

Genetic Phenomenology of Personal Experience. The Interdisciplinary Potential of Edmund Husserl's Transcendental Philosophy

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Resume

Today, quickly escalating conflicts challenge us to develop a new theoretic and practical approach to human experience. We are forced to find new ways to integrate the concrete perspectives of others who radically differ from us in their history, experiences and expectations. This is not only a political and practical task. It rather challenges the way we conceive subjectivity at large, both in philosophy and in human science. We are no longer allowed to think of the subject as an isolated, autonomous, self-sufficient and self-conscious element of society. We rather strive for the philosophical grounding of a "porous", open, originally intersubjectively co-determined subjectivity which is constitutively relational and aware of its own limits and conditions.

To this end, philosophy and particularly phenomenology as a modern transcendental theory of consciousness need to enter a multifaceted dialogue with human sciences, thereby focusing on the presupposed notions of consciousness, experience, intentionality, agency and motivation. In my opinion, the method of genetic intentional analysis qualifies phenomenology for such an inter-disciplinary enterprise in a unique way.

The genetic account of phenomenology namely reveals that subjective life can only be experienced through emotive and often contradictory motivational evidences, such as tendency and striving, preferences and tendentious moods, and can therefore only be effective in form of actual awakened interests. Husserl calls the proper subject of such intentionality "transcendental person". This is a subject determined both by its corporeality and affectivity, which is temporally and historically structured.

The aim of this project is to shed a new light on Husserl's transcendental genetic phenomenology starting from this concrete insight into the living structure of subjectivity and following to integrate this view with the most recent results of modern developmental psychology and psychoanalysis. This interdisciplinary approach intends to provide the basis for the interpretation of conflict as a meaningful and constitutive element of experience and as the potential root of social transformation.