

Conference Paper

Polycultural Phenomenology

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Abstract

The paper deals with the issue of the phenomenological foundations of polyculturalism on the basis of the categories of the following concepts: multi-layer being, concretization, intentionality, life world, and epoché. A comparison of phenomenology with eastern psychotechnics allows us to stress the importance of Husserl's break with the tradition of speculative philosophy. Phenomenology is a pure experience of self-observation. Such a radical intellectual position is similar to that of yoga and Buddhism which is also built after breaking with past traditions. They all reformat the cultural shell in order to reset and justify the experience of transcendental meditation. The achievement of the phenomenology lies not only in its reformist direction in philosophy, but also in that it solves the problem of overcoming the crisis of social sciences in Europe due to breaking the deadlock of speculative philosophy and positivism. Its universal value is in the development of cross-cultural research methodology, with the help of which such systems as Vedanta, yoga, Buddhism and phenomenology itself can be in a single intersubjective field.

Keywords: phenomenology of culture, phenomenology of education, multiculturalism, Husserl, life world.

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1. Introduction

Globalization is a new factor in the modern state of affairs, which is characterized by the openness to the information, value and meaning systems instability. Under these conditions, a new model of interaction between the subjects of the world process is being worked out based on multiculturalism, cultural assimilation and exclusion. Obviously, direct cultural expansion and colonialism have ended, so the choice is between diffusion and separation, marginalization and integration.

The significance of the study is as follows: Russia needs an adequate model of acculturation, which could work in a civilized manner with the problems of cultural pluralism: migration, missionary activities, horizontal and vertical innovations. The modern policy of intercultural communication originates in Europe of the Enlightenment and needs to be adapted. Cultural differences are not at the level of ontology, but they affect social

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formations no less than the geographical environment, and, unlike the latter, can be harmonized.

Here are the critical questions the study addresses: in what way are cultural differences significant for the sustainable global society? Are there conservative identity management technologies? How can philosophical phenomenology help in these matters?

The paper will address moderate practices of polycultural formation using the phenomenological tools of multi-layer vision, concretization, intentionality, analysis of the life world, and epoché. This device will help to create a flexible model of cultural adaptation. The purpose of the study is to propose a conservative system of cultural policy based on phenomenology. The hypothesis is that phenomenology can serve as a working tool for guided cultural interaction [1].

Multiculturalism and fusion ("melting pot", "furnace", "crucible") are considered as two opposing policies. The first represents the idea of the salad bowl (or "pizza effect", "symphony", "mosaic"), which retains its identity, while the second advocates the elimination of the limitations and differences imposed by their own tradition, and the formation of a unified cultural form.

The merging of cultures, the melting of ethnic and religious identities into a single Anglo-Protestant national alloy -- this ideal arose in the United States as a result of the influx of frontiersmen. The implementation of this goal was quite successful as long as the subjects of amalgamation were white immigrants. Representatives of Indian, Latin American, Japanese, Chinese and African civilizations formed separate enclaves, which allowed S. Huntington even in 1993 to talk about the danger of collision of different cultural worlds.

Multiculturalism as a policy and social practice was used in Canada, Germany, France, and Great Britain. Some participants have accumulated a negative reaction due to the isolation of ethnic communities, potential conflicts, the preservation of language distances, and the involvement of criminal communities.

Polyculturalism is positioned as a moderate protection of cultural pluralism, raising the younger generation in the spirit of respect for other cultural systems [2].

Political entities seek to achieve maximum dominance through their practices of Americanization, Arabization, Germanization, Sinization, Polonization, Russification, Ukrainization, Hellenization, etc., unless they reach counter resistance. The Russian state has expanded its borders to well-known geographical borders and the borders of other powerful political entities. Hundreds of monocultural entities were included in the Russian state. The two leading directions of the tsarist politics were assimilation through

the adoption of Orthodoxy, as well as the management of cultural diversity through ethnic and religious elites. The USSR built the international identity "Soviet man", uniting peoples around the socio-economic goal of building a communist society. After the collapse of the USSR, radical cultural construction was replaced by "small bonds" -- the unity of historical fate, the victory over Nazism, the Eurasian economic space and all-Russian patriotism.

Phenomenology is a philosophical practice of profound overcoming cultural stereotypes, ethno-confessional clichés, political conventions, based on concepts and technologies of multi-layer, concretization, intentionality, life world, and epoché [3].

Due to the fact that Husserl's teachings of Husserl are very extensive, multifaceted and difficult to understand, the interpretation of phenomenology varies from author to author. Extensive speculative reasoning prevails, which not only justifies the name of phenomenology as "philosophy for philosophers," but also makes it a product of dubious quality. Many authors indulge in the creation of terms and consider under the phenomenology a certain type of formation of individual thinking, not taking into account the tradition of phenomenological philosophy.

At the same time, phenomenology has a rather specific program, close to social and cultural practice, presented by the teachings of R. Ingarden, A. Schütz, P. Berger, and T. Luckmann. They loaded phenomenology with quite clear tasks -- to explain the essence of a thing and its social reflection, to eliminate the antinomies between the natural and the social, and introduce the rational principle into the irrational and metaphysical.

Let us turn to the key categories of phenomenology: multi-layeredness, concretization, intentionality, life world, epoché. The Polish phenomenologist Roman Ingarden has developed an ontological system of multiple layers of being, which helps to formulate a new model of communication for social agents. In the ontology of R. Ingarden, in addition to the real being of things, the ideal being of mathematical constructs and the absolute essence of theology, there is an intentional world of sociocultural objects, generated by projectivity of consciousness and the need for self-expression and identification (artistic heroes, social expectations, ethnic ideas, religious beliefs, the media) [4].

Real objects (mountain, river, planet) may cease to exist due to the influence of other real objects, but their existential stability is high. Intentional objects have the least existential inertia: they can disappear without any external influence if they are simply forgotten. The most severe ideological clashes between the Olmecs and Aztecs, Assyrians and Arameans are now remembered by a very few people, since new worldviews and conflicts constantly arise, and there is always a hybridization of the old and the new, when the fusion of local and global is in full swing.

The existence of sociocultural objects depends not on one consciousness, but also on the consent of several agents. Intentional objects support their existence intersubjectively due to the communicative consent, which stores the integrity parameters of intentional objects. Due to iconic systems, intentional objects become publicly available for viewing, evaluation and change. R. Ingarden also developed a theory of concretization, where he described how abstract transforms into concrete. Concretization is closely connected with the multi-layered existence and intentionality of objects, which owe their essence and existence to individual consciousness.

Religious monuments, legal norms, works of art are not only physical objects. Their physical parameters (stability, essence, existence) do not coincide with cultural ones. Physical objects may be lost, but social memory retains its cultural properties.

Ingarden introduced the concept of concretization for the procedural development of points of uncertainty of the text. The concretization of a sociocultural object is a way of establishing links between the text and the reading patterns it causes. The closest correlate of instantiation is actualization, the act of translating opportunity into reality, in which other possibilities remain unrealized. R. Ingarden pointed out the semantic affinity of the term to the more well-known "actualization", but he himself preferred his own version [5].

The life worlds are small and large social groups that share value-semantic structures of their target collective consciousness and generate their solidary predicates. Thus, participants in the political process are united in their belief in their views on the ideal structure of society. Members of professional groups (doctors, sailors, communications workers, entrepreneurs, etc.), share a common destiny in activity, payment, and protection of their corporate interests. The religious group cooperates around the common structures of faith and moral principles. In a traditional, relatively simple society, the individual usually belongs to the integrative value-semantic worlds, which comprise professional, political, religious, moral, aesthetic and other views.

Life worlds are transformed with their social carriers. Thus, the life world of merchants, reflected on the B.M. Kustodiev's canvases, with its aesthetic and ethical norms, went into oblivion under the influence of the culture of the revolutionary life of the proletariat. The culture of peasant settlements in old Russia was supplanted by the culture of the early Soviet communal dormitories, which was replaced by the customs of individual urban households of the late USSR.

Conflicts of concretization are possible at the borders of vital worlds. Thus, the conflict of concretization of constitutional rights and freedoms can be seen on the example of discussing a draft law on insulting religious feelings. Proponents of this bill consider it a

guarantor of the sanctity of the sacred, while opponents believe that it excludes religion from the sphere of public criticism, which is bad for religion itself. Constitutional rights and freedoms have individual intentional parameters and their identity is established intersubjectively.

The emergence, maintenance and formatting of life worlds is associated with another sociocultural phenomenon -- the growing individualization in society. This is the process of separating oneself from general biological properties. Due to the growing individuation in modern society, it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain primary cooperative structures --- the institutions of marriage and the family. The proof of multiculturalism in the original social institution is the diversification of its forms: guest, open, and trial marriage, cohabitation, single-parent families, and polyamory.

E. Husserl developed an important philosophical tool -- a phenomenological reduction (epoché) of the mental procedure for recording and removing from the layers of psychological experience. This is a multi-stage act, consisting in removing the brackets: 1) usual experience, 2) psychological attitudes, and 3) theoretical assumptions. Phenomenological reduction is the operation to remove the attributes of objects from acts of consciousness, freeing the image of a thing in consciousness from other characteristics that have been transferred, not necessarily characteristic of things. Transferred to cultural practice, the epoché means the conscious position of the speaker and the acting cultural agent, recognizing the conventions and functionality of their own and other people's cultural identities [6].

2. Methods

The paper is based on general scientific methods of a theoretical level: comparative, genetic, systemic and structural types of analyses. Choosing from general logical methods, the author relies on analysis / synthesis, abstraction / concretization, and generalization / concretization.

3. Results & Discussion

One of the reasons of the instability of social institutions is dissatisfaction with static identities and openness to the dynamics of life. Phenomenology does not call for destabilization of identities. It recognizes their conditional functional value due to the fact that they contribute to the sedimentation and institutionalization of society. Stability, meaning, individuation are the phenomenological ideals of human existence. The

phenomenology of multiculturalism offers training in the concepts and technologies of multi-layer, concretization, intentionality, life world, and epoché.

Phenomenology is also a promising tool due to its comparability with eastern psychotechnics, since it was based on the idea that reality of one's mind is apodictic and the first reality given. Yoga, Vedanta, Buddhism offer prolific material for the study of consciousness. Nowhere in the world in the pre-scientific period has such a rich terminological apparatus been elaborated that would track the subtlest modifications of the *atma*, the inner self.

All Vedanta schools practice control of the mind and speech, which can be compared with abstaining from judgments (epoché) in phenomenology. Husserl borrowed the term from the scepticism philosophy as abstaining from judgments (epoché), which, like a shadow, is followed by tranquility (ataraxia).

Phenomenological reduction is an operation of removing the attributes of objects from the acts of consciousness. It consists of three steps: psychic, eidetic and transcendental reductions. Psychic reduction is the elimination of assessments, motivations and intentions related to the subject. Eidetic reduction removes the form of cognitive operations and transcendental focuses the mind on its own grounds. Epoché is an important method of phenomenological reduction, because during the ascent to the unconditional state of consciousness, you must learn to restrain the quality of the object remote from its intentional attraction.

Vedanta school practices several levels of epoché. The first task is to refrain from the usual statements. The practice of abstinence from speech (mauna) is widely practiced in both schools of Vedanta. In Advaita Vedanta, complete abstinence from utterances is carried out. In Dvaita Vedanta, mauna is a concrete incarnation, which consists in speaking only about Krishna or spiritual topics, that is, renouncing everyday judgments. Both schools of Vedanta recognize the reincarnation of the soul and agree that the mind replaces from one life the prints of sensory images (samskara), which can be either virtuous or sinful. Samskaras, which are similar to anchors, arise as a result of direct contact with the objects of feelings and include reason, motive, media and external communications. It does not matter which anchors remain in the mind of man, whether they are virtuous or sinful, the restless subtle body makes the soul reincarnate. Therefore, the subtle body in Vedanta is also called *karana deha*, the causal body.

Yoga recognizes that there is a gap between the automatism and the individual's choice -- an act of will that can stop the chain of thoughts in order to become aware of an epoché. Consciousness as it were merges with images and automatic performances at the moment of interaction. When the mind-manas, immersed in its sensory-semantic

modification, is faced with a new challenge, it perceives this as a threat to the current image and enters into an affective state (resentment, jealousy, envy, hatred, anger). Affective states are the cause of suffering and delusion, therefore yoga teaches us to be in our natural state, to keep the image-vritti subordinate and to break the identification with the consciousness of affective automatisms.

Vasanas are hidden in the subconscious "seeds of desires", so Yoga considers them to be the bitterest enemies for the Jiva. Citta takes the form of various mental states of factual being. Soul (jiva) identifies itself with citta, and because of that jiva enjoys and suffers. Yogi calms citta, going through 5 levels of spiritual life, using the 8 stages of yoga practice, which are based on tapasya, asceticism. Thus, a person "anneals" the seeds of desires and attains the state of freedom, happiness and ultimately liberation (moksha). When all the imprints of past experience (samskaras) disappear, the yogi leaves his body and enters the videha mukti, liberation after death, in which Ishvara (God) helps him.

Yoga-Sutra (1.3) offers to leave everything in the natural state (tada drashtuh svarupe avasthanam -- the seer rests in its own state). One just needs to remove the noise from the mind. Memory is responsible for storing fingerprints of sensory experience. Patanjali offers two types of meditation to deal with samskara. The first meditation is to reflect on the true ego, full of knowledge, existence, and bliss. The second practice is to retain the thoughts (epoché) (Yoga-sutras 1.17-18). This type of meditation is close to the Tibetan Buddhism, in which the attainment of nirvana is conceived as the gradual extinction of the flow of thoughts and desires. Whatever one sees around, all this is treated as naturally occurring manifestation and naturally empty void. One is offered to leave everything as it is and does not create anything with the mind, "Thoughts disappear themselves, if you do not cling to them. Naturally released manifestations become your assistants, and you can practice by adopting external vision as a path. As for what is inside, whatever the movement may occur in your mind, no matter what thoughts may come, all this has no effect, all is emptiness". Thus thoughts are released naturally in Buddhism. As a result, the phenomena completely disappear from the view of reflective mind (reflective ego in Husserl's terminology), which focuses on the feeling of the self [7].

From a phenomenological point of view, the transcendental problem is primarily a problem of the constitution, which should not be understood in the classical sense of the problem of transcendence as "how a consciousness transcends itself", yet on the sense of intentionality, without which the mind cannot find anything that belongs to subjects.

An explanation of the possible relationship of consciousness with its object requires clarification of the meaning of this connection between the constitutive subjectivity and objectivity. In other words, the problem of the transcendence of the world and the phenomenology of being-inside-the-world has been removed, transformed into the problem of the deliberate presence of the world, which makes it possible to approach the world as an open and fulfilled consciousness.

In Husserl's phenomenology the role of the "conductor" in the transcendental dimension is transcendental reflection or transcendental-phenomenological reduction, because we are talking about a method of approaching an absolute existential field. Husserl's reducing system involves three main stages: 1) psychological and phenomenological reduction (opening a purely mental sphere); 2) eidetic reduction (discovery of the a priori structure and internal forms of the field of mental life); 3) transcendental-phenomenological reduction.

However, the important thing here is not the number of levels, but their direction. It is important that Husserl's transcendental reduction is impossible without eidetic level. The first reductive stage (psychological) is not necessary: for example, "Ideas" and "Cartesian thinking pose a direct path to the pure realm of consciousness in the commission of eidetic-transcendental reduction. Thereby, the experience of mental is implied, but not deleted.

So, the main stage of the transcendental reduction is turning off the perception of the world, "bracketing" the thesis about the world, a permanent and hidden in a natural setting assumption of the significance of this existential world and based on this assumption of the importance of natural science. Everything that undergoes such a modification, does not disappear, but, in contrast, is revealed as phenomenon in its semantic existence. In general, we can say that the transcendental reduction is to turn off all transcendental presuppositions and the whole (or ideas) of that transcendence (the existence of the world). The event of transcendental reduction is the discovery of meaningful differences "something like something", not identity, but the difference that is assumed in intentional experience. Distinguish something as something means to select it in the phenomenal order of givens from its availability in the world within which it takes the predication of the transcendent in-itself, etc. Reducing the thesis of the world and faith in the existence of the world, we thereby reduce the world as the ultimate referent (in regard to meaning, presence, etc.). We no longer refer to the world, but we ask about it in the "how" of its life and "what" entity.

The epistemological aspect of transcendental reduction opens the possibility of clarifying the nature of knowledge and its appreciation. This refers to the fact that

phenomenology acts on the level of law or the "principle of all principles": consider what is and how it is from itself, that is, to perceive the essence of self-accomplishment.

One of the levels of studying psychic phenomena is the study of emotions and their relationships in one experiment, based only on what can be found explicitly and in a pure form, which is beyond mental (or any other) projections onto the physical, both outside of me and regardless of me, yet impacting me. In the dimension of the transcendental experience, the phenomenological principle is motivated by significantly different interests. There is a difference between being asked about the nature and structure of certain experiences, in order to ask how in the immanent order of consciousness the object is given, that is, asking about the meaning of intentional relations and its origins.

The ontological aspect of reduction opens a new transcendental sphere of experience as a sphere of absolute being of consciousness, transcendental subjectivity. Thus, the ontological difference is determined by the ways of consciousness being (the absolute, immanent, pure) and to the world of consciousness (intentional, meaningful existence). Thus, in the course of the phenomenological experience of the world, the first is the positioning or the natural setting as the first affordable one, that leads to the second in the course of argumentation (yet first by meaning) -- namely, to the ontic unit of the irreducible sphere of ego cogito and the ontological or transcendental entities, that alone determine the possibility of positioning of natural datum and sense of meaningful existence.

Phenomenology does not contradict the concept of a cultured personality with tolerant attitude to cultural diversity. Neither does it conflict with the prevention of extremism. It supports such priorities of state policy in the field of education and upbringing as the reproduction of a highly moral personality with a sense of respect for their culture, tolerance for other cultures, and an orientation towards cooperation with the Other [8].

Socio-cultural phenomenology may help in strengthening the theoretical level of the formation of ideas about cultural diversity. The existing school subjects "The Foundations of the Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia" and "The Foundations of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics" fill the gap in the basic information about a global open society. However, this is not enough to create empathy for other cultural systems. Living together cannot only be informative, without communication and empathy. The multicultural world is based on respect and conscious creation of a new quality of life.

According to the concept of V.B. Sokol, "phenomenological melos" proposes to achieve a spiritual rapprochement of peoples through the intentionally-musical origin

of human experience, which opens up access to a common empathy. A world of people of different cultures (participation or *sankirtana*) based on music as a unity of breathing and voice intentions, allows us even unknowingly master a single intersubjective life world [9].

4. Conclusion

Thus, the problem of the current stage of development is that none of the strategies of cultural policy has proven flawless. The melting pot does not work, because there are substances that react toxically in the alloy. The cultural salad leads to the loss of a single controllability of the collective subject. Phenomenology proposes to simultaneously maintain cultural consensus and go beyond identities. The synergistic effect of the interaction of different cultures must be controlled from within the consciousness of the subject himself, who ought to be sufficiently educated and cultured to select creatively the models and processes of interaction.

The phenomenology of multiculturalism is the formation of an inner moral position that is alien to cultural raiding and consumer assimilation. The moral philosophy of phenomenology is of a conscious choice, cooperation for the sake of global sustainability, without damaging local traditions, with respect for the Other, yet with the preservation of self-identity; adoption of cultural innovations, that are necessary for steady development, along with preserving the history of one's ancestors.

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