

The Return of Phenomenology to European Psychology

Editorial

Journal für Psychologie, 31(1), 21–37

<https://doi.org/10.30820/0942-2285-2023-1-21>

CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

www.journal-fuer-psychologie.de

1 Retrieving the Lost Tradition

From the lively discourses of 19th century philosophical psychology, experimental psychology and phenomenology both broke off into divergent streams. If psychology, as a positive science, tried to solve the world-riddle of human consciousness by observation and measurement, then phenomenological philosophy would devote itself to the same riddle by means of a systematically descriptive analysis of experience. It is very important to note that, before these streams so dramatically diverged in these two different directions, the psychologists of the late 19th century, including Wilhelm Wundt (considered the founder of experimental psychology) identified themselves as philosophers. All psychologists were employed in departments of philosophy and understood their work in psychology as a subfield within the larger field of philosophy. Moreover, they viewed their experimental work as a revolutionary contribution to the history of philosophy. This however did not sit well with the other philosophers who viewed this new science as a threat to the intellectual integrity of mainstream philosophy. These more traditional philosophers charged the new psychologists with the accusation of »psychologism« which generally means »to try to reduce the laws of logic to empirical processes, such as neuronal events.« This perceived reductionism was intolerable to traditional philosophers and this »psychologism« debate consumed the German academic world at that time. Thus, cooperation broke down between the two camps and any unity between philosophy and psychology fell apart due to a mutual claim of absoluteness – a sundering which had profound historical consequences.

As sociology of science concludes, this psychologism debate culminated in a great event, known as the *Lehrstuhlstreit* (see Galliker 2016, 122–127): In 1911, an informal »professors union« (*Professorenengewerkschaft*) was formed to submit a petition to all the ministries of education in Germany to protest the growing trend of replacing chairs in historical or pure philosophy with chairs in the new field of experimental psychology (Kusch 1995, 191). The result of this petition was the permanent institutional

separation of psychology from philosophy. This separation, again, greatly realigned the academic world by severing philosophy from the active practices of the sciences and severing psychology from its original identification with the history of philosophy. The claims of absoluteness, that led to this schism, went on to become the decisive theme of the 19th »century of science« (Schnädelbach 1983, 118; our translation), foreboding the developments of the 20th century. This led experimental psychology to unceasingly move in the direction of the physical sciences, cutting itself off from dialogue with the field of philosophy. In turn, philosophy moved in the direction of the humanities with a primary orientation towards textual exegesis.

Nobody mourned this forced exile more than Wilhelm Wundt who deeply resented the restrictive label of *experimental* psychology. To him it was unthinkable that psychology could ever be detached from philosophy because Wundt envisioned experimental science as making positive contributions to the field of philosophy. To Wundt experimental psychology was never in opposition to the practice of philosophy. Moreover, he feared that, detached from the broad intellectually rigorous atmosphere of philosophical discourse, psychology risked degenerating into a »philistine art.« Here, the psychologist risked becoming a mere »scientific artisan who does not belong among the philosophers« (Kusch 1995, 194). Unfortunately, his fellow psychologists and philosophers alike did not see things his way and Wundt lost this battle. From that time onward, psychology and philosophy have drifted even further apart – especially overseas in America. But it remains an open question as to whether this permanent institutional separation was the best solution to a momentary academic turf war. Nor is it clear that either field, in the long term, has been well served by this divorce. Contemporary psychology can never match the intellectual breadth and depth of knowledge that comes with a background in the history for philosophy.

However, despite this academic breakup, there were efforts to constructively integrate both research paradigms, phenomenology and experimental psychology. Already at the beginning of the 20th century corresponding traces can be found. One example is Moritz Geiger's contribution to the Fourth Congress of Experimental Psychology in April 1910, where the Munich phenomenologist spoke about »the nature and meaning of empathy« (Geiger 1911). His Munich friend and colleague, the phenomenologist Alexander Pfänder, even published an »Introduction to Psychology« (1904) which focuses on the psychic phenomena. A case approaching from the other side, i. e., from psychology, is the textbook by the psychologist of thought August Messer entitled »Empfindung und Denken« (Messer 1908), which attempted to draw on Husserl's results, while another psychologist of thought, namely Otto Selz, whose impact in problem-solving research continues to the present, gave a test lecture in Mannheim on »Husserl's Phenomenology and its Relation to the Psychological Question« (cf. Seebohm 1970). Despite these attempts at cooperation, no interdisciplinary discourse

could be established in the first half of the 20th century. On the contrary, the secession of the different types of research was only increased by the collapse of European psychology traditions, such as Gestalt psychology, and the rise of behaviorism. From the objectivist perspective of the new ideal of science, phenomenology at this time seemed to side with the old ›traditional‹ forces that declared psychology to be exclusively a science of the mind and stood in the way of the progress of empirical research in natural sciences. Particularly persistent here is the inaccurate accusation of naïve introspectionism, which – among other misconceptions – hampered the development of phenomenological psychology (cf. Giorgi 1983; Herzog 1992, 496–197).

Meanwhile, with the second half of the 20th century, new formations developed (cf. Giorgi 2010; Wendt 2021). Attempts to conceptualize or even systematize phenomenological psychology occurred in various places. More specifically, five centers of phenomenological psychology in the 1950s and 60s can be named:

1. Johannes Linschoten's phenomenological psychology in *Utrecht* goes back to Fredrik Buytendijk, who had acquired knowledge of phenomenology in Cologne with Max Scheler.
2. Carl Friedrich Graumann, professor of psychology in *Heidelberg*, was trained for example by Karl-Heinz Volkman-Schluck, a phenomenological hermeneuticist, and by Maria Krudewig, a psychologist of thought. Alexandre Métraux worked at his side (see Métraux and Wendt 2022).
3. The so-called *Copenhagen School*, in which Franz From and Edgar Tranekjær Rasmussen worked in the middle of the century, had its founding father in Edgar Rubin.
4. In Belgium, Georges Thinès worked in *Leuven* as a student of Albert Michotte, who had gained knowledge of Husserl's work through the psychology of thought in Würzburg (cf. Michotte 1954, 214).
5. At Duquesne University in *Pittsburgh*, the Spiritans Adrian van Kaam and Henry Koren had conducted anthropological and existentialist studies before inviting Amedeo Giorgi (originally an experimental psychologist) to develop an appropriately phenomenological psychological methodology (see Churchill, Aanstoots and Morley 2022).

Among the four European approaches, only the Copenhagen School persists to the present, but in the early 60's it could only be said that its representatives »were aware of Husserl's works, they did not seem to have followed him closely« (Giorgi 2010, 159). More recently, there has been increased phenomenological research there under the influence of Bjarne Sode Funch, Simo K ppe, and Tone Roald. Nonetheless, since the end of the last century, continuous phenomenological work in psychology has existed mainly in the United States. The European psychological traditions continued in a way that was distantly related to phenomenological philosophy or continued on in isolat-

ed pockets (methodologically related currents, though not fully phenomenological in the strict sense, e. g., Gestalt psychology and psychological morphology). This circumstance becomes clear with an exemplary look at Swiss phenomenological psychology: In the second half of the 20th century, many phenomenological researchers worked in psychology in Helvetia. Prominent names are Wilhelm Keller and Detlef von Uslar in Zurich, Ludwig Binswanger in Kreuzlingen, or Hans Kunz in Basel. Since von Uslar's retirement in 1987, however, there are no longer any phenomenologically oriented full professors in Switzerland, and the last German-language publications in the spirit of phenomenological psychology date from the 1990s, so that Max Herzog's extensive habilitation thesis of 1992 on »Phenomenological Psychology« (Herzog 1994) nowadays reads like an obituary, although it could have been a starting point.

In North America, phenomenological psychology has proved more resilient. In contrast to Graumann and Thinès, Giorgi has been able to inspire another generation of researchers with his phenomenological approach to methodology. The reasons for this continental difference have not yet been sufficiently explored historically. In Giorgi's own writings we find interesting conjectures. In 1996, he looked back at the genesis of the »Journal of Phenomenological Psychology,« which he had launched around three decades earlier. Hoping for an intercontinental cooperation between phenomenological psychologists, he had originally won Graumann and Thinès as co-editors, but came to realize in the end that the »stream of articles« (Giorgi 1998, 165) from Europe, which he had hoped for, did not materialize. That the research programs of his European colleagues »never developed a phenomenological research program« ultimately led Giorgi to assess, with evident resignation, »I never understood why« (Giorgi 2010, 163). A concluding discussion of this historical development must be the subject of future research in the history of psychology. For the time being, three significant differences can be identified:

1. European psychology at the middle of the 20th century was institutionally still substantially different from its American counterpart. Speaking by example: Graumann was appointed in 1963 as successor to Johannes Rudert, a holistic psychologist, as the only professor of psychology at the philosophical faculty in Heidelberg. His appointment was therefore also decided by philosophical colleagues such as Hans-Georg Gadamer. In other words, Graumann's appointment has also taken place due to tradition in human studies, even if as director of the institute he contributed significantly to its modernization. His phenomenological interests linked him, in a sense, more closely to what appeared as an »old fashioned« or past-oriented tradition than his other efforts at modernizing and updating Heidelberg's psychology program. In stark cultural contrast, inspired by the socially progressive humanistic movement in 1960's American psychology, Giorgi, and his colleagues at Duquesne, viewed phenomenology as the path of progress. Viewed as novel and revolutionary

- in America, in Germany phenomenology was seen as the vestige of a traditional academic world.
2. There are also differences between the approaches in phenomenological questions. While the faculty of the Duquesne program were phenomenologically diverse and eclectic in their readings, calling themselves an ›existential-phenomenological‹ program, Giorgi's later systematic approach was mostly, but not limited, to Husserl (2009), it is Maurice Merleau-Ponty, however, who served as the primary model for the Utrecht School. The Copenhagen School, on the other hand, seceded already in its earliest days, as Rubin was not convinced by Husserl's thinking and developed an alternative approach, which he called ›aspective psychology‹, following Husserl's Göttingen colleague Georg Elias Müller and his collaborator David Katz (cf. Pind 2014). Greater convergence in terms of basic phenomenological assumptions can be found between Giorgi and Thinès, who emphasized the »transcendental dimension of scientific psychology« (Thinès 1968, 160; our translation). Graumann lastly, although he placed his phenomenological stance close to Husserl, also expressed scepticism toward him (cf. Graumann 1960, 72–73). Mention is also made of Aron Gurwitsch as an influential source of ideas.
 3. The most important difference between the approaches concerns their self-understanding regarding methodology. Giorgi's central intention is to develop a specifically phenomenological *method* for psychological research. His efforts culminate in a »modified Husserlian approach« (Giorgi 2009). The absence of this methodological cultivation of phenomenology among his European colleagues ultimately led him to demarcate his own work: »I did not find anyone who had a research program using a phenomenological method in psychology« (Giorgi 2009, xii). This attitude has the strongest contrast with the Heidelbergers, as here there was deliberate talk only of a mere »Phenomenological Orientation in Psychology« (Graumann and Métraux 1977), i. e., of an attitude conducive to further psychological paradigms. In retrospect, Alexandre Métraux argues: »To outline another psychology, as it were an independent department or direction within the discipline, was at any rate not what I had in mind, and if I am not mistaken, that was also the case with Graumann« (Métraux and Wendt 2022, 50). Nonetheless, there have been efforts at methods in Europe as well, but they have not amounted to a procedure with the same straightforwardness as Giorgi's. Linschoten's work contains the approach to a so-called situation analysis, which has also been evaluated by Graumann as a methodological contribution of phenomenology to psychology. However, this analysis was not fully developed (cf. Schott 1991).

While the reasons for the breakdown of European traditions remain open for discussion, a lesson to be learned from history is the importance of international community

and the need for better cooperation in the future. The sympathy between Giorgi, Lin-schoten, and Graumann that emerged in the 1960s was not enough to engender a long-term trans-Atlantic network. Phenomenological psychology in the 21st century will attempt to remedy this deficiency. The aim of this issue is therefore to build bridges. This results in an international authorship as well as a multilingual issue. However, we do not limit ourselves to bilateral exchange. Phenomenological thinking can be found in all parts of the world. A contribution from South America (San Martín and Mercado Vázquez) helps to express the polyphony of the research style.

This review of the history of the European tradition of phenomenological psychology is not intended as a nostalgic call to resuscitate a past tradition in a way that only repeats or copies it. It is more meaningful, moreover, to learn from its difficulties. Accordingly, inspirations for further development are needed that will take advantage of the opportunity for international confluence for creative renewal. The contributions in this issue are therefore not only intended to present what is already known to the German-speaking public, but also to generate new perspectives for development.

2 The Phenomenological Contribution to Psychology

To draw on Husserl's words, the >principle of all principles< of phenomenology is the assumption that all rationality, logic, and truth become attainable in directly lived experience (Berghofer 2020). This same thesis is reiterated by Merleau-Ponty as >the primacy of perception< (Giorgi 1977). Despite the substantial range of positions within this field, it is this *theory of direct intuition* that continues to epistemologically unite the phenomenological perspective. This understanding of experience is inclusive of all experience – not only >sense experience< as in British empiricism. Phenomenological psychology, in this way, strives to understand psychological phenomena and develop methodologies that are in keeping with this principle of rootedness in unmediated directly intuited experience. However, it does not simply presuppose a concept of experience, like >Erlebnis< in the tradition of philosophy of life. Rather, phenomenology itself is a discourse that aims at elucidating experience. For this reason, it would be wrong to assume that phenomenological research is immanentist. What is found in Wilhelm Dilthey as the >theorem of phenomenality<, i. e., the view that all objects are for me and therefore the investigation is only limited to the first-person-perspective (cf. van Kerckhoven 1992), does not apply to phenomenology. On the contrary, there are so-called egological positions in phenomenology that affirm this role of consciousness, and others, namely non-egological ones, that reject it. For this reason, it is justified to speak of phenomenology as the discourse that seeks the determination of experience, without presupposing a concept of it.

In general, it can hardly be denied that experience is also the subject of psychology. Although the concept itself is to be determined phenomenologically, there is no doubt that the human subjects studied in psychology are actively experiencing beings. This is the starting point for phenomenological psychology: It investigates with scientific and not only philosophical means the structure, context, and origin of experience, i. e., the meaning of experience. What connects all contributions with this broad claim to knowledge is the common reference to a discourse. This phenomenological discourse provides a framework for theorizing and a basis for methodological critique that can address the weaknesses of other paradigms. Speaking by example: From a phenomenological perspective, both naturalistic reductionism and rationalistic transcendentalism can be identified and questioned. Therefore, phenomenological psychology always comprises a critical standpoint that exposes the presuppositions of empirical work into full view. At the same time, it is capable of constructive alternative approaches, as evidenced by the research traditions cited above. In what follows we shall argue for the potential phenomenology has for making a vital contribution to psychology, specifically in the areas of philosophy as well as experimental, cultural, and theoretical psychology.

2.1 Philosophical Phenomenology

Although influential phenomenologists of the past, such as Edith Stein or Jean-Paul Sartre, have often taken a stand on empirical research and also on psychology, theirs have usually been philosophical reflections. There is a structural difference between phenomenological philosophy and psychology, which cannot only be understood methodologically. More fundamental is the distinction between philosophy and science in general, which has been formulated, for example, by Merleau-Ponty:

»Philosophy is not science, because science believes it can survey its object and holds the interrelation between knowledge and being to be certain, whereas philosophy is the epitome of those questions in which the questioner is himself called into question by his questioning« (Merleau-Ponty 1986, 47; our translation).

The phenomenological transition from philosophy to psychology is a fundamental epistemological change of perspective that makes the object of knowledge appear under different conditions: While philosophical phenomenology asks for the ground of being and cognition that makes the perspective of psychology possible, naturalistic psychology itself deals with the analysis of already given factual behavior and structures without fundamentally questioning their possibility. Consequently, there is a philo-

sophical »phenomenology of the psychic« (Scheler 1986, 388; our translation), which is therefore not yet phenomenological psychology.

The transition between phenomenological philosophy and psychology has been understood in different ways throughout intellectual history. The philosophical classics speak of a foundational relation. If, on the other hand, the independence of psychology as a science is emphasized, it can be said that both share a specific attitude. For this phenomenological attitude, various accounts can be found, for example, in Max Scheler. He speaks of an »attitude of mental seeing in which one gets to en-vision [*erschauen*] or ex-perience [*er-leben*] something that remains hidden without it: namely, a realm of >matters-of-fact< of a peculiar kind« (Scheler 1986, 380; our translation). The peculiarity of these facts lies in their epistemic nature: »What is experienced and seen is >given< only in the experiencing and envisioning act itself, in its performance: it appears in it, and only in it« (ibid.). Abstractly formulated, phenomenological philosophy and psychology choose an epistemic approach to the phenomenal realm of the mental that does not coincide with the empirical operations of measuring and observing. In this way they complement other types of research.

A classic differentiation between phenomenological *philosophy* and phenomenological *psychology* comes from Husserl himself. While Husserl's phenomenology certainly grew out of his critique of >psychologism<, it is important to note that he also strongly supported the development of a non-naturalistic psychology. His philosophy emphasized a phenomenological transcendental attitude, achieved by suspending (via the methodological *epoché*) the naïve realism of what he called the everyday >natural attitude<, from which rigorous philosophical descriptions could be performed. Furthermore, he outlines a phenomenologically >psychological< attitude that is pre-transcendental.

To Husserl this non-transcendental level of research would be directed towards particular persons within the lifeworld of embodied time and space. In short, transcendental *philosophical* research suspends individual personal experience, but phenomenological *psychological* research is directed exactly towards personal experiences within the >natural attitude< itself (cf. Wertz and Morley 2023). With phenomenological psychology, the *epoché* or suspension of the naïve realism of the natural attitude takes a more strategically ambiguous form. While still suspending the beliefs of natural science, the standpoint of the psychological *epoché* takes on a two-way circular process. Here the phenomenological psychologist both steps into the naively believed personal world of the everyday natural attitude, at the same time systematically stepping out of the natural attitude to perform phenomenological psychological reflections and descriptions. What is suspended is the cause-and-effect beliefs of naturalism, but, unlike the fully transcendental position, the particularities and concrete situatedness of the psychological subject is the exact focus of the psychologically descriptive research.

For Husserl, phenomenological psychology was conducted on a non-transcendental level, and, like the gestalt switch within a figure-ground dynamic, Husserl understood that the transcendental and psychological positions could not be sustained at the same moment. Yet, to him the person was always still ultimately founded in the transcendental source of consciousness. The latter existential phenomenologists (such as Merleau-Ponty) took a less transcendental approach and leaned in the direction of worldly embodiment and what one could call a more psychologically oriented approach to phenomenology. In this way, one could say that, since Husserl, existentially oriented phenomenology has been evolving in a direction that increasingly lends itself towards the psychological approach.

2.2 Psychology of the Lifeworld and Cultural Studies

To obtain the starting point of psychological research in the individual and social experience that is situated in the concrete environment of persons, is a basic idea of qualitative social science and corresponding approaches in psychology (cf. Mey and Mruck 2020). In this diverse environment, the phenomenological orientation with its emphasis on intentional meaning plays an important role for the lifeworld of actors, an influence that is always also mediated through the body (Wendt 2020). The phenomenological perspective also plays a central role within the framework of a cultural psychology that seeks to understand human action and experience in the context of meaning references and the structural features of cultures (Wendt 2022). The central methodological approach of understanding meaning in qualitative and cultural studies research moves phenomenology close to hermeneutics (Sichler 2020). In view of the development of existential philosophy in the 20th century, however, there is also a multifaceted connection here, including critical cross-connections, to which phenomenological-psychological theorizing and research can tie up with the prospect of rich yields.

2.3 Experimental Psychology

It would be a misunderstanding that phenomenological psychology is structurally opposed to experimental psychology. Although phenomenology certainly objects to any absolutistic >scientism< that uncritically reduces all psychological meaning to physical causes, this does not imply a sweeping rejection of all experimental research as reductionistic. On the contrary, phenomenological psychology can engage in productive dialogue with natural science psychology. It offers a hermeneutic of science. In other

words, it can reveal the fuller meanings of experimental results that can elude the experimenter. It can offer a wider epistemic range that opens aspects of the experimental situation into view that do not show up under other epistemological conditions.

The specific relationship between experimental research and phenomenology has been discussed in many places. In a way that revives the early 20th century phenomenological approaches to experimental research, philosopher Shaun Gallagher (2003) outlines the possibilities of this phenomenological hermeneutic of science in three ways: A) Neurophenomenology – qualitative verbal reports from experimental participants that can be compared to experimental quantitative data within the same study. B) Indirect phenomenology – applying the phenomenological approach to the interpretation of independently obtained experimental results. C) Front-loading – the phenomenological theorizing that precedes the empirical experimental research process in a way that and can inform and improve the design validity of experiments.

Although Gallagher revives the helpful application phenomenological concepts to the interpretation and design of experiments, this is still not itself a phenomenological >psychological< *method* in its own right – in the sense of Giorgi's paradigmatic unity of approach, method, and content. As a proto-phenomenological psychology, it still has the problem of mixing paradigms in a way that maintains a considerable gap between philosophy and science. But having made this caveat, it is still the case that there are promising methodological possibilities for a dynamic relationship between the two radially distinct research paradigms. Not only can existing experimental paradigms be interpreted or supplemented by phenomenological reflection, but they can themselves be shaped by these ideas. This offers very promising research possibilities for both naturalistic and phenomenological psychology in the 21st century.

2.4 Theoretical Psychology

It was not only the so-called >replication crisis< that showed that the diagnosis of crisis (Bühler 1927; Friedrich 2018) has lasting validity for psychology. More recently, it has been argued that the weaknesses of empirical psychology results from a theory deficit (Dege and Sichler 2018; Eronen and Bringmann 2021; Oberauer and Lewandowsky 2019). Theory building and criticism, however, is no trivial activity. This requires considerable academic training. Theoretical psychology is more than the sum of psychological theories. It requires a foundation in philosophy of science and the theory of knowledge (epistemology). The discourse about the reasons for unreliable results or related problems of empirical research needs a standpoint that reflects the experimental situation epistemologically and anthropologically and thus allows its modification (cf. Münch 2002).

In his 1970 text »Psychology as a Human Science«, Giorgi demonstrated that the trinity of theoretical approach, subject matter, and methodology are intricately interconnected, with each part affecting the other. He clarified how the methodology chosen will determine the topic covered, and how this limitation in turn shapes the theory. By relying mainly on experimental methods, researchers were limited to only studying phenomena that can be reduced to an »operational definition« which can fit this method, thus requiring the conversion of the topic into quantifiable terms to establish a causal relationship between two measurable variables. This insight not only explained why phenomenology had yet to make an impact in psychology; it also highlighted the need for a new rigorously phenomenologically based method that could study complex subjective phenomena inaccessible to experimental methods. Such methods for filling these experiential gaps could complement existing experimental methods, contribute to more reliable research designs, and broaden the definition of »empirical« in psychology to include qualitative phenomena.

3 The Exigency of Methodology

Since the beginning of the 20th century, psychological research has steadily moved away from consideration of the phenomenological mode of thought. A concerted effort is needed to fill this gap. Meanwhile, in phenomenological psychology, methodological approaches can be found that make an independent and unique contribution to empirical knowledge:

1. As mentioned above, the standard paradigm of phenomenological psychology is a data collection (interviews and descriptions) and data analysis (elucidation of meaning) that dates to Giorgi (Giorgi 2009; Giorgi, Giorgi and Morley 2017; Englander and Morley 2023). As a phenomenologically based procedure it offers an organized framework for qualitative data analysis. It is a whole-part-whole procedure for elucidating the tacit meanings that are latent within psychological descriptions. The epistemic goal of this method is to reveal holistic invariants within the experience of subjects, i. e., the structure in the meaningful constitution of the lifeworld rather than mere elementary mechanisms.
2. In concert with Pierre Vermersch, the neurobiologist Francisco Varela proposed a new field of »neuropsychophenomenology« that would formally conjoin neuropsychology with phenomenological philosophy in a manner of »mutual enlightenment.« Subsequently, in keeping with Vermersch's elicitation interview a new research method in this tradition has emerged, called microphenomenology or microphenomenological interviewing (e. g., Bitbol and Petitmengin 2017), that is designed for fine grained focusing on very immediate experiences – hence the term »micro-« phe-

nomenology. Researchers using this interview methodology will often integrate their approach with meditation research and enactivist theory.

3. An eclectic approach is known as Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), where elements of hermeneutics are combined with qualitative empiricism. This approach is described as idiographic, inductive, and interrogative (cf. Smith 2008).

The task of phenomenological psychology is to critically illuminate these contributions in order to make a reliable and scientifically rigorous contribution to psychological discourse. Approaches such as IPA that amalgamate different theoretical traditions threaten to underutilize the potential of phenomenological thinking. The peculiarity of phenomenological methods is to derive their power and perspective from the depth of philosophical discourse. To make progress, it is also necessary to look self-critically at the approaches available so far. Another task is to develop new »mixed methods« that can go beyond the dichotomy of quantitative and qualitative methods. In this way, phenomenology can make significant contributions to all areas of psychological research.

While many can debate the possibility of mixed methods projects, such as neuropsychology, the fact is that they have addressed a real need – for a return to a more intimate academic relationship between phenomenological philosophy and academic psychology. We are also witnessing a proliferation of new and competing qualitative methods, many born of phenomenological influences, but they are unfortunately not in intimate contact with phenomenological philosophy. It is in this way that the need for a clarification could not be greater. The editors wonder if we may be coming full circle. While it is not possible to go back in time to the original institutional context of psychology within philosophy departments, could the time yet be right to address the rift that sundered these fields? Phenomenological psychology addresses this rift. And while it certainly has changed and developed over the past century in other countries, it has been missing in its indigenous German academic context. We invite the readers of the *Journal für Psychologie* to consider for themselves the potential value of reclaiming this lost tradition.

4 The Contributions to This Issue

The current issue of the *Journal für Psychologie* brings together ten contributions on phenomenological psychology:

1. *Gerhard Benetka and Thomas Sluneko* take the perspective of theoretical psychology and reflect on the presuppositions under which psychological research which claims to be natural sciences operates. In doing so, they develop a critique of materialism, representationalism, and computer and automaton models of mind. Following

- Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty as phenomenologists, conceptual alternatives are obtained which allow to make the human being as embodied in concrete lifeworld the object of psychological research.
2. *Hannes Wendler and Josh Joseph Ramminger* look historically at the problem of subject-matter, that is, at the question of what it is that psychology investigates. With the help of phenomenology, they attempt to organize the discourse to date and to establish a meta-perspective that succeeds in systematically placing the various possible answers in relationship. In the course of this, they differentiate between the concepts of appropriateness and justness of the subject-matter and explore which epistemic consequences result from the relationship of empirical research to the problem of subject-matter.
 3. *Scott D. Churchill and Amy M. Fisher-Smith*, in a paper translated by *Malte Schlenker*, present the overall approach of existential-phenomenological research that is in the Duquesne tradition of Amedeo Giorgi. They present the human-scientific orientation of phenomenological psychological research, based on a phenomenological theory of science that is distinct from the natural science approach to psychology. It maintains the integral relation between existential and phenomenological thought by investigating the intentionality or >in-order-to motives< of lived experiences instead of the >because motives< or cause-effect-relationships of physical science.
 4. *Christopher Gutland and Alexander Nicolai Wendt* argue for the interdependence between phenomenological and psychological discourse. Although Husserl, as a central figure in the tradition, sought to ground his research from the transcendental standpoint, it is argued that a transcendental purification of psychology is highly unlikely. Thus, it becomes apparent that the course of consciousness does not only flow from transcendental phenomenology to phenomenological psychology, but that there is a reciprocal entanglement.
 5. *Javier San Martín and Martín Mercado Vásquez* also deal with the approaches of a psychology in Husserl's thought. Their main interest lies in methodological rigor, which allows to distinguish two stages of phenomenological psychology, namely a static and a genetic one. Their discussion aims both at the further development of psychology as >post- transcendental<, yet still based on phenomenology, and at the conceptualization of new, post-Husserlian forms of phenomenological psychology based on enactivism.
 6. *Uwe Wolfradt and Alexander Nicolai Wendt* ask whether Paul Ferdinand Linke was a precursor of phenomenological psychology. Linke's early work was grounded in both empirical psychology and phenomenological thought. His research career incorporates, especially in his critical engagement with Husserl, the difficulties of the project of doing psychological research with a phenomenological approach.

7. *Bernhard Geißler* develops the comparison between phenomenology and the psychodynamic tradition by relating the concept of the unconscious to first-personal phenomenological analyses. Thanks to phenomenological analyses of philosophy of consciousness, introspection could be methodologically consolidated. By cooperating with phenomenology, depth psychology also has the possibility to investigate the unconscious without having to postulate sub-personal mechanisms.
8. *Sofie Boldsen and Niklas Chimirri* clarify some of critical psychology's mistaken interpretations of phenomenology as solely directed towards individuality and neglectful of the social. They then take up recent developments towards a >critical phenomenology< to establish the comparison between critical psychology and phenomenological psychology. They find a parallel in the analysis of intersubjectivity and sociality, which allows both research traditions to elucidate dialogic and collective phenomena. Drawing on the ideas of Holzkamp and Graumann, Boldsen and Chimirri demonstrate the relevance of Husserl's and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology to social psychological issues.
9. *Markus Wrbschek* clarifies the importance of Gilbert Simondon's phenomenological thoughts for the psychology of emotion. Against the background of a critical discussion of mood theories going back to Heidegger, Wrbschek shows that a process theory of individuation can facilitate theoretical integration. Particular consideration is given to the conceptualization of subjectivity as orientation toward the environment, which is formed in affectivity.
10. *Christian Tewes* devotes himself to the investigation of the micro-phenomenological approach, which he systematically presents as a first- and second-person method for consciousness research. The elicitation procedure and methodological triangulation are highlighted as core features. Finally, a method-critical perspective is offered that would open possibilities for methodological refinement through philosophical phenomenological reflection.

In addition to our authors, many substantial, high-quality critical reviews have contributed to the success of this special issue. We would like to thank the reviewers Lars Allolio-Näcke, Peter Ashworth, Athena Colman, Eugene DeRobertis, Erik Norman Dzwiza-Ohlsen, Joachim Funke, Steffen Kluck, Carlos Kölbl, Peter Mattes, Daniel Niesyt, Brent Robins, Stephan Schleim, Matthias Schloßberger, Terje Sparby, Frederick Wertz, Martin Wieser, and Fynn Ole Wöstenfeld (in alphabetical order) for their valuable contribution. We would like to thank Christian Flierl and his team for their professional cooperation in editing and proofreading the texts as well as Kylie Suarez for the proofreading of an English contribution.

Alexander Nicolai Wendt, Ralph Sichler & James Morley

References

- Berghofer, Philipp. 2020. »Husserl's project of ultimate elucidation and the principle of all principles«. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 50 (3): 285–296.
- Bitbol, Michel und Claire Petitmengin. 2017. »Neurophenomenology and the Micro-phenomenological Interview«. In *The Blackwell Companion to Consciousness*, hrsg. v. Susan Schneider und Max Velmans, 726–739. Hoboken: Wiley.
- Bühler, Karl. 1927. *Die Krise der Psychologie*. Jena: Fischer.
- Churchill, Scott, Christopher Aanstoss und James Morley. 2022. »The Emergence of Phenomenological Psychology in the United States«. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 52 (2): 218–274.
- Dege, Martin und Ralph Sichler. 2018. »Allgemeine Psychologie revisited«. *Journal für Psychologie* 26 (1): 1–184.
- Englander, Magnus und James Morley. 2023. »Phenomenological psychology and qualitative research«. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 22: 25–53.
- Eronen, Markus und Laura Bringmann. 2021. »The theory crisis in psychology: How to move forward«. *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 16 (4): 779–788.
- Friedrich, Janette. 2018. *Karl Bühlers Krise der Psychologie. Positionen, Bezüge und Kontroversen im Wien der 1920er/30er Jahre*. Heidelberg: Springer.
- Gallagher, Shaun. 2003. »Phenomenology and Experimental Design: Towards a Phenomenologically Enlightened Experimental Science«. *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 10, 9/10: 85–99.
- Galliker, Mark. 2016. *Ist die Psychologie eine Wissenschaft?* Heidelberg: Springer.
- Geiger, Moritz. 1911. »Über das Wesen und die Bedeutung der Einfühlung«. In *Bericht über den IV. Kongreß für experimentelle Psychologie*, hrsg. v. Friedrich Schumann, 29–73. Leipzig: Barth.
- Giorgi, Amedeo. 1970. *Psychology as a Human Science: A Phenomenologically Based Approach*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Giorgi, Amedeo. 1977. »The implications of Merleau-Ponty's thesis of »The Primacy of Perception« for perceptual research in psychology«. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 8 (1): 81–102.
- Giorgi, Amedeo. 1983. »Concerning the possibility of phenomenological psychological research«. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 14: 129–169.
- Giorgi, Amedeo. 1998. »The origins of the journal of phenomenological psychology and some difficulties in introducing phenomenology into scientific psychology«. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 29 (2): 161–176.
- Giorgi, Amedeo. 2009. *The Descriptive Phenomenological Method in Psychology*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.
- Giorgi, Amedeo. 2010. »Phenomenological Psychology: A Brief History and Its Challenges«. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 41: 145–179.
- Giorgi, Amedeo, Barbro Giorgi und James Morley. 2017. »The Descriptive Phenomenological Psychological Method«. In *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research In Psychology*, hrsg. v. Carla Willig und Wendy Stainton Rogers, 176–192. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Graumann, Carl Friedrich. 1960. *Grundlagen einer Phänomenologie und Psychologie der Perspektivität*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Graumann, Carl Friedrich und Alexandre Métraux. 1977. »Die Phänomenologische Orientierung in der Psychologie«. In *Wissenschaftstheoretische Grundlagen der Psychologie*, hrsg. v. Klaus Alfred Schneewind, 27–54. München: Reinhardt.
- Herzog, Maximilian. 1992. *Phänomenologische Psychologie. Grundlagen und Entwicklungen*. Heidelberg: Asanger.
- Husserl, Edmund. 1962. *Husserliana Band IX. Phänomenologische Psychologie. Vorlesungen Sommersemester 1925*. Den Haag: Nijhoff.

- Kusch, Martin. 1995. *Psychologism. A Case Study in the Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. 1986. *Das Sichtbare und das Unsichtbare*. München: Fink.
- Messer, August. 1908. *Empfindung und Denken*. Leipzig: Meyer & Quelle.
- Messer, August. 1911. »Husserls Phänomenologie in ihrem Verhältnis zur Psychologie«. *Archiv für die gesamte Psychologie* 22: 117–129.
- Métraux, Alexandre und Alexander Nicolai Wendt. 2022. »Zur phänomenologischen Orientierung in der Psychologie«. *Journal für Psychologie* 30 (1): 48–68.
- Mey, Günter und Katja Mruck. 2020. *Handbuch Qualitative Forschung in der Psychologie. Band 1*. Heidelberg: Springer.
- Michotte, Albert. 1954. »Autobiographie«. *Psychologica Belgica* 1: 189–217.
- Münch, Dieter. 2002. »Die Einheit der Psychologie und ihre anthropologischen Grundlagen«. *Journal für Psychologie* 10 (1): 40–62.
- Oberauer, K. und S. Lewandowsky. 2019. »Addressing the theory crisis in psychology«. *Psychonomic bulletin & review* 26 (5): 1596–1618.
- Pfänder, Alexander. 1904. *Einführung in die Psychologie*. Leipzig: Barth.
- Pind, Jörgen L. 2014. *Edgar Rubin and psychology in Denmark. Figure and ground*. Heidelberg: Springer.
- Scheler, Max. 1986. *Schriften aus dem Nachlass. Band 1*. Bonn: Bouvier.
- Schnädelbach, Herbert. 1983. *Philosophie in Deutschland 1831–1933*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Schott, Erika. 1991. *Psychologie der Situation*. Heidelberg: Asanger.
- Seebohm, Hans. 1970. *Otto Selz. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Psychologie*. Heidelberg: Dissertation.
- Sichler, Ralph. 2020. »Hermeneutik«. In *Handbuch Qualitative Forschung in der Psychologie. Band 1*, hrsg. v. Günter Mey und Katja Mruck, 125–143. Heidelberg: Springer.
- Smith, Jonathan A. 2008. »Reflecting on the development of interpretative phenomenological analysis and its contribution to qualitative research in psychology«. *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 1 (1): 39–54.
- Thinès, George. 1968. *La problématique de la psychologie*. Den Haag: Nijhoff.
- van Kerckhoven, Guy. 1992. »W. Dilthey. Der Satz der Phänomenalität«. In *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie. Band VIII*, hrsg. v. Joachim Ritter und Karlfried Gründer, 1195–1198. Basel: Schwabe.
- Varela, Francisco Javier. 1996. »Neurophenomenology: A methodological remedy for the hard problem«. *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 3 (4): 330–349.
- Wendt, Alexander Nicolai. 2021. »Auf dem Rückweg zu einer phänomenologischen Psychologie«. In *Historische Entwicklung und aktuelle Perspektiven des Verhältnisses von Philosophie und Psychologie*, hrsg. v. Hans Werbik, Uwe Wolfradt, Andrea Lailach-Hennrich und Lars Allolio-Näcke, 159–178. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann.
- Wendt, Alexander Nicolai. 2022. »Die phänomenologische Perspektive«. In *Kulturpsychologie. Eine Einführung*, hrsg. v. Uwe Wolfradt, Lars Allolio-Näcke und Paul Sebastian Ruppel, 51–61. Heidelberg: Springer.
- Wertz, Frederick J. und James Morley. 2023. »Special edition: Husserl on the psychological reduction«. *Journal of phenomenological psychology* 54 (1).

The Editors

Alexander Nicolai Wendt, PhD, is a post-doctoral researcher at the Psychological Department of the Ruprecht-Karls-University of Heidelberg and a PhD student at the Department of Human Sciences

of the Università degli Studi di Verona. His research interests include psychology of thought, theoretical psychology, and phenomenological psychology.

Contact: Dr. Alexander Nicolai Wendt, Institute of Psychology, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, Hauptstraße 47–51, 69117 Heidelberg; E-Mail: alexander.wendt@psychologie.uni-heidelberg.de

Ralph Sichler, PhD, was born in 1960 and is head of the Institute for Management and Leadership Development at the University of Applied Sciences Wiener Neustadt (Austria), as well as a long-time co-editor of the *Journal für Psychologie*. His work focuses on the new world of work, organizational and personnel psychology, cultural psychology, philosophical foundations of psychology, and qualitative social research.

Contact: Dr. Ralph Sichler, University of Applied Sciences Wiener Neustadt, Institute for Management and Leadership Development, Schlögelgasse 22–26, 2700 Wiener Neustadt, Austria; E-Mail: ralph.sichler@fhwn.ac.at

James Morley, PhD, professor of clinical psychology at Ramapo College in New Jersey and editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* as well as president of the Interdisciplinary Coalition of North American Phenomenologists (ICNAP). His research interests include phenomenological psychology, clinical psychology, and qualitative research methods.

Contact: PhD James Morley, Ramapo College, School of Social Science and Human Services, 505 Ramapo Valley Rd, Mahwah, NJ 07430, USA; E-Mail: jmorley@ramapo.edu

Copyright of Journal für Psychologie is the property of Psychosozial-Verlag and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.