Phenomenology and Psychology

[116] The meaning of the two words – phenomenology and psychology – is not fixed and unambiguous. The word phenomenology is not only the name of a philosophy, but is used also in the science of psychology. Jørgen Jørgensen divides the manifestations of consciousness into phenomenological, behavioural and physiological. The word psychology is also not only the name of a science, but one also talks of a philosophical psychology that differs from a science. Gilbert Ryle and Hans Lipps both do this. The meaning of the two words therefore overlaps, and this makes sense because the phenomena under investigation are mostly the same. Nevertheless, for clarity I will use the word psychology about the science only and the word phenomenology about philosophy only, as is also assumed by the title of the lectures.

Philosophy is also many other things beside phenomenology. But in what follows, where I now and then briefly say philosophy, I only mean the philosophy that works in a phenomenological way.

One more remark before I come to my subject: I do not adopt an historical approach; that is, I do not explain phenomenology starting with Husserl as a kind of extension of Kantian apriorism or Max Scheler’s continued expansion of phenomenology into the area of the emotions, to end with its assimilation and continued existence in Heidegger’s and Hans Lipp’s existential philosophy. I immediately proceed to an attempt to explain the methodological differences between psychology and phenomenology.

I. Psychology is science, phenomenology is philosophy. In the introduction to his work Die menschliche Natur [Human Nature] (Frankfurt am Main, 1941), Hans Lipps characterizes the difference between science and philosophy in the following way: a science begins by taking up certain points of view that open access into a [117] field of inquiry, and re-configuring it. Underlying any methodical working science some decisions are, as it were, secretly taken implicitly, through the points of view it adopt, which then delimit a region for the investigations. The points of views that are taken up in taking up the method are more or less hidden. In a sense the science is self-reliant, and the scientist absorbs the method and assumes its point of view. His approach to science is that of taking up a certain interest.

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By contrast, in philosophy one has not committed oneself to determinate points of view. This is not to say that philosophy can start with itself. It comes into existence by means of a knowledge, which the human being already has and which is not philosophy. That prior knowledge is highly various and takes all possible directions. It is too unsystematic to give rise to methodically structured inquiries, and philosophy therefore is the same. It precisely consists in bringing into the light of day the understanding of human nature and relations in the world that lie hidden in pre-philosophical knowledge. The philosophizing person is therefore not merely interested, but involved. It is one’s own knowledge and one’s own possibilities and one’s own world, which one occupies oneself with in order to reveal one’s own nature and the world’s character. The philosopher has always already understood the world, his own life and his life with the other. He cannot come behind this understanding and its ground in human existence. The purpose is not to lay new ground.

The philosophical description or analysis never goes beyond what can be directly exhibited. There is only explication. For it to be that, we must from the beginning know more than we can say. In understanding itself there must lie the possibility of explication. In explication, one works out and appropriates thematically what one has already understood unthematically. It happens this way in the special case of textual explication. In phenomenological philosophy, human existence is a ‘text’ which we immediately understand and explicate, in that the explication moves within the understanding, that is already there beforehand. This is the implicit understanding, so to speak, covered up and covered over by the common understanding. But this is just why it [the implicit understanding] has a leading and guiding role within the common understanding. In its previously given, underlying understanding, human existence is understood ahead of itself, as Heidegger puts it. The ground is always already laid. So when one is seeking to find oneself in one’s underlying [118] understanding through understanding and explicating it, it is one’s own human existence one explicates. In philosophy man finds himself in the way he has already understood the world and his own life. Explication is the conscious articulation of that which is unconsciously understood. The philosophical explication of existence is no more without presuppositions than textual explication is. When one as interpreter appeals to ‘what is in the text’, it is one’s own immediate prior understanding that one refers to.

Science and philosophy turn their eyes in different directions. The scientific study of a field is an extension of our dealings with things and is therefore led by natural interests and passions. As one loses oneself in occupying oneself with things, one forgets oneself in scientific inquiry. By contrast philosophy does not accommodate an interest in matters at hand [saglig]. It conveys no new knowledge. Philosophy cannot be taught as a discipline. Philosophy cannot count on natural passions. One finds oneself driven back to what previously led one in one’s common understanding of the world and one’s own existence. Philosophy is in a constant tension with any natural practice. It interrupts us in our externally directed preoccupations. A knowledge that was hidden from ourselves,
because our eyes were focused outwardly, is redeemed in philosophy. It appeals to what is implicitly understood, but what to begin with is necessarily and naturally enough overlooked.

In order to prevent a misunderstanding, I should say that philosophical reflection does not consist in introspection. Philosophically one can only meet oneself in what one did not expect and which one was not tuned in to.¹

It is clear that in a particular and essential respect phenomenology is a continuation of transcendental philosophy. To take a single example as an illustration: In his analysis of fear, Heidegger says that it is not the case that one first finds a possible evil and one then is afraid of that, but rather it is first fear that discovers the possible evil. The threatening is feared – for the sake of one’s existence – which therefore must already be an existence in fearfulness. The coming evil does not create the fear, but is only its occasion. Fearfulness’s slumbering atmosphere of openness to [119] my situation in the world has already revealed it as a world from which something threatening can come. In other words, in his interpretation of fear Heidegger has transferred transcendental philosophy’s talk of the self-transcendence of knowledge to the area of the moods. In general the implicit pre-given and guiding understanding of phenomenology corresponds to the a priori of transcendental philosophy. In transcendental philosophy this is the element that controls synthesis, within which objects and the relation between objects are posited, and which are given with the subject’s subjectivity. In phenomenology those aspects under which things are taken and which constitute what they are, are expressions of man’s self-understanding. Man is reality’s principle – a phenomenological formulation of transcendental philosophy’s point of view (Die menschliche Natur, p. 67).

Another thing is that existential philosophy’s continuation of transcendental philosophy’s point of view takes place under a critique of the guise of theoretical knowledge in which it first came forward. Put very briefly, the transcendence of human existence replaced the subject’s transcendence. And the difference then is that while the transcendence of man’s existence is a transcendence in entanglement with the world and with the existence of others, the subject’s transcendence was unentangled and situationless. Which in turn means that the implicit understanding, that is of man’s existence, is so manifold, so unmanageable, so impossible to systematize, as is our entanglement with the world and with the lives of others. Whereas thanks to the subject’s unentanglement and transcendence, one could become prey to the illusion that one could make a system out of that which is given a priori. For Kant the elements that control the synthesis in which objects and the relations between objects are posited made up a complete system.

Science brings in factual [saglige] and systematic points of view. Thanks to the characteristic features that are established in the system, and discovered in phenomena, it puts the phenomena into their determinate place in the system and its divisions, which in turn serve to determine them. ‘Psychology’s task is thus to analyse and classify the phenomena of consciousness in such a way that the greatest possible regularities can be formulated concerning them’ (Jørgen Jørgensen, ‘Psykologi på biologisk grundlag’ (Psychology on a Biological Basis), Copenhagen 1946, p. 395).

[120] A division, which plays a big role in the psychology of the emotions, and also because it is repeated in the physiology of the emotions and in this way connects psychology and physiology, is the division between raising and lowering. They are strictly quantitative terms, both in their mental as in their organic use. A raising, an excitation, means that there is a transition from less to more, your ideas become more numerous, associations faster, affectivity richer, motor responses more energetic, pulse beat stronger and faster, breathing quicker or deeper, secretion increases, etc. Lowering, or depression, means conversely a movement from more to less.

It is not only because it connects the psychology of emotions with their physiology that this division is so significant, but also because it is so general. It does not just serve to divide the emotions into excited and depressive, but also often to distinguish between the emotion’s active and passive forms. The form under which the emotion expresses itself in the raising of reactions is active; passive is the form under which it expresses itself in a lowering of them. It is the active form that one first and foremost thinks of when one defines what a feeling is, as this is also what one thinks of when one uses the word ‘feeling’ in daily speech.

If the raising exceeds a certain limit, it is no longer the case that – physiologically and mentally – it allows itself to follow the usual path, but creates disorder. The emotion can also – depending on its degree – proceed in an orderly or a disorderly way. The French psychologist Georges Dumas, whose elucidations I follow, maintains however that raising (excitation) and lowering (depression), are purely quantitative concepts and will not introduce a new concept for the raising that proceeds in a disorderly way (for example the agitation that is different from excitation). This of course does not exclude a differentiation between the raising and lowering of different modalities – for example precisely in their orderly or disorderly way of proceeding – in order to characterize one emotion in its difference from an other.\footnote{[121]}

To see the scientific way of making divisions and its use of characteristic features in operation, and to fix its difference from the phenomenological explication of the understanding which is innate to the feelings, I take the [121] example of Dumas’ study of the phenomenon of anger.

\footnote{1 George Dumas, La vie affective [The affective life], Paris 1948, pp. 84-91.}
Dumas characterizes anger psychologically as follows, where for the sake of simplicity I divide his definition into three elements: (1) anger occurs after a painful event that is experienced as painful (2) the angry person rebels rather than resigning and just complaining (3) the angry person has a more or less clear sense of superiority over the power he is the victim of.¹

After that Dumas begins to explain anger’s lack of imagination. If anger rises, it pushes aside the selection of images and ideas that thought consists of, and finally ends up with monotonous repetition of the same phrases. The difficulty in thinking and explaining increases the anger yet further and may rise to failing muscle control. All intellectual, moral and social inhibitions disappear; all promises, all duty and all conventions are forgotten.

Dumas aims to keep the feeling of anger apart from aggression, with which it is often associated. One can be angry without the intention to attack and threaten. Anger consists in an excessive discharge of rebellious and protesting mental emotion [sindsrørelser], which is anger’s active form, which must not be confused with the aggressiveness to which it is often the prelude.

Now, what is characteristic of Dumas’s account? The first characteristic is the definition – that anger comes on after a painful event; however true this may be, it is very summary, as it does not say anything more about what kind of painful event gives rise to it. Also other emotions, for instance distress and grief, can occur after painful events. As nothing more is said than that the event is painful, then the other elements of the definition become even more important.

If we go to the second characteristic – that anger is rebellion or revolt – it might be asked whether it is anything other than a tautology in the form of a metaphor. In a literal understanding is not talk of revolt or rebellion only of figurative meaning? But what is rebellion or revolt in its figurative meaning other than a figurative expression for anger?

[122] Anger is opposed to resignation and regret. That says something, but not very much. There is not enough kinship between anger and resignation and regret, and indeed there is reason to set them against each other. If the reason why anger is opposed to resignation and regret is that resignation and regret occurs after a painful event has occurred, then the characterization says nothing more than that all emotions that occur after the painful incident, which do not consist in resignation or regret, are anger. Or conversely if the opposition to resignation and regret that is meant to point to the revolt in anger, what can it be but the aggressive impulse which Dumas wanted to keep out of anger?

¹ ‘Psychologically anger arises after an event that is painful [pénible] and felt as such... The subject revolts rather than resigning himself or lamenting, and as one cannot revolt or act against destiny or against power, the subject has the obscure or clear sense that he is superior to the force of which he is the victim. There is almost always in effect in this emotion a sense of superiority or at least a certain equality’ (p. 112) [Translated from the French of Løgstrup’s quotation.]
The third moment in the psychological definition is not obvious. Firstly because it involves a – doubtful – piece of reasoning: Since one cannot rebel against fate nor human power which is sovereign, there belongs to anger a sense of superiority, or at least of a certain parity.

Examination of the psychological definition shows that not a lot of work has gone into it. It is also fairly rudimentary. This does not concern Dumas. He does not come back to this. What interests him are the characteristic features that place anger in a division and systematization of the emotions, namely placing lack of imagination together with the increase in the number of other reactions, especially organic ones. The definition is really only needed to make the phenomenon unmistakable. Then it has done its duty, and all interest can focus on the characteristic features which locate the phenomenon in the system. It does not seek for an explication.

Another testament to the fact that the psychological definition is not very interesting for its own sake, is that it does not distinguish between anger and rage (anger and rage or fury). What interests it is the difference between the ordered and disordered course that gives rise to the quantitative characteristic features of excitation and depression as two different modalities of the raising’s course. The question does not arise how the difference between an ordered and disordered course relates itself to the difference between anger and rage.

As an example of a phenomenological approach I take Hans Lipps’s characterization of anger and rage in their mutual difference. The one affect is described in the light of the other to [123] let the difference stand out. Equally, the phrases in which the words appear in everyday language are used to characterize them.

‘To direct one’s anger at someone’ is a standard phrase, a phrase that cannot be used with the word ‘rage’. One takes one’s rage out on someone. In a similar way, one says that the other was hit by one’s anger, which one cannot say about rage. Anger, which will not ignore the fact that the other does not live up to what we can expect of him, is directed against the other and hits him.

Because anger is directed against the other and hits him, one has one’s grip on something in anger. That is why in anger – even when you let it become powerful in yourself – you are still in control of yourself. Unlike rage, in which one ‘loses grip of oneself’.

In anger one shows oneself, one has enough control over oneself for this. In anger, one expresses oneself and as one wants to. Again unlike rage, which marks a person whether the raging person wants this or not and no matter how he wants it or not. He brandishes his arms about. His movements betray him.¹

¹ ‘One simply lets rage out on someone, but it is not directed at him. It does not hit like anger that interprets the other, which will no longer overlook the non-fulfillment of what one can expect from the other. In anger one seizes on something. During rage composure is lost, one lets oneself slip away, but one really puts oneself into anger. It grows powerful
Characteristic of the account is that none of the definitions are meant for being used to place the phenomena in a system. No characteristic features are sought after, no range of characteristics are selected which when combined are sufficient to enable the phenomenon not to be confused with other phenomena. By contrast a description is given of the two phenomena taking advantage of their mutual differences. It can only succeed if the phenomena are sufficiently related, as only then is it a demand on the description that it be flexible and well-fitting. If the phenomena are far enough from one another, the characteristics which lend themselves to the comparison become coarse and summary. Anger and rage are such related phenomena, that their comparison can allow the philosopher to give a [124] nuanced and precise depiction. They are so related that for the psychologist's purposes there is no difference between them. By contrast, between anger and resignation and regret there is not much kinship, so that their juxtaposition only gives rise to a coarse characterization. It was not an immediate sense of something akin between the phenomena that led Dumas to put them together, but it was the characteristic of anger as an emotion, that occurs after a painful event, that led him to think of other emotions, that also occur after painful events, and which therefore must be distinguished from anger.

Concerning the phenomenological method, it is said in an article on Hans Lipps by O. F. Bollnow, that it consists in the art of distinguishing closely related concepts; concepts that are often used interchangeably, without making any distinction between them, are distinguished from one another. Only in such a distinction is a significant understanding of them achieved. Lipps assumes that language has always intended to do something by having several words for apparently the same phenomenon. The investigation will therefore be orientated by the use of language. The phrases in which the words are used are investigated in order to trace hidden differences in meaning. Precisely those phrases where a word cannot be replaced by its synonym opens up understanding.

Bollnow takes up an objection that has been raised against Lipps, that the philosophical insight in this way is delivered over to the use of language, and because the use of language is not something objectively conditioned but has arisen accidentally, so Lipps's philosophy is said to amount to a philosophically fruitless clarification of linguistic habit. Bollnow answers this objection by saying that it misjudges language's significance. Words can be interpreted as arbitrary within a framework of an objectively given kind, as something just external in relation to thought; but when what is at stake is to go through the factual [saglige] relations in order to attain a deeper and original relation to human life and the world, words just are the organ whereby reality first lets itself be seen. It reveals itself to us in the linguistic grip. To quote Lipps: 'The word here opens something up for one. That something is given linguistic form is the only way to let it show itself. Only words can discover what remains hidden to the factual grip'. It is in

in one. In anger one shows oneself. Rage only marks one. The person brandishes his arms about. His movements betray him' (Hans Lipps, *Human Nature*, p. 41).
order to liberate the original power that is hidden in words, that the linguistic possibilities given with the phrases and the differences of the meaning of words, are investigated with the care and patience that is found in Lipps’s philosophy (O. F. Bullnow, ‘Hans [125] Lipps’, in Blätter für deutsche Philosophie, vol 16, pp. 302-3).

But – one could ask – why not try to take the determinations out of the comparisons which gave rise to them, place them next to each other, connect them, and make the results into a definition. That never happens. But Lipps intentionally lets the determinations stay in the comparisons which gave rise to them. The reason is that the philosophical reflection is only an explication. This is based on the view that in moods, emotions and affects there is an inbuilt understanding, which can be explicated. I will return to this in the next section. But anyway in a strict sense the explication cannot be verified. One can only refer to an understanding that is built into a feeling, mood or affect, and which we take for granted and which is common to us. Explication is not of a scientific but of a philosophical sort.

Because phenomenology does not want to define but only to explicate, it does not pretend to avoid a petitio principia; quite the opposite. In Lipps’s description, there is no attempt to give a series of characteristics of anger or of rage, that could stand alone and form a definition, without the definiendum being included in the definiens. There is no attempt at an unambiguous determination that more precisely delimits the phenomena. Nothing more is in question than an attempt to make clear what the innate understanding is.

To take another example: In agreement with Kierkegaard, Heidegger describes fear in comparison to anxiety. He says that fear’s object is found among what one is dealing with and what one knows. What one fears threatens one in respect of a certain way in which one is. It comes near, but without, however, being within reach. It is not certain it will occur; it may well be that it is absent. The uncertainty does not lessen the fear, but on the contrary increases it. But what is said here is not a definition. By contrast we would have a definition – Heidegger notes – when fear is determined as the expectation of a coming evil. This would not include what should be defined, i.e. fear, in the definition: the expectation of a coming evil. One pretends to have given a unique characterization, that circumscribes the phenomenon, so that it cannot be confused with other phenomena. A petitio principii is avoided. But as we have said, an explication is not interested in avoiding this. On the contrary. The explication continually takes the phenomenon and does not want to definite it, only clarify it. Philosophy and science, explication [126] and systematization, should be kept apart from one another. Philosophy is not to become a sort of pseudo-science. An account which is intended as an explication is not to be cut up into a range of pseudo-scientific characteristic features.

A characteristic feature is precisely not an explication but serves to place the phenomenon in a scientific system. Admittedly characteristic features can very well be retrieved from the explication, or the explication can be used to track down the characteristic feature. But the characteristic feature need not have anything to do with
the explication, it can be attained in an entirely different way, for instance in the case of affective phenomena through physiological investigations. And the characteristic feature that has nothing to do with the explication, can be more efficient – scientifically – than the characteristic feature which one has tracked down by means of the explication. Put briefly, while the explication is to legitimate itself in the face of the understanding that is inbuilt into the phenomenon, the characteristic features are to legitimate themselves in the face of the system and serve to determine the phenomenon.

In its existential-analytic form, the phenomenological description attains a guiding point of view, as the analysis of anger and rage also illustrates. The difference between anger and rage, which Lipps puts forward, corresponds approximately to the difference between the orderly and disorderly course of an excitation which according to Duma characterizes anger in general, i.e. in its active form, as 'la colère rouge'. Here it is reasonable to put the phenomenological and psychological determinations together. In anger one has hold of oneself, and therefore the way it runs is orderly. In rage one loses composure, because one's excitement has reached a height that creates disorder. One brandishes one's arms about, because one can contain oneself no longer; the increasing excitement of one's reactions makes it impossible to direct them in the right course.

In psychology the difference is determined quantitatively: intellectual, moral and social inhibitions disappear, one forgets promises and duties and all conventions, when the raising of reactions reaches such a degree that their orderly character turns into a disorderly one.

By contrast, existence philosophy has quite another interest in the difference. The difference between anger and rage is of interest to it insofar as it is a difference between poise or lack of poise. This is the viewpoint that guides the existential philosopher in his examination of the difference between the two phenomena, or, perhaps I should rather say, which the explication gives rise to [127] through the comparison. Taken as mere feelings, anger and rage seem closely related to one another, while they are opposites, when we consider their significance as poise, Lipps says.\(^1\)

But why does existential philosophy interest itself in the two phenomena as poise? Not for moral reasons, but because as poise they are characteristic for man in his nature.\(^2\) Affects as such are not peculiar to human beings. Animals also have affects, to some extent the same as human beings. What is peculiar about human beings – and that is, for every person individually – is by contrast how their affects are modeled by poise, Lipps says.

To come to have an affect means, as the word says, to be moved by something, to be affected. But in affect one seeks simultaneously to be done with it, what one is moved by – one wants to get out of it, in order to regain a grip on oneself. This applies both to an affect as anger and an affect as rage. But the course is different for the two affects. Under

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\(^1\) 'As bare feelings, without observing their meaning as poise [Haltungssinn], anger and rage appear to be kin to one another' (Hans Lipps, *Die menschliche Natur*, p. 21).

\(^2\) I refer to my account in *The Ethical Demand* (Copenhagen 1956), pp. 77-81.
anger one does not lose a grip on oneself, however affected one is. There might have had to be no small effort in order to secure one’s position against a movement that has been about to overpower one.

By contrast in rage one loses a grip on oneself. Only after having been carried away can one later get a grip on oneself. That does not mean, that only anger is to be a human way to be affected while rage is to be inhuman. Only man – because he has poise – can become ‘beside himself’ from rage.

The difference between anger and rage is a difference between the ways in which the two affects interact with the person’s poise, where the difference cannot be applied to animals. One cannot distinguish whether an animal is angry or enraged. The animal’s relation to its surroundings and its own nature is unbroken.

While psychologists are interested in finding the characteristic features for the affects, which will serve to locate them in a system, existential philosophy is interested in seeing the affects in the light of the constitution of human [128] nature. One can very well say that both psychology and existential philosophy are interested in the affective movement’s course – but indeed from different points of view. Psychology is interested in the movement’s course as an increase and is interested in when the increase becomes so strong that the movement from an orderly course turns into a disorderly course. This is the difference between anger and rage for psychology. By contrast existential philosophy is interested in whether the human being in the violence of his affective movement manages to hold himself together or not.

Existential philosophy thus interests itself in anger and rage for the different ways whereby human beings take up their relation to the world and other people. This is the theme for its explication – which is also the explication’s subject. The presupposition for the explication is at the same time its subject. Only because the human being comes to himself and is open to himself in an immediate way, for example in anger and rage, can he explicate the ways in which he comes to himself and becomes transparent to himself, for example in anger and rage.

II. If we look at the process that we call becoming clear about something, gaining insight, coming to knowledge about something, it often begins as a movement in the mind or having a feeling, and arguments are only the end of the process. For the most part, it is important that the process does not come to a conclusion too quickly. The movement of the mind is full of un-unfolded [uudfoldet] knowledge, so that feeling something is the beginning of insight. If all the knowledge and insight that is hidden in the movement and feeling is to be brought forward, concentration must be upheld by the incessant will to make the adequate expression announce itself. What is inadequate should always be discarded or improved. For this one must allow time and not rush to the argument. It must only come after the real process of cognition is finished. Argumentation organizes the insight it gains – afterwards. If one rushes into argumentation, without worrying
about giving it adequate expression, there is nothing to keep the attitude open, movement is stopped, feeling shrinks away, and insight is gone before it becomes unfolded.

However, it is one thing to say that emotional states can be conditions for achieving knowledge, but it is a different matter whether emotional states contain knowledge. Most will dispute the latter claim, and so will say that there is [129] no knowledge in feeling. Therefore nothing belonging to the feeling, that might have been the condition for gaining the insight, should be included in the description and argumentation in which the insight is formulated, if the description is to be true and the argumentation correct.

Occasionally, our reason and our feelings come into conflict with one another. Russell is one philosopher who has given a lot of thought to this conflict. He decides for reason and against feelings. That is, feelings are attached to our needs, and in our needs there is obviously no knowledge. It is true enough that need is the driving force in our lives and gives our life excitement and our world meaning; but, Russell says, conversely need is quite useless as a medium of knowledge of ourselves and society, of our environment and universe as they are. Just because we have need for something and the desire that the situation is this way or that, nothing is said about whether it really is so. Obviously there is a need that lies at the basis for our knowledge, or it would come to nothing. Indeed we also talk of the ‘thirst for knowledge’. But the same needs that our active life and therefore also our knowledge as an undertaking stems from, become obstacles to our knowledge, if we make them into the means for it. Put briefly, need is indispensable as a motor for our knowledge, but as a means it is has to be eliminated. The universe is to be known as it is apart from our needs, desires and interests.

And as far as our feelings are concerned, it has been said that they are the sources of our needs. Our emotional life is closely bound up with our cravings and desires. It follows that just as our needs tell us nothing about how things really are, in the same way our feelings say equally little. In his wish to look reality straight in the eye as it is, Russell therefore opposes his feelings. And that they are strong, even violent, and that the conflict therefore becomes painful, is just one more reason to go against his feelings, for it is only further evidence of their origin in our needs.

Now it is characteristic of the phenomenology, which lives on in existential philosophy, that it considers that it is primarily through our emotions that we become familiar with our life’s condition and the world that we live in. Our condition presents itself and our world comes into view in an immediate and direct way in our feelings. There is an understanding, and it is a fundamental understanding, that we cannot have [130] other than emotionally.

How can this be connected together with the claim that our feelings contain no knowledge that Russell made when he relied on the empirical work of psychology? I believe that it fits together very well, that there is no contradiction.
There is understanding in feeling, namely an understanding of the mood one is in when one is angry, enraged, happy, fearful etc. If one refuses to talk about understanding in connection with feelings, one does so for the reason that in feeling the person who understands and that which is understood come together. The angry person knows that he is angry, the fearful person knows that he is fearful. If one insists that it cannot be called understanding, it is assumed that it is the nature of understanding that the understanding is distinct from what is understood. But that must be a dogmatic commitment to the subject-object relation, and to the view that understanding must ground itself in objectifying, although conversely it is objectifying that presupposes understanding.

But everything has not yet been said. Feeling is not a state or a process that is in a mind that is worldless or situationless, that can be itself alone. On the contrary, feeling is always a feeling within my situation, within my life in my world with the others. If we let this be a phenomenological way of speaking, the psychologist cannot have any objection to it. Anger materializes after a painful event, says a scientific and empirical psychologist like Dumas. He could also have said, that fear arises at the behest of a threatening evil. That is the way that the psychologist who works empirically speaks, and to this the philosopher who works phenomenologically can have no objections. It is simply the case that feelings sometimes appear in the mind as reaction to what we encounter.

But the philosopher raises a question, that does not interest the psychologist and does not need to interest him, and this is the question: is the defined feeling (definiendum) included in the definition (definens) or not? Is one then guilty of a petitio principii or not? Yes, answers the philosopher, and that is not to be avoided. If one did not include the feeling in the defined predicate, then one would be able to understand without feeling what a painful event or a menacing one is. But one cannot do that. It must be felt, as everyday language puts it, which is why it is also said that one becomes pained and feels oneself menaced. If we consider a person who could not enter into the state of feeling we call being pained or feeling [131] menaced, he would never, no matter how much intelligence, judgment and imagination he was equipped with, be able to know what a painful event and a menacing evil was. Only anger gives us access to the interdependence of life and its painful events, only fear gives us access to life in the world with its threatening menaces. Thus in anger and fear I do not just understand what mood I am in, but with my anger and fear I understand what it is for something to be painful or menacing at all.

Maybe someone would object that the situation is not one in which I first get angry and then due to my anger discover that that which I encountered was painful – or that I first feel fear, and then with the help of my fear discover that I am threatened. My anger or my fear are not needed as states of mind for me to know that the event was painful or the situation threatening. On the contrary, psychologically it is the painful event and the menacing evil that provide the occasion for my anger or fear. That is very true. That is, however, a psychological assertion, not a phenomenological consideration. Viewed
phenomenologically it is through my possibility for becoming angry or afraid, that I even
know what a painful or menacing event is. In their own ways my possibilities for feeling –
I could also call them my dispositions for feeling – open up my world and
interdependence, so that events can be understood as painful and menacing.

We therefore have to distinguish between the access-giving possibilities of feeling
(or dispositions for feeling) that philosophy interests itself with, and the actual
prompting circumstances and course of feeling, that psychology interests itself with. The
philosopher is in the right when he asserts that the former contains understanding; the
psychologist is in the right when he asserts that the latter contains no knowledge.

Let me say a few words on the latter. On an actual occasion I become angry. Whether there are grounds for it or not, I cannot be told by my anger; that I can only be
told by my understanding and imagination. I must use my imagination to understand how
the situation occurred, I must use my understanding to ask critically whether I was not
irritated for completely different reasons and merely choose a random occasion for
giving vent to a charged irritation, so that the occasion was actually not the real reason
for getting angry. A man has been given a dressing down at work and lets it out on his
wife and children when he comes home. From his tantrum at home, he cannot know
anything about how it was occasioned by his wife and children [132], he can only be told
this by the self-criticism of his understanding and imagination. Put briefly, our acute
states of feeling and the course they run give us no knowledge of their causes and what
occasions them. That does not happen, because our acute feelings are accredited to our
needs and the imagination and daydreams that they give rise to. That is what is correct in
placing feeling and understanding in opposition to one another.

As has been said, our affects, feelings and moods very often leave us prey to
ilusions about what they are occasioned by, and from our feelings and sentiments we
cannot acquire knowledge of the situation and the events that have induced them. But we
cannot conclude from that, that feelings are blind. On the contrary, they are sighted to the
highest degree, as possibilities for feeling, as dispositions for feeling, they open the world
and our historical life in this interdependence for us. But the feeling’s understanding is
like an horizon that opens up, that has nothing to do with a knowledge of individual facts
and not of the individual facts that precisely gave rise to the acute emotion.

III. Previously, when I took anger as an example, I began with a psychological
investigation of an affective phenomenon in order then to see how a philosopher who
works in a phenomenological way investigates it. Now I begin with the phenomenological
considerations which a certain observation give rise to, in order later to see how the
psychologist must methodologically consider the same observation. I take an observation
that I find important and current, irrespective of the use of this to illustrate the different
procedures of philosophy and psychology.

There are people who others bow to, who have clout, as one says. Their words are
taken seriously, and even though their opinions are not incontrovertible, one takes great
care about countering them. In any case one does not overlook them. It is all the more remarkable that the powerful person need not excel in any way, not by talent, not by insight, not even by being characterful. His understanding can be crude, his standpoint nonsense. A lightweight can have not a little influence, which happens and not just rarely.

Conversely it happens that the person without authority is highly gifted and full of insight. Indeed, the remarkable thing is that spiritual charisma that draws people in and from which some other benefits, and for the [133] sake of which his company is sought, still need not give him the smallest amount of authority and power. Often the opposite is the case.

One is not interested phenomenologically in giving a general understanding of the above observations, and certainly not in what brings about power in the immediate sense that we are talking about here. One will only point to what in some cases is the explanation, and this is that a person gains power from being closed off [tillukkethed]. A certain aloofness in personal constitution, an ultimate reservation, imparts power. In all accommodation, affability and maybe charm, there is still no way in. This far and no further! It almost doesn’t matter how a man closes in, it still affects us. It can happen not only when a person closes himself in by giving weight to his decision and words, but also when he closes in through his consciousness of being in the right, and it may even at times give him influence to close himself in through putting on a pose and in appearing to be insulted.

Conversely it is true that person deprives himself of authority who without aloofness and reservation is present in what he says and does, who does not think about how his presence in word and deed are to be used. With openness he gives away the power that he by virtue of his person could get over us, in order for his insight to be the reason why we accept his words. Not to be aloof and reserved in attitude, is negating of authority. It is not, as Kierkegaard thought, communication’s indirectness, but on the contrary its openness, that makes the other free. With sincerity a person gives us security and freedom, for with sincerity he depletes his own possibilities for exerting power and authority.

Let us assume the same observations to be the starting point for the psychologist. But he asks: Is there a rulebound relationship between the two pairs of variables in question – on the one hand spiritual power and immediate powerlessness, and on the other hand lack of spiritual power and immediate powerfulness; and obviously this is not the case. If the psychologist does not let the matter drop, but he is curious to get an explanation for his observations, because they have surprised him, then he will ask under which particular circumstances the dependencies hold, that he claims to have observed. He tries to gather more data. And he and the philosopher both note that the people, in whom spiritual power and immediate powerlessness are combined, are open-natured, as it is called; whereas the people who are immediately powerful despite the fact that their spiritual force is much smaller than that of [134] the powerless, have reserved natures. Having made this new observation the psychologist tries to find a new functional
dependency, asking: Is there a rule-bound relationship between the independent variables: a spiritually powerful person, who has an open nature – and the dependent variable: immediate powerlessness? If he finds the functional dependence confirmed by new observations, he has arrived at a preliminary result. If disconfirmed by the new observations, he may again ask, under what particular circumstances does the dependence obtain. He asks what enables the spiritually powerful person, in spite of having an open nature, nevertheless to have an immediate power over other people. To find an answer he collects new data and records, for example, that one of the people concerned is pushy, another does not shrink continual repetitions until the other gives up just to avoid having to listen to him, a third is keen to assert himself. Yet again the psychologist tries to find a functional dependence: Is there a rule-bound relation between the independent variable, a spiritually powerful person who has an open nature without being pushy, stubborn or determinedly thinking about results – and the dependent variable, immediate powerlessness?

Here I stop and pretend that all the new observations that the psychologist conducts confirm his assumption, as he has finally formulated it. Two things are characteristic of his approach: The study is empirical, he observes and keeps on observing. And all the concepts he works with – power and powerlessness in an immediate sense (unlike delegated power, or as it is also called, power as assigned competence), spiritual power and powerlessness, open and reserved nature, pushiness, stubbornness, interest in results – can be reduced to observable phenomena, however laborious and cumbersome the reduction might be.¹ The second characteristic of the method [135] is that rule-boundedness, law-likeness, is the criterion for the dependence. He continues to collect new data in order with this to determine in a more particular way one or more of the variables, until he finds a relationship which is rule-bound, a dependence that can be declared functional.

As already said, the philosopher’s starting point is the same as the psychologist’s. It strikes them both, that a nonentity can have clout, and the spiritually powerful person does not exercise power in the immediate sense. Both also realize from the beginning that neither of the two forms of connection are strictly necessary. It only happens now and then that the nonentity has clout, and that being spiritually powerful is the same as being immediately powerless. Also, they share the next step in the investigation. They make the

¹ The scientific description uses concepts without their basic elements being observable. Not until analyzed more closely can they be reduced to empirical data. Poul Meyer mentions that a lot of basic legal concepts are of that form: ‘property’, ‘marriage’, ‘purchase’, ‘sale’. Within political science a number of concepts are nominal, by which is meant that ‘they are defined by other concepts or linguistic circumlocutions’. As an example Poul Meyer mentions ‘parliamentarianism’. A scientific task is that of reducing the concept’s elements to observational quantities and thereby giving the concepts an empirical meaning: see Politisk videnskab [Political Science], Copenhagen 1962, pp. 38-39.
same observations. Both know people whose talent and spiritual charisma they admire and enjoy, and they both come to the idea that when they exercise no authority – people allow themselves to do whatever they like in relation to them – it is because they are open natured. But the psychologist and the philosopher formulate the new moves they make in their investigation in a slightly different way. The scientist asks whether the new observations are able to make the visible event’s occasional coexistence between spiritual charisma and psychological powerlessness into a functional dependence, if to spiritual charisma is added being of an open nature. Since this is not enough, we must add more: lack of pushiness, stubbornness, zeal about results. The philosopher also notes that to be open natured to an extent makes one lack authority, that not even spiritual charisma can prevent this, and the philosopher also affirms that by keeping ourselves to what we can observe, the relation is not rule-bound. But that doesn’t bother him. He hurries to concede it and get it out of the way: obviously there are properties, such as pushiness, zeal about results, stubbornness and perhaps many others, that prevent openness effecting psychological powerlessness. The issue is that unlike the psychologist, the philosopher does not hold himself merely to what can be observed, and he is not interested in rule-boundedness as such. By contrast he is interested in what the observation he has carried out – that to have an open nature is to deprive one of authority – reveals concern about the life between people. It reveals the following:

[136] In trust the individual enters life in the relationship to the other expecting to be accepted and received by him. Not in the sense that the trusting person expects that the other will agree with him. It is located at a different and deeper level than agreement and disagreement, acceptance and resistance. Scepticism towards one’s views does not have to involve the least bit of scepticism towards the individual person as a whole. In disagreement one's views are taken seriously, as worth contradicting.

But if the other now shuts off, the trusting person tries to break through the wall of reservation, and he has the hope of getting the other person to give up his reservation. But that has risks. There is less security left in his trust, and thereby he is moving into the sphere of power that the other creates with his shutting off. The other gains power by playing hard to get, and he succeeds in being hard to get he by shutting himself off. The trusting person bows to the shut off person, gives in, and in the end trust may be dissolved in submission. To get out of the uncertainty that the other’s closedness throws him in, he goes along with him. A component of what one calls leadership can be a final, uncertainty creating, unapproachableness. The leader holds himself in reserve, so that one becomes insecure, so that one is not sure where one stands in relation to him. And in insecurity one becomes prey to the leader's exercise of power. He has reserved the authority and power for himself – by just being reserved. Power in immediate and psychological circumstances often involves creating an indeterminate illusion concerning what hides behind the unapproachable attitude. In fact there is nothing. There is nothing in reserve, of either power or abilities, behind the front of reservation. Closedness with
nothing behind it can be enough to create authority and influence. I do not say that it is a rule, only that it happens, and not just rarely.

To return to the methodological considerations: The philosopher is not interested through observations in checking whether the relation between openness and lack of authority is rule-bound, whether the relation is functional, but he is trying to find that feature in interdependence which explains why a person by his openness loses his authority, and with reserve achieves authority. The philosopher assumes that the dependence is essential and discloses the essence of interdependence. This conviction is his inspiration. Compared to the psychologist, the philosopher is rash, and his recklessness puts him in peril, that is clear. I will not [137] say that nothing he says can be verified, but verification does not interest him. He goes from the observations – via the interpretation of them – to the unobservable features by which human beings live, in this case in their interdependence in life. The evidence for his assertions consists in the relationship there is between the unobservable features in human life, which he has sniffed out – and in the evidence that belongs to the interpretation. The risk he runs is that he succumbs to loose speculations. The history of philosophy shows that a system can show the greatest coherence and yet still be pure speculation.

In contrast to the empirical definition, ‘that only makes use of terms that refer to observable circumstances’ (Poul Meyer, op. cit. p. 29), the phenomena of the phenomenological analyses cannot be observed, they are only matters of interpretation. Interpretation is much more ambitious than scientific explanation. While in science one explains one functional dependency by a new functional dependency, interpretation pretends to make clear the dependency itself. In science one is interested in where the rule-bound mutual relations are between two or more variables in order to investigate with all possible control measures whether the rule-boundedness actually is as strong as first assumed. The interpretation presupposes a certain rule-boundedness, but what the interpretation wants is to come as close as possible to what the dependency consist in.

It is in the nature of things that an interpretation is not verifiable, in the way that a scientific hypothesis is. Matters are different, however, when it comes to questions of falsifiability: some interpretations can be falsified, while others cannot. If an interpretation can be checked by the facts, it can be falsified, if it is false. One bows to the facts, not only in forming an hypothesis, but also an interpretation. If an interpretation is falsified, it is obstinacy to stick to the point that it is an interpretation and not a scientific hypothesis.

But the difference between psychology and philosophy should not be overdone. As I said, the psychologist tries to find out on what immediate power and so-called leadership skills are based, and when he now comes to the thought that an open nature sets aside authority, and that reservedness pulls the others into one’s field of power, then it is not that he just stumbles on his observations, but he is guided by an understanding of the structure of our interdependence. He is inspired by [138] the same understanding of human life as the philosopher. The understanding of interdependence, that guides the
psychologist to his hypothesis, is made the theme of his considerations by the philosopher. We gain access to this interdependence not just through observation alone but also through interpretation, and the interpretation of the interdependence we carry out with the interdependence of our own lives. The interpretation's access is needed, together with the access of observation, in order for the psychologist to put forward his hypothesis. But whereas the psychologist is concerned with what results he can reach with his hypothesis, the philosopher so to speak turns around to consider the interdependence with which he interprets the interdependence.

'It goes against simple psychological observations to assume that the link between the two set variables in general is purely mechanical (reflexes)...'; the link is established by the help of a mental process; it is conveyed by a psychic structure (Poul Meyer, op. cit., pp. 56-7). This establishes the link between the stimulus and the reaction and cannot be immediately observed or confirmed. What the psychologist calls psychical structure, the phenomenologist calls the constitution of our existence. In fact, it may very well mean the same. Does the difference only consist in the fact that psychological introspection is in the service of the scientific way of proceeding, while phenomenology wants to hold its own as a form of analysis that is independent of the sciences? There are philosophers who work phenomenologically who are very eager to distance themselves from psychology, who claim that access to the phenomena is not through introspection (or retrospection). The access is an interpretation of the ways through which existence is open for itself. The form of philosophy that we have to do with here can therefore be called existence-exegesis.

How can one get hold of what cannot be readily observed? Oxford philosophy resorts to language, in which we get hold of it. Phenomenologists pretended originally – such as Husserl and Scheler – that one gets hold of it in an intuition that has nothing to do with immediate observation, and which is called 'the intuition of essences' [Wesensschauf]. This is abandoned by later phenomenology, which therefore also goes under the name of existential philosophy; here one pretends to get hold of it in the interpretation. Methodologically the development within phenomenology has been this move from 'the intuition of essences' to interpretation.

But to go back to the similarity and difference between psychology and phenomenology. The phenomenologist puts a phenomenon like openness's undermining of authority and reservedness's creation of authority [139] in connection with other features of the interdependence of human life, and admits beforehand that all sorts of characteristics and circumstances such as pushiness, stubbornness and obstinacy can rule out the phenomenon; but here the scientist says that in putting forward the hypothesis that there is an invariable correlation between openness and lack of authority, one ignores all other possible determinants. It may be necessary to do this – for the time being – because one may know nothing about the determinants yet. But one regrets this, for as long as this is the case the hypothesis cannot be verified or falsified. The philosopher who works phenomenologically knows that determinants are there; he, too,
expects that they in most cases prevent openness from being operative and that they thus eliminate the dependency. But this doesn’t worry him, as it is not the rule-boundedness but the condition of interdependence that interests him.

The structure of the psyche or of existence, that creates the link between the independent and depends variables, is called the intermediate or hypothetical variable. With them one leaves ‘the outer observable world and moves towards the discovery process in the human mind’ (Poul Meyer, op. cit., p. 73, p. 75). But while the phenomenologist describes and analyses the psychic or existential structure for its own sake, the scientist is interested in behaviour to see how it is determined by internal and external influences. Motives belong to the internal influences, which therefore cannot be subject to external observation (Poul Meyer op. cit. p. 75, p. 86, p. 68). But here phenomenology deviates, it reflects on the openness to influence itself, the suggestibility itself, and its connection with other features of the interdependence, for example the relation between trust and submission. The tendencies of phenomenology and behavioural science are different, but there is not an insuperable barrier between them.

Afterword I realize that the psychology that I have referred to in Section I is out of date. The criticism from Professor K. B. Madsen and his co-workers, raised at the seminar at Denmark’s High School for Pedagogics where the lectures were held, came as no surprise to me, and the guidance and information in which it consisted and which was informative, I just had to accept. Because the lectures had to be published immediately, I was not able to take [140] account of the criticisms; I regret that, but it could not be done straightaway, but would require a substantial overhaul and a lot of reading. Nevertheless, I do not think that it does great damage to have the lectures printed, when their main aim is to give a characterization of phenomenological philosophy, and the comparison with psychology is only needed for that. And although the psychology I have in mind is a thing of the past, the purely methodological overview still seems to be reasonably accurate.

Translated by Hans Fink and Robert Stern

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i ‘Saglig’ is a difficult word to translate, as it also has connotations of what is objective and factual, like its German equivalent: ‘sachlich’.

ii ‘Pinlig’ also carries connotations of awkwardness and embarrassment.

iii These terms are given in French.

iv For a related discussion, see The Ethical Demand, Introduction, §3.

v The Danish word here is ‘holdning’, which can also mean ‘attitude’, which then connects with the way one holds or comports oneself. Løgstrup discusses this issue further in §4.1 of The Ethical Demand, where ‘holdning’ is there translated as ‘demeanour’.