute to eco-phenomenology. Backhaus draws on Martin Heidegger’s “poetic dwelling” in an effort to disclose networks of places within bioregions. Cameron refers at first to Plato but ultimately to Hans-Georg Gadamer’s notion of linguistic constitution in order to understand how nature can dialogue with humans.

The Society for Phenomenology and Media is represented by Chris Nagel as well as Alberto Carrillo Canán and May Zindel from Mexico (essays belong to the North America volume if the local organization, which may be international, is headquartered there). The latter focus on the spectacularity of the new digital cinema and the former develops a phenomenological interpretation of media based on Maurice Merleau-Ponty.

The emotional component in life has been recognized but not extensively within the phenomenological tradition. Scott

Churchill draws on over a dozen phenomenological philosophers in clarifying how emotional expressions can be understood. Steen Halling draws on three such figures in reflecting on how anger and resentment are let go of in forgiveness. And Robert Stolorow draws on Martin Heidegger to clarify collective emotional trauma.

Phenomenologists concerned with how Others are encountered need to consider people with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Maureen Connolly draws on Maurice Merleau-Ponty in sensitively investigating how movement is meaningful for such Others. Thomas Craig draws on Paul Ricoeur as well as Maurice Merleau-Ponty to explore what photography can subtly disclose about autistic people.

Essays by Mark A. and Judith E. Hector and by Sandra P. Thomas are concerned with nursing, draw on the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and refer to works of literature, the former to a poem by Walt Whitman, who served as a nurse in the Civil War, and the latter to James Agee, whose *Let us Now Praise Famous Men* shows much about understanding Others in dialogue.

Three essays pertain to the relationship between places and those who live and work in them. Reza Shirazi examines Juhani Pallasmaa's Husserl-derived and fragile, multi-sensory architecture, David Seamon considers Gaston Bachelard a phenomenologist and uses his thought to clarify the "lived reciprocity" between houses and inhabitants, and Lori Schneider draws on Martin Heidegger concerning the local places of "remote workers" in this era of globalization.

Finally, Osborne Wiggins and Michael Schwarz draw on Aron Gurwitsch, Edmund Husserl, and Alfred Schutz in clarifying the organism-environment relationship in George Conguillhem and Hans Jonas, which is relevant for phenomenological psychiatry, and Akihiro Yoshida draws on the early William James and Alfred Schutz in describing the various psychologies he has subscribed to on his way to phenomenological psychology.

In sum, while phenomenologists interestingly investigate things in areas beyond the traditional scope of philosophy and do so often in the perspectives of other disciplines, it is easy to believe that philosophical phenomenologists can find much to ponder in the results.

III. New Phenomenological Organizations in North America

Since Phenomenology 2005, 12 new phenomenological organizations have been recognized. This is in addition to the 32 recognized then. Not all are dues-paying formal members of the Organization of Phenomenological Organizations, but are listed in the hope that those that they become such members:

1. The Alfred Schutz Research Center at St. Louis University

Michael Barber: barbermd@slu.edu

2. Applied Phenomenology Colloquy of the University of Tennessee

Sandra Thomas sthomas@utk.edu

3. Front Range Phenomenological Society

Robert Jordan: Robert.Jordan@colostate.edu

4. Hannah Arendt Circle

Dianna Taylor: dtaylor@ius.edu

5. The Interdisciplinary Coalition of North American Phenomenologists: www.icnap.org

Lester Embree: embree@fau.edu

6. International Association for Environmental Philosophy (IAEP): <http://www.environmentalphilosophy.org/>

Kenn Maly: maly.kenn@uwlax.edu

7. International Human Science Research Conference

Steen Halling - SHALLING@seattleu.edu

8. Sartre Circle

Constance Mui: cmui@nadal.loyno.edu

Adrian Mirvish: amirvish@csuchico.edu

Ronald Santoni: santoni@denison.edu

9. Seminar on Phenomenology and Hermeneutics:

www.sem-phen.org

Pol Vandavelde: pol.vandavelde@marquette.edu

Kevin Hermberg: kevin.hermberg@sem-phen.org

10. Society for Interdisciplinary Feminist Phenomenology

Bonnie Mann: bmann@uoregon.edu

Beata Stawarska: stawarsk@uoregon.edu

11. Society for Phenomenology and Hermeneutic Study

Gloria L. Cordova: cordovag@losalamos.com

12. Southwest Seminar in Continental Philosophy

Robert Stolorow: robertstolorow@gmail.com