

PHENOMENOLOGY

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PHENOMENOLOGY ?

- The word 'Phenomenology' first time has been used by Johann Heinrich Lambert in his work Neues Organon (1764) as a doctrine and was subsequently used by Immanuel Kant and specially by G.W.F Hegel
- Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) was the first philosopher who has used the word 'Phenomenology' to denote a precisely restricted method of thought.
- Phenomenology has been practiced in various ways for centuries but it came into its own in the early 20th century in the works of Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau Ponty and others.

Phenomenology as a method

- Phenomenology etymologically means ‘a science of phenomena or appearances’.
- Actually Husserl has used the word ‘Phenomenology’ to denote a doctrine and as well as a method.
- This method is presuppositionless method in the sense that it is totally divorced from any presupposition.
- Phenomenological method is based on the process of reduction.
- Phenomenology as a subject is distinct from but related to other key disciplines in philosophy such as ontology, epistemology, logic and ethics.

Phenomenology to Hume and Kant

- The term 'phenomenology' was used several times in the history of philosophy.
- David Hume, in the book *A Treatise of Human Nature*, describes the process of reasoning causality in psychological terms to define the phenomenological or psychological approach.
- In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant maintains that noumena is beyond the reach of human understanding. But the human beings can know the phenomena, which is the truth and the thing-in-itself.

Phenomenology of Hegel

- Hegel in *phenomenology of spirit*, changed Kant's doctrine of the unknowable thing-in-itself, and affirmed that by knowing phenomena more fully we can gradually arrive at a consciousness of the absolute and spiritual truth of divinity.
- According to Hegel phenomena stands for 'appearances' through which a thing is presented to us, such as in perception. He was concerned with the phenomena or appearances.
- Hegel understood them to be the appearances of the Absolute Mind, which constitute the different stages of the universal consciousness.
- So Hegel's phenomenology was ontological.

Phenomenology to Brentano & Husserl

- Husserl is known as ‘father’ of phenomenology. He redefined phenomenology at first as a kind of descriptive psychology and then as an epistemological, foundational eidetic discipline to explain the essences.
- Franz Brentano of his lectures at Vienna seems to have used the term ‘phenomenology’. As a student of Brentano Husserl was influenced by him to define the concept of intentionality.
- Phenomenology is a return to ‘phenomena’. Husserl understands phenomenon as ‘what appears as such’. In other words phenomenology is what is directly given to us.

Analysis of the structure of Consciousness

- Phenomenology is the method of analysis of structures of consciousness as experienced from the one man (knower) point of view.
- This method is based on intuition and this intuition refers to the given phenomenon/object.
- The basic object of Phenomenology is “back to the things themselves” and here ‘things’ means ‘just the given’
- The main structure of the experience of knower , is its intentionality, which is directed toward something or about some object.
- Phenomenology is commonly understood either of two ways – as a disciplinary field philosophy and as a movement in the history of philosophy

Phenomenology Focuses on what is given in Intuition

- Phenomenology totally focuses on what is given in intuition and is not meant to rely on logical inferences, or any kind of knowledge.
- The discipline of phenomenology may be defined initially as the study of structures of experience, or consciousness.
- Phenomenology is the study of 'phenomena'. The appearances of things or things as they appear to our experiences, or the ways we experience things.

A Movement of Thought

- The historic movement of phenomenology is the philosophical tradition started in the first half of the 20th century by Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau Ponty, Jean Paul Sartre et al.
- Phenomenology is a movement in philosophy. Husserl initially developed Phenomenology as a descriptive psychology (First Edition of the *Logical Investigations*)
- As a Mathematician Husserl felt that that the objectivism of science excluded an adequate apprehension of the world.

A radical method of investigation

- Phenomenology claims first and foremost to be a radical way of analysis, a practice rather than a system .
- It is best understood as the truth of matters, to describe phenomena, in the broadest sense as whatever appears to consciousness to the experienter.
- Its first step is to seek to avoid all misconstructions and impositions placed on experience in advance, whether these are drawn from religious or cultural traditions or from science itself.
- Phenomenology is involves with concrete acts of meaning, meaning intending, not as empirically occurring facts in the world or in terms of the ideal meanings they articulate but in so far as they have essential , intentional, a priori structures.

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- Husserl's transcendental phenomenology is different from empirical phenomenology.
 - He assumes that the object of philosophy is not factual but ideal.
 - The ideal object has its origin in consciousness, which in this context cannot be explained in empirical terms or empirical psychology.
 - From the lectures of Brentano Husserl was authorized in his idea that philosophy could be treated as strict science

A Presuppositionless Philosophy

- In the first edition of logical Investigations, Husserl presented phenomenology as a pure, Presuppositionless science of consciousness.
- The claim as we have seen, means first of all that phenomenology cannot assume or utilize the results of any other science in its investigations.
- Husserl laid great emphasis on phenomenology's principle of Presuppositionless that is, the claim to have discarded philosophical theorizing in favour of careful description of phenomena themselves, to be attentive only to what is given in intuition.

- According to Husserl, presuppositionless means ‘free from prejudice’ or ‘from prejudgements’.
- The requirement that the cultural sciences should proceed without presuppositions was understood to mean freedom from world-view assumptions.
- Husserl called these intuitions ‘originary giving’ or ‘presentitive’ intuitions. The concept of ‘originary presentive intuition’ is that the core of Husserl’s philosophy.

Intuition

- ‘Givenness’ sums up the view that all experience is experience to someone, according to a particular manner of experiencing.
- According to Husserl, intuition occur in all experiences of understanding, but in cases of genuine certain knowledge, we have intuition with the highest kind of fulfillment or evidence.
- Husserl suggests different kinds of objects, not all of which are spatio-temporal or sensibly grasped.



From the lectures of Brentano Husserl was authorized in his idea that philosophy could be treated as strict science. He arrived to understand that philosophy cannot be set up on the sciences, but the task of philosophy is to provide science a strict foundation. Science does not permit any presupposition only admits which can be seen. Since phenomenology does so, it is called rigorous science.

A Rigorous Science

- Husserl seeks to understand philosophy as a rigorous science. He discusses it in his article 'philosophy as a rigorous science', which was published in 1911.
- In this article Husserl seeks to uphold the position that philosophy should be a rigorous science but that does not mean that philosophy should follow the empirical sciences.
- Philosophy as a rigorous science needs a solid foundation.
- Husserl established a new theory of knowledge or method which concern with the consciousness.

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Philosophy as a strict science would be possible, not because it is possible to arrive at a truly scientific knowledge of the ideal objects, but because it is an analysis of the essences of things.

Philosophy, Husserl thinks it is an ideal science which is not concerned with objective facts.

He arrived to understand that philosophy cannot be set up on the sciences, but the task of philosophy is to provide science a strict foundation.

He presented various philosophical conceptualisations and techniques designed to locate the sources or essences of reality in the human consciousness.

Martin Heidegger criticised Husserl's theory of phenomenology as he tried to develop a theory of ontology that led him to his original theory of Dasein, the abstract human being.

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