

# PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE IMPLICIT

Originally published in *Dialectica*, Vol. 29, No 2-3 (1975), pp. 173-188.

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**KEYWORDS:** transcendental philosophy, pre-reflective awareness, reflection, preconditions of reference

## Summary

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## Résumé

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## Zusammenfassung

Der Autor versucht, eine alternative Untersuchungsmethode zu bestimmten Hauptproblemen der transzendentalen Philosophie darzustellen. Insbesondere könnte das gegenwärtige Verständnis der vorreflexiven Bewusstheit, der Reflexion, and ihres Zusammenhangs strenger aufgeklärt werden. Zu diesem Zweck wird Aufmerksamkeit auf die *Beziehungsvorbedingungen* gerichtet, die in der phänomenologischen Unterscheidung zwischen impliziter Erfahrung und expliziter Reflexion miteinbegriffen sind.

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# Phenomenology of the Implicit

By Steven BARTLETT

## Summary

An attempt is made to suggest an alternative approach to certain of the problems central to transcendental philosophy. In particular, it seems that the present understanding of pre-reflective awareness, of reflection, and of their interrelation can acquire a greater degree of rigour and clarity. To this end, attention is paid to *pre-conditions of reference* that are entailed by the phenomenological distinction between implicit experience and explicit reflection.

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The task of reflective philosophy, and of phenomenology, in particular, has been variously described, but in most of these accounts, and perhaps in all of them, use is made of a notion that has remained both central and vague. I shall call this the notion of the *implicit*: the relation between what is implicit and what is explicit bears certain important similarities, as I will attempt to show, to the relation between what has been termed "pre-reflective experience" and "reflective experience".

This paper attempts (1) to describe a framework in which the notion of the implicit can be investigated, (2) to reach certain conclusions about this notion, and, in the course of doing (1) and (2), (3) to throw some light on

how reflective philosophy, and particularly phenomenology, can be fruitfully developed along somewhat different lines than tradition has so far made possible.

Accordingly, my approach will involve three steps: In the first, I will try concisely to enumerate a group of defining properties which can serve to characterize the general framework proper to Husserl's phenomenological methodology. In the second, I will suggest a "transformation schema" that permits, with a consequent gain in rigour and clarity, a transposition or re-orientation of phenomenological methodology in terms of a different, though related, framework. In the third, I will suggest certain conclusions about the peculiar notion of the implicit.

It may be of interest to digress at this point before continuing, to remark that one of the implications of the subsequent discussion concerns certain conflicts between the Husserlian and the Heideggerian approaches to phenomenology. Although this question could not be handled in detail here for reasons of space, a few general comments can serve to place the issue in the present context.

It is basic to Heidegger's philosophical perspective (a) to assert that theoretical analyses *per se* fail to disclose those structures which are *most* fundamental in a description of the constitution of experience, while he claims (b) that reflective theoretical investigations are themselves to be understood as in a sense disguised and disfigured representations of the truth about experience.

Husserl's reaction to these dogmas of *Sein und Zeit* is recorded in the so far neglected marginal comments written by Husserl in his own copy of Heidegger's book<sup>1</sup>. Husserl's reaction is frequently not sympathetic: his comments reveal his skepticism that any philosophically meaningful description can be made without recourse to reflection.

If this is so, then the above claims (a) and (b) lead to a curious paradox which can be formulated as follows: For any reflective philosophical description, by (a) there remains something *un-said* which is true, while by (b) what *is* said can have no real, i. e., "authentic", claim to truth. But the foregoing statement is, by its own admission, unconvincing as it stands.

The paradox may safely be dismissed if it can be shown that it is indeed the case that a reflective standpoint is the pre-condition for the possibility of philosophical descriptions in general. This is precisely the conclusion reached below, in Part III.

<sup>1</sup> These comments have been brought together by Stephan Strasser, and exist as yet only in manuscript form in the Husserl Archives, Louvain, Belgium.

## I

The following description of Husserl's concept of phenomenology will be given in terms of a series of selective idealizations of what I believe to be are defining properties of Husserl's position. I use the expression 'selective idealization' in the sense that the group of defining properties enumerated here does not consistently accommodate all of the multiple descriptions chosen by Husserl to represent his approach to phenomenology. This group contains five such defining properties, which will be discussed under the following headings: the level of maximum theoretic generality, the empirical basis, the transcendental, the conversion of meaning, and phenomenology as a descriptive science.

A. *The level of maximum theoretic generality.* The expression used for this heading is borrowed from F. B. Fitch<sup>2</sup>, who employs it to refer to the occurrence of a theory in its own subject-matter. Such a theory concerning theories in general is said to be expressed on the "level of maximum theoretic generality". Such a theory of theory or science of science is self-referent insofar as it is part of its own subject-matter<sup>3</sup>.

Husserl advanced the idea of phenomenology as a science which sets the task for itself to study the general nature of all science, and, in particular, to do this by an investigation of the transcendental foundations of, e. g., the various scientific disciplines, its own transcendental foundation included<sup>4</sup>.

Thus, Husserlian phenomenology may be characterized initially as a transcendental science of maximum theoretic generality.

B. *The empirical basis.* The range of objects and structures treated in phenomenology is intimately associated with the "empirical basis" provided by the world of facts and the world of fancy, which furnish material for study. Access to individual instances which may be variously observed or examined is presupposed. The concept of "the given" in Husserl's phenomenology will be interpreted as asserting such an access<sup>5</sup>.

In its transcendental capacity, phenomenology is specifically oriented toward an examination of the formal constitutive structures of any particular phenomenon in terms of a range of material possibilities. This may be taken in somewhat the sense that "abstract ontological conditions . . . refer to concrete ontological situations and cannot substitute for them"<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> F. B. Fitch, *Symbolic Logic* (New York: The Ronald Press 1952), p. 223.

<sup>3</sup> An examination of problems of self-reference in such a theory is set aside for treatment elsewhere.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen* I § 42; II. 1 Appendix 2 § 6; *Formale und Transzendente Logik* §§ 10, 101; *Ideen* I §§ 62, 65; *Méd. Cartésiennes* 130.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Log. Unt.* III § 16; *Formale und Transzendente Logik* §§ 58, 89, 98.

<sup>6</sup> James K. Feibleman, *Ontology* [New York: Greenwood Press 1968; first printed (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press 1951)], p. 140.

C. *The transcendental.* Husserl's phenomenology is concerned with the transcendental in the traditional sense that conveys commitment to the work of elucidating conditions of possibility. The task of transcendental elucidation may be thought of as the isolation and descriptive characterization of the structures or properties necessarily invariant with respect to a certain class of objects. In this sense, these structures and properties are thought of as expressing the essential constitution of the class of objects. Membership in the class entails a certain minimal satisfaction of a set of requirements. Such requirements, in other words, condition possible membership in the class. Discrete classes of objects so studied are specifically determined in relation to distinct and invariant features disclosed by given individual instances which may be diversely observed or examined, as already mentioned.

D. *The conversion of meaning.* Phenomenology, as Husserl observed<sup>7</sup>, can be understood in terms of a "conversion of meaning" which the assumption of the "phenomenological attitude" determines. Descriptions of phenomenology in these terms have led to unfortunate interpretations of Husserl's phenomenology. The formulation of the phenomenological approach in terms of the *performance* of various *reductions* has been misleading<sup>8</sup>.

What is misleading about such formulations is that they have suggested that access to the framework proper to phenomenology can be achieved by means of certain psychological transformations in attitude. This suggestion reflects the "natural standpoint", whereby naïve and unquestioning use is made of unclear or biased concepts — here, for example, the concepts involved in "achieving a result, performing an operation, and thus changing an attitude" — concepts to be investigated, rather than to be assumed in the investigation itself. Any formulation of the phenomenological approach which is forced to assume and employ concepts which have not been adequately clarified will be of no value.

The "conversion of meaning" which the "reductions" "lead to" must therefore be provided with some admissible interpretation. My suggestion is that the "reductions" be considered to *define* or *determine* a standpoint, rather than to provide access to that standpoint "as a result of the performance of a psychological readjustment in orientation". In the sense proposed, then, the meaning of 'phenomenology' is defined in relation to the following schema.

<sup>7</sup> Cf., e. g. *Ideen I*, Einleitung.

<sup>8</sup> Eugen Fink, in his well-known article, "Die phänomenologische Philosophie Edmund Husserls in der gegenwärtigen Kritik", *Kantstudien* XXXVIII (1933), pp. 319—383, has described certain of these misled interpretations.

(i) With a given object, an ideal and perspicuously defined possibility is correlated, as exemplifying an instance of a class of observable (examinable) objects of similar structure. In this, essentially non-observable, or absurd, possibilities are excluded.

(ii) The possibility described is ranked hierarchically in terms of classes of greater and lesser extension. This provides a system by means of which individual phenomenological descriptions can be classified.

(iii) Individual members of the class in question (or "region", in Husserl's terms) are considered to be determinable in terms of general concepts and principles expressing the invariant structure(s) of those members of the class with respect to that class.

(iv) The essential structure of an object is determined through the elucidation of the essential connection evidenced between the object — as structurally described in (iii) — and its structure given in a particular mode of observation, e. g., perception. In Husserl, "intuition" is frequently the apprehension that this connection obtains.

(v) The essential connection elucidated in (iv) is studied in either one or both of two different ways: (a) in terms of *static constitution*, relating to the conditions of possibility of an object, the structure of which is *given*; (b) in terms of *genetic constitution*, relating to the conditions of possibility of an object, the structure of which reveals a *synthetic-productive activity* of consciousness. For Husserl, an analysis of genetic constitution is often thought to provide a deeper insight into the origin of what is statically described<sup>9</sup>.

E. *Phenomenology as descriptive science.* The framework proper to phenomenology is such as to allow for the description of the constitutive structural principles which condition the possibility of phenomena, as essentially examinable objects. The distinctive character of phenomenology is its task of foundational elucidation. Whatever method is proposed to this end must satisfy some standard(s) with respect to which phenomenological descriptions are protected against the introduction into descriptions of pre-analytically accepted positive content. It is in this connection that Husserl characterized phenomenology as "presuppositionless".

<sup>9</sup> Due to a fundamental inconsistency in the idea of genetic constitution, which I have treated at length elsewhere [*Théorie de la relativité de la constitution phénoménologique* (doctoral thesis, Université de Paris 1970)], (b) above will not be described here as representing an essential characteristic of the phenomenological approach.

## II

The lapses from rigour and from clarity of exposition that are frequently associated with frameworks expressed in the "language of consciousness" are largely to blame for the neglect of Husserlian phenomenology in the Anglo-American world.

In part to attempt to remedy this defect, I will propose at this point a transformation schema in terms of which a somewhat more exact and clearer description of the framework proper to phenomenology can be given in the "language of reference". This "transformation schema" will be made clear by associating with each of headings A-E a second heading A'-E'.

A'. The initial program of phenomenology, as a science of maximum theoretic generality, is to secure a logically sound methodology which can provide the basis for a meta-science capable of investigating, on a cross-disciplinary basis, concepts basic to, e. g., disciplines in which scientific methods are fundamental. Such a methodology would provide a useful and meaningful theoretical framework and method for the elucidation of the essential constitution of possible objects of reference. The structure of such a reflexive system is of a totally intrinsic kind — that is, self-reference in the system will require recourse to no higher-order referential embedment-system(s)<sup>10</sup>. This will guarantee that such a discipline will be able to investigate the constitutive foundations of the various particular sciences, its own foundation included. In this context, phenomenology re-appears as a transcendental science of maximum theoretic generality.

The world of ideally possible objects of reference comprises the subject-matter for study. Phenomenology elucidates the sense the world has relative to a given theoretical framework. In this, as will be seen, it denies that meaning can attach to any question concerning this world taken apart from an appropriate possible frame of reference.

B'. Analyses of constitutive structures are essentially relative to one or more given systems. The constitution of a specific object of possible reference, relative to a certain frame of reference, cannot often simply be "read off", for a good deal of analysis is usually first necessary. In this, the subject-matter for analysis remains presupposed as object of possible reference.

For the present, let the term 'phenomenon' be synonymous with 'possible object of reference'. Now, the formal structure of a group of phenomena differs from the structure of a given phenomenon only in degree of specificity, that is, in the degree of restriction obtaining over a range of possibilities. In the limit of maximum restriction, of minimum generality, reference to

<sup>10</sup> Cf. note 9, Bartlett, *ibid.*

the set of pure non-essential (contingent) features of a given phenomenon is possible. And, inversely, in the limit of minimum restriction, reference is possible to the set of pure essential (invariant) structures constitutive of the given phenomenon with respect to a class of phenomena of similar structure. The latter set expresses the "formal constitution" of the given phenomenon, while the former set refers to its "material constitution".

Since an invariant structure is essentially related to a range of possible objects exhibiting that structure, the formal constitutive structures of a phenomenon are regarded as being intrinsically relative to a range of material possibilities. It is in this sense that phenomenology, as it is here proposed, is relative to a given, and is in this measure empirically bound. Reference to phenomena, which comprise the domain of possible experience, is fundamental to phenomenology.

C'. This approach to phenomenology may be termed 'transcendental' in that the fundamental concern is to elucidate the conditions which must be satisfied by objects of possible reference in order that reference to them may obtain. Such a foundational elucidation of referential systems attempts, then, to render explicit the structures upon which consistent forms of reference depend.

D'. I now turn to describe briefly a methodology developed to answer the need in phenomenology for an adequate theoretical framework in which transcendental problems of reference can be elucidated.

This methodology is intended to meet the need for a procedure which is capable of determining and correcting a form of invalid reference involved in conceptual misconstructions in foundation work in phenomenology, as well as in concepts basic to the sciences, concepts which phenomenology would seek to explicate in terms of an analysis of conditions of valid reference.

Phenomenological methodology, according to this view, is specifically interested in identifying, avoiding, and eliminating obstacles that stand in the way of the kind of scientific elucidation it seeks to develop. Phenomenology may therefore be characterized as committed to a model of "*explication as elimination*", as suggested by Quine:

We have, to begin with, an expression or form of expression that is somehow troublesome. . . . But it also serves certain purposes that are not to be abandoned. Then we find a way of accomplishing those same purposes through other channels, using other less troublesome forms of expression. The old perplexities are resolved <sup>11</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Willard V. O. Quine, *Word and Object* (Cambridge, Mass.: Technology Press 1960) p. 260.



The resolution of certain kinds of "perplexities" will be closely associated with the meaning of 'phenomenology' here. In an obvious sense, a kind of "conversion of meaning" will go hand-in-hand with the resolution and elimination of difficulties that stand in the way of phenomenological explanation.

The particular form of invalid reference that will be characterized here is termed a '*projective misconception*', which can be understood in the following manner:

A phenomenon of any kind is relative to a determinable context of identification. In general, it is possible to characterize any phenomenon in relation to other phenomena or structures to which the phenomenon is essentially relative. In this sense, the propositions of a non-euclidean geometry are essentially relative to that particular system for their sense and truth-value. These patterns of relativity are to be found in every discipline; a network of relativistic relations constitutes or provides for the foundation for a discipline's internal unity.

Some interesting consequences follow from an analysis of these kinds of relations: it can be demonstrated that if two things are connected by a relation of essential relativity, then to affirm one out of connection to the other is logically inconsistent. As an example, consider a Cartesian coordinate system simply as a certain kind of system which provides definite means for identifying the position of objects in relation to an ideal origin in the framework. An object, the Cartesian coordinates for which are given, is represented in such a way that its position can be located in a Cartesian coordinate system. If these coordinates — without appropriate coordinate-transformation — are thought to locate the object from the standpoint of a Polar coordinate system, a conceptual misconception results. By a '*conceptual misconception*' I mean a '*logically invalid proposition resulting from an improper operation with a set of conceptual structures*'.

The notion of a projective misconception, or, more simply, of a projection, is understood in the sense that reference to objects may be likened to coordination. Correct reasoning, or proper operation with a set of conceptual structures, presupposes valid coordination. In order to eliminate and to avoid this variety of improper reference or coordination, the *method of de-projection* is established. De-projection is a procedure with respect to which it is possible to clarify and restore the regulation of coordinations in accordance with the structural principles essential to the constitution of a given system. In the example, this would amount to showing that a position is appropriately designated in a Polar coordinate system if and only if the position is identified in a form complying with the understood conventions for specifying

points in that kind of coordinate system. This would of course require re-expression of the initial coordinates of the specified position through coordinate-transformation.

Relative to a given frame of reference, identifying references are essentially possible. An identifying reference is such that an ascription to that which can be the subject of an ascription establishes that what is ascribed and that to which ascription is made, are one and the same. Such an ascription determines reference to that which is thereby identified such that the subject of the identification is fixed within a structure which allows for the possibility that the same subject can be re-identified.

An improper coordination results when reference obtains in a manner that does not conform to the syntactical organization of the frame of reference that conditions the possibility of the reference. A coordination then obtains which is improper in the sense that the reference itself does not satisfy what must be granted for it to be possible. When this invalid form of reference is explicitly described, it can be exhibited as devoid of sense and absurd.

Clearly, however, not all meaningless and inconsistent propositions express projections. A projection is a particular kind of coordination which must satisfy the following conditions:

- (1) *A projection requires as a condition of its possibility that a phenomenon be disconnected from certain of its essential relations to the coordinating structure required for its possibility. In other words, there must be a severing of the essential relativity of the object of reference to its context of reference.*
- (2) *The phenomenon must be asserted to be in certain respects autonomous of its context of reference. Reference must be made to the phenomenon in such a manner that denies or ignores one or more essential determinants of its contextual relativity. The coordination is projective in these respects.*

It must be understood that (1) and (2) are descriptions of conditions which must be satisfied by any projection from the standpoint of an analysis of its essential structure. It is not as if a projective misconstruction takes the form of an explicit severing of essential contextual relations — although this may be so in deliberately constructed cases. But this condition of explicit severing of essential coordinative relations must be satisfied once the projection is expressed in the form of an assertion that specific structures are *not* essentially connected to the context.

Let the term 'coordinate' be understood in the sense of a 'determinant of reference to that which can be the subject of an identifying reference'. A

coordinate is therefore identifiable within a coordinate system which assures it an appropriate context of reference. Any reference to a phenomenon establishes a relational system which conditions the possibility of that reference. In keeping with Quine's dictum "no entity without identity"<sup>12</sup>, a phenomenon is intrinsically specifiable in terms of what renders it determinable — in the example, its "coordinates".

Through a description of the constitutive structure of a phenomenon, de-projection retrieves to that phenomenon its coordinates which, as projected, are regarded as autonomous of the coordinate system(s) entailed by these coordinates. Thus, de-projection is concerned with elucidating the structures necessary for the possibility of the referential character of coordinates.

When misconstructions implied by a disregard for the constitutive relativity of a given system of reference are circumvented by heeding the conditioning principles upon which the possibility of the structures examined depend, analyses introduce, as it were, no supplementary content, or assumptions. As a method for accurate description, the formal structure of de-projection is tautologous — for, in making explicit the constitutive elements of that which is described, a point is reached where it is clear that the affirmation of a concept, or reference to a phenomenon, must at once involve the constitutive structures which guarantee the possibility of that concept or reference. It is precisely because de-projection is empty of content that it can authorize a transition from one formulation to another, while guaranteeing their equivalence, and without risking an automatic introduction of error.

The first condition above specifies that a phenomenon is to be considered as dislocated from its essential contextual relativity. The second condition specifies that this dislocation is to be formulated in the form of an assertion of the autonomy of the phenomenon with respect to its context of reference. The first condition denies the possibility of the phenomenon by separating the phenomenon from the context conditioning its possibility. After F. B. Fitch, such a denial is termed 'self-referentially inconsistent'. The separation involved is strictly speaking impossible, so long as reference is actually *understood* as intending a certain object of reference. However, *what* is said of that object of reference — namely, that it is autonomous of the context conditioning its possibility — comprises a self-contradictory and projective assertion. From the standpoint of de-projective analysis, the above separation must consequently be considered a *mistaken* separation.

The second condition, then, involves asserting the phenomenon while the grounds for its possibility are excluded. Thus, a projective misconception

<sup>12</sup> Leonard Linsky, *Referring* (New York: Humanities Press 1967), p. 27.

would attempt to disconnect two or more things which are essentially relative to one another, where this essential relativity of the one to the other is necessary for either to be possible<sup>13</sup>.

The elimination of projections follows according to the coordinating principles of the context within which a projection obtains. Three distinct moments of analysis are made prior to the de-projective correction of a projective misconception. First, the constitutive coordinative structure of the concept or reference in question must be adequately described. This description must specify the essential restrictions imposed by this structure upon possible coordinations. Second, the assertion involved in the projective misconception must be explicitly formulated. The formulation will specify the nature of the "projective demand" by designating the nature of the asserted autonomy of the given concept or reference with respect to its conditioning context. Third, the opposition of the projective demand to the regulative principles of the context must be verified to result in a contradictory and meaningless formulation.

Together, these preliminary analyses render explicit the constitutive structure of the given context and demonstrate that reference to the concept or reference in question is at once necessarily relative to those constitutive elements guaranteeing the possibility of that concept or reference. De-projective analysis is completed through a reconciliation of the constitutive coordinate structure with the misconception which was originally in opposition to that constitution. This final phase of de-projection involves a correction of the projective coordination, imposing upon the coordination regulation according to the regulative structure of the context of reference, which in turn conditions the possibility of reference to the given concept or reference<sup>14</sup>.

The idea of phenomenology as being closely tied to a model of explication as elimination reveals a similarity between the function of de-projection and the rôle of the *epoché* or reductions in Husserl's phenomenology. Where the latter isolates by bracketing or suspending a region of "dubitable nature", projective misconstructions are eliminated in the former. In a rather limited sense, the phenomenological *epoché* may be thought to function at

<sup>13</sup> Up to this point, I have discussed the essential relativity of any object of reference to some context of possible reference. The inverse relation of essential relativity of any context of possible reference to some domain of one or more possible objects of reference is a consequence of the fact that "an invariant structure is essentially related to a range of possible objects exhibiting that structure". (Cf. above, p. 179.) For this reason, among others not treated here, a Platonism concerning possible systems is avoided.

<sup>14</sup> A full account of the notions of projective misconception and of de-projection is given elsewhere. See note 9.

times as a suspension of the absurd<sup>15</sup>, and here Husserlian phenomenology shares with de-projective phenomenology if not the same, then at least a common, interest. An "essential residuum" is left in each case: in de-projective phenomenology, a de-projectively clarified field of phenomena; for Husserl, indubitable consciousness. At times these residua overlap; usually, however, they do not, and there the similarity to phenomenological reduction breaks down.

E'. De-projective phenomenology begins in the employment of a strict methodology, where certain explicit deviations from consistent forms of reference are considered invalid in the sense that the description formulated in a de-projective analysis must itself be granted as a correct description in order for valid forms of reference to obtain. De-projection leads, when this is possible, in its final corrective phase, to a re-formulation free from projective misconstructions of the initial concept or reference in question.

The description of the constitutive structure of a phenomenon or group of phenomena from the standpoint of a given framework cannot be universally generalized. The description is relative to a given framework, and can be considered invariant only in relation to an isomorphic system of frameworks. For example, the translatability of a proposition is always relative to systems providing adequate means for the expression of that proposition. It is merely factual that not all systems have equally adequate means of expression.

Phenomenology undertaken in this manner is primarily interested in investigating the essential structure of individual phenomena taken in relation to definite and general classes of phenomena in which they have membership. From this standpoint, a de-projective phenomenological description of a given phenomenon tends to minimize the non-essential, *individuating* features of that phenomenon. As such, de-projective phenomenology is in the nature of a *generalized analysis*, as developed by A. A. Gukham<sup>16</sup>, the task of which is to elucidate the formal structure of a group of phenomena with respect to which the essential structure of a given phenomenon is covariant. De-projective phenomenology, incorporating a transcendental theory of reference, can be characterized as a descriptive science on the level of maximum theoretic generality, the aim of which is to render *explicit* the structure of possible objects of reference, the structure of possible experience.

<sup>15</sup> See above, p. 5 (i).

*Log. Unt.* II. 2 v § 16, § 27; III Appendix § 5; *Ideen* I § 48; S. Bachelard, *La Logique de Husserl* (Paris: Presses Universitaires 1957), p. 136.

<sup>16</sup> Aleksandr Adolfovich Gukham, *Introduction to the Theory of Similarity*, trans. ed. Robert D. Cess (New York: Academic Press 1965).

## III

The purpose of reflective philosophy is to elucidate, explicate, or disclose the *implicit* structure of possible, or merely actual, experience. For here, it is said that “to analyze is to explicate the implicit”<sup>17</sup>. The development of reflective philosophy may be understood as a growing consciousness of the nature of the primary task of philosophy: to render the implicit explicit. If phenomenology is committed to “radical self-understanding”, as Husserl would put it, then it is important that phenomenology account for itself in the terms of the tradition to which it belongs. Therefore, it will be useful (1) to consider what place should be accorded to the terms ‘explicit’ and ‘implicit’ in the formulation of a reflective philosophical approach, and then (2) to take note of the relation between the meaning established for these terms and that of ‘reflective experience’ and ‘pre-reflective experience’.

Before proceeding in this manner, it will be helpful and of interest to refer here to several passages in Husserl’s *Ideas I*, which will provide a background for the discussion here.

[§ 35] “Every perception of a thing has a zone of background intuitions (or background awarenesses . . .)” such that every perception of some thing shades off into a total context, a “co-perceived objective ‘background’.”

“ . . . it is here implied that certain modifications of the original experience are possible, which we refer to as a free turning of the . . . ‘mental look’ . . . from [e. g.] the paper at first *descried* to objects which had already appeared before, of which we had been ‘implicitly’ aware, and whereof *subsequent* to the directing of one’s look thither we are explicitly aware, perceiving them ‘attentively’ . . .”

“ . . . we know that it is the essence of all such experiences . . . to exhibit that remarkable modification which transfers consciousness in the *mode of actual orientation* to consciousness in the *mode of non-actuality* and conversely. At the one time the experience is, so to speak, ‘explicitly’ aware of its objective content, at the other implicitly and merely *potentially*. ”

[§ 78] “. . . every variety of ‘reflection’ has the character of a *modification of consciousness*. . .” The “unreflective experience-datum undergoes a transformation — into the mode, that is, of reflective consciousness (consciousness of which we are aware).”

<sup>17</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *Husserl: An Analysis of his Phenomenology*, trans. E. G. Ballard and L. E. Embree (Evanston: Northwestern University Press 1967), p. 99

[§ 79] "... phenomenology ... makes ... , as a fundamental condition of its possibility, positive affirmations concerning unreflective experiences. These it owes to reflection, or, more accurately, to reflective intuition of the essence<sup>18</sup>."

(1) When "implicit reference" is made to a phenomenon, the following formal conditions (or some other conditions which are reducible to these) must be satisfied:

From the standpoint of a system K, it is possible identifyingly to refer to sub-systems I and J, where systems I and J have a given common structure. System-J, though sharing a common structure with system-I, is such that a set of elements, A, B, C, are associated with the system as constitutive of it. Since the sub-systems have a common structure, from the standpoint of system-K, A, B, C can be correlated with system-I, even though these elements are directly associated only with system-J.

Insofar as the correlation holds, A, B, C are said to be both *explicit* constitutive elements of system-J, and *implicit* constitutive elements of system-I. To generalize, the implicit has a structure conditioning the range of possible explicit structures which can validly be correlated with it.

System-K, then, provides a possible framework within which the relation between the terms 'explicit' and 'implicit' is determinate. A projective misconstruction obtains if an object of reference is characterized both as (a) having an "implicit" structure of a certain sort, and as (b) having such a structure out of connection to such a system K. To say of an object of reference that it has a certain character implicitly, while reference to systems like J and K, to which predication of the term 'implicit' is necessarily relative, is denied or neglected, — to maintain this, immediately gives way to an inconsistent and absurd misconstruction. Such a misconstruction will be termed a 'projection of the implicit'.

Reflective philosophy may accordingly be viewed as posing the general task of explicating any subject-matter by validly correlating an explicit description with that subject-matter. Some framework which permits reference to such a correlation is necessarily presupposed whenever reference is made to an "implicit content". A projection of the implicit obtains if such reference is made in apparent autonomy of the presupposed framework. Any reference to what is "implicit", independent of a framework permitting a correlation between what is implicit and what is expressed in an explicit description, manifests a projective misconstruction of this kind.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. also *Ideen I*, §§ 36, 69, 77.

(2) It is clear with some reflection that only from the standpoint of an embedment-system of higher order, can reference be made to an egologically modified or affectively modified phenomenon (e. g., a "desired apple") so as to permit the discrimination of a specific egological modification (the "desire") with respect to the phenomenon (the "apple") which it modifies, or with which the modification is correlated. It should be emphasized that the distinguishability of a specific egological modification, or attentional character, in relation to the phenomenon so modified, is essentially relative to a context of reference which provides for recourse to a higher order embedment-system<sup>19</sup>. In relation to a context which does not provide for reference from the standpoint of such an embedment-system, a phenomenon and the attentional character modifying it cannot be distinguished.

A context the structure of which does not provide for recourse to a higher order embedment-system is said to comprise a "pre-reflexive standpoint", in contrast to a "reflexive standpoint", in relation to which such an embedment-system is established<sup>20</sup>. The former is said to be "pre-reflexive" since it frequently is possible to evidence a correlation between two given phenomena, where one phenomenon temporally precedes the other and may or may not be egologically modified, while the second is explicitly modified, that is, is such that any egological modification can be distinguished from the phenomenon modified. This correlation may not be generalized, however, inasmuch as either phenomenon in question may be given in contexts without the other. The distinction here between the two phenomena is a simple expression of the difference, as it were, between phenomena and their explicit description.

From a reflexive standpoint, then, it is possible for the purposes of descriptive analysis to differentiate between a given phenomenon and an attentional character which may modify that phenomenon. It is emphasized, once again, that such a distinction is essentially relative to that reflexive standpoint. It is therefore projective to "carry over" the results of a reflexive analysis of phenomena to phenomena which are thought to be "pre-reflexively constituted" independently of the very framework in terms of which the notion of "pre-reflexive constitution" is applicable. Thus, reference to a

<sup>19</sup> *Log. Unt.* II. 2 v § 23.

It follows that it is projective to represent an attentional character autonomously of such a context.

<sup>20</sup> The terms 'pre-reflexive' and 'pre-reflective', 'reflexive' and 'reflective' are distinguished here in that the first term in each pair is associated with general structures of systems of possible reference, whereas the second term in each pair is a familiar occurrence in the literature pertaining to "consciousness".



“pre-reflexive context” from a reflexive standpoint can only be understood, *simultatione*, to involve a “pre-reflexive context”<sup>21</sup>.

The projections distinguished under (1) and (2) above are variously represented in the passages quoted from *Ideas I*; it is possible here to enumerate only two of the assertions assumed there which can be shown to involve projections.

- (a) Reference from the standpoint of a reflective framework involves a “modification” of a pre-reflective content, which remained unchanged until it was identifyingly referred to from that standpoint.
- (b) Descriptions are possible of the constitution of what is implicitly given without reference to a reflective standpoint.

The corrective phase of de-projection would yield the following re-formulation: Phenomenology as an explication of the implicit, or as a foundational elucidation of possible objects of reference, is so constituted itself, as an approach to a field of problems, that any phenomenological description is intrinsically relative to the phenomenological framework. De-projective phenomenology, which is elaborated in terms of a transcendental theory of reference, may obtain certain descriptive results concerning such notions as “pre-reflective experience” or “the implicit”, but these results cannot be taken out of relation to frameworks rendering those results possible.

It is difficult to understand why phenomenologists have been unaware of this “limitation” placed upon their activities, while the same “limitation” has been accepted and understood by mathematicians for centuries. A geometer would not claim any validity for his results outside of the system(s) in terms of which the validity of these results can be posed as a question.

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<sup>21</sup> It may be hazarded that perhaps only “artistic involvement” permits wholly intrinsic representation of the essential structure of pre-reflexive phenomena.

## OTHER PUBLICATIONS BY THE AUTHOR RELATED TO THE TOPIC OF THIS PAPER

### BOOKS

1. *Metalogic of Reference: A Study in the Foundations of Possibility*, Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, 1975. A research monograph that formulates the author's approach to epistemology through the use of self-referential argumentation and self-validating proofs.
2. *Conceptual Therapy: An Introduction to Framework-relative Epistemology*, Studies in Theory and Behavior, Saint Louis, 1983. An introductory text that gives students applied exercises in thinking using the author's approach to epistemology in terms of self-referential argumentation and self-validating proofs.
3. *Self-Reference: Reflections on Reflexivity*, edited with Peter Suber, Martinus Nijhoff, 1987; now published by Springer Science. The first of two collections (see #4 below), consisting of invited papers by leading contemporary authors, to be published in the new area of research, the general theory of reflexivity, pioneered by the author.
4. *Reflexivity: A Source Book in Self-Reference*, Elsevier Science Publishers, 1992. The second collection, consisting of classical papers by leading contributors of the twentieth century, published in the new area of research, the general theory of reflexivity.
5. *The Pathology of Man: A Study of Human Evil*, published in 2005 by behavioral science publisher Charles C. Thomas, is the first comprehensive scholarly study of the psychology and epistemology of human aggression and destructiveness. The study includes original research by the author, such as a detailed description of the phenomenology of hatred and the psychology of human stupidity, and an extension and elaboration of the author's earlier published work dealing with the epistemology of human thought disorders (Part III).
6. *Normality Does Not Equal Mental Health: The Need to Look Elsewhere for Standards of Good Psychological Health*, Praeger, 2011. The first book-length scholarly critique of the widespread and unexamined presumption that psychological normality should be employed as a standard for good mental health. The book extends the claim by Abraham Maslow that acceptable standards that define good mental health are to be found among exceptional people, and not among the average and psychological normal, who so often — as world history has amply proved, and as such experimental studies as Milgram's and Zimbardo's confirm — will, when circumstances are right, subject others to abuse, cruelty, and death in state- or group-endorsed wars, genocides, and terrorism (see publication #5 above).

### ARTICLES

7. "Referential Consistency as a Criterion of Meaning," *Synthese*, Vol. 52, 1982, 267-282.

8. "Philosophy as Conceptual Therapy," Educational Resources Information Center, National Institute of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, May, 1983, Document #ED 224 402.
9. "Hoisted by Their Own Petards: Philosophical Positions that Self-Destruct," *Argumentation*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1988, 69-80.
10. "Roots of Human Resistance to Animal Rights: Psychological and Conceptual Blocks," *Animal Law* (law review of the Northwestern School of Law, Lewis and Clark College), Vol. 8, 2002, pp. 143-76. The first comprehensive legal study of the psychological and epistemological foundations of human resistance to the compassionate treatment of animals. Contains an application of the author's self-referential argumentation to human conceptual blocks that stand in the way of the recognition of animal rights.
11. "Roots of Human Resistance to Animal Rights: Psychological and Conceptual Blocks," electronically re-published October, 2002, by the Michigan State University's Detroit College of Law, Animal Law Web Center, and maintained on an ongoing basis at:  
<http://www.animallaw.info/articles/arussbartlett2002.htm>  
Also available in German: "Wurzeln menschlichen Widerstands gegen Tierrechte: Psychologische und konzeptuelle Blockaden," available at:  
[http://www.simorgh.de/animallaw/bartlett\\_33-67.pdf](http://www.simorgh.de/animallaw/bartlett_33-67.pdf)
12. Also available in Portuguese: "Raízes da resistência humana aos direitos dos animais: Bloqueios psicológicos e conceituais," published in *Brazilian Animal Rights Review (Revista Brasileira de Direito Animal)*, Vol. 2(3), July/December, 2007 [actually appeared in 2008], pp. 17-66. Available at:  
<https://www.animallaw.info/sites/default/files/brazilvol3.pdf>