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### **Summary**

The article proceeds from the point of view in the history of philosophy that is constantly looking for the context of great names and concepts usually associated with them. Thus anyone studying the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl should not ignore the fact that before *Logical Investigations* phenomenology was practiced by Munich psychologists, most notably Theodor Lipps, and the *Phenomenology of Willing*, a work by his apprentice Alexander Pfänder, may be considered the first work in phenomenology. Just to pose the question of whether this phenomenology meets the criteria of the philosophical discipline developed by Husserl is to take the path to a fuller historical picture. What makes Pfänder relevant today is the following distinctive feature of his philosophy. He tries to avoid traditional terminology and, based on ordinary language, builds his terminology in the process of writing. This affinity to the philosophy of ordinary language may be key to understanding the phenomenological movement as a whole. Philosophy was being pushed out of the psychological domain by new empirical methods and started looking for means of expression understandable to every man, be it an academic guru or an engineer. In this context phenomenology may well be a philosophical science in search of a new language to solve philosophy's old tasks, sometimes by avoiding such sharp traditional oppositions as the ideal and the real, the mind and the body, etc. Pfänder's approach had a profound influence on the Munich phenomenology and phenomenology in general, and his analysis of willing and motivation is unparalleled even now and may be helpful to anyone who still wonders about the subjective side of action.

**Keywords:** Pfänder, Munich phenomenology, will, motivation, ordinary language

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Edmund Husserl is phenomenology embodied. Max Scheler is widely known as one of the pillars of philosophical anthropology. But who is Alexander Pfänder? He seems to be an insignificant figure: one of Theodor Lipps's students, one of Munich phenomenologists, one of the editors of the *Yearbook of Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*. We could find several reasons for that. First, he could be considered a layman: he finished a Realgymnasium, a school with focus on natural sciences and foreign languages, studied engineering at the Polytechnic Schools of Hannover and Munich, and turned to philosophy in 1892 inspired by his reading of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. And only in 1894 he enters Munich University, where he meets Theodor Lipps, who will guide him to his 1897 dissertation "On the Consciousness of Will." Second, after the *Phenomenology of Willing* came out in 1900, Pfänder devotes himself almost entirely to teaching: from 1901 till 1935 he is giving philosophy courses at Munich University and his big works *Introduction to Psychology* (1904) and *Logic* (1921) look more like textbooks, a systematic presentation of sciences, where it is hard to find Pfänder the phenomenologist. Third, his magnum opus *The Soul of Man*, where he was trying to redefine the bases of human psychology, came out in 1933 and due to the political situation received no due attention

and remains practically unresearched to this day [Avé-Lallemant 2001, 289–290].

However, as a layman Pfänder must have had a fresh view on the psychological questions, which allowed him to see what his teacher Lipps could not. Pfänder's teaching experience made his writing clear and philosophically sound. His "understanding psychology" found its young audience, attentive readers, those, who really needed it. And his student Herbert Spiegelberg did his best to keep his name alive. He made sure that Pfänder's manuscript heritage was preserved in the Bavarian State Library in Munich. Together with Eberhard Avé-Lallemant he organized and tried to popularize it, as evidenced by the works *Pfänders phänomenologie* (1963), which formed parts of the Spiegelberg's highly acclaimed *Phenomenological Movement*, and the *Pfänder-Studien* – a collection of works with Spiegelberg and Avé-Lallemant as editors published in 1982. The wave of interest to Pfänder in the 1970s opens new perspectives on the history of phenomenology and the problem of the genesis of the "phenomenological movement." Before it Pfänder could be seen mostly through the eyes of Husserl, who criticized Munich phenomenologists for ignoring the transcendental method, phenomenological reduction, and hence the questions of constitution [Spiegelberg 1982, 5]. However the research into the manuscript heritage of both Pfänder and Husserl in the 1970s, for example, the one carried out by Karl Schumann in his *Dialectics in Phenomenology* (1973), showed that Husserl thoroughly studied the ones he criticized, not directly borrowing their ideas, but sometimes taking them as a starting point in his own investigations. It was true above all for such delicate problems for phenomenology as "will" or "motivation." Today Pfänder has serious weight in the phenomenology of will, reinforced by the interest of Paul Ricœur. But what was it that his phenomenology did?

Since ancient times will has been presented in philosophy as some force of rational striving. Such will, βούλησις, is basic for Plato

("a tyrant does not do what he wants" because he deludes himself and does not see the truth), and Aristotle, although he speaks of προαίρεσις (preference) and ἐκούσιον (voluntariness), probably uses the terms to describe the external, objective freedom of action, i.e. arbitrariness. The stoic philosophy, especially in its Roman adherents, associates this force with the ability to initiate action. Thus Seneca talks about the will to progress to virtue (*velle proficere*). But only with the advance of Christianity did the explanations of free human action start to point to will as implying the ability of free decision making (*liberum arbitrium*), without which any wish has no sense, or cannot be credited to a person. For example, this is how Augustine tries to counter the stoic determinism and reconcile the freedom of divine providence with the freedom of man to do evil [Horn 2005, 763–769].

Augustine is interesting, because he sees will as a moment of self-consciousness manifested in the affections of the soul, as part of the trinity "memoria – intelligentia – voluntas." The medieval philosophy continues this "phenomenology." The problem of medieval concepts of will was that they linked action to will, and will to freedom (mixing the freedom of will and the freedom of action). Although they could not come to an agreement on the definition of this freedom, preferring either the power to choose between alternatives (the voluntaristic position of Duns Scotus), or the state of absolute knowledge of necessity (the intellectualistic position of Thomas Aquinas), philosophers in one way or another turned to the supernatural to show man as a free actor. Like in Anselm's "omnis volens ipsum suum velle vult" – will exists on its own. But how can supernatural cause the natural? Do volitions arise without reason? And is not it absurd to will willing [Lossky 1927, 14]?

The first conscious attempt to bring the concept of will to its natural interpretations can be found in Thomas Hobbes's treatise *On Freedom and Necessity* (1654). The mechanistic explanation of the phenomenon of will that he gave allowed to see the agent of

will in the man himself, and, what is hard to imagine in medieval philosophy, the same agent in a child, fool, madman, and even animal. The will in Hobbes is the result of deliberation, assessment of possible actions according to freedom. Freedom was defined as the absence of impediment from the causally defined forces on the one hand and the abilities of the actor on the other. The problem here is that, as Schopenhauer put it, “I can do what I will... if I will, but I am not able to will this” (i.e. what I will) [Schopenhauer 2001, 331]. The modern philosophy thus moves again to the subjective side of the problem, and to the meaning of “human volitional activity”; it opens possibilities for its scientific exploration, specification of the concept of will in relation to the concepts of ideas, feelings, wishes, aspirations, etc.

The scientific views on will have developed in two main directions, and this situation in a way continues the medieval argument around the primacy of different psychic abilities. This is what the soviet psychologist Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky explains in his lectures: scientific theories either explain the will by relating it to non-will-based psychic processes (heteronomous theories), or search for the essential characteristics of willful action as such (autonomous theories). Heteronomous theories show “in what way, for which reason, and based on what determination a willful, purposeful, and free human action arises” [Vygotsky 2005, 655], they show how a reactive, impulsive, and unfree action develops into a willful one, when its complexity increases with the participation of memory (associations are built), or intellect (attention is directed to processes). Vygotsky believes that those theories “fail to explain the most essential to will, that is the willful character of acts, arbitrariness itself, as well as the internal freedom, a man feels, when he makes this or that decision, and the external structural richness of action, which distinguishes a willful action from an unwillful one” [Vygotsky 2005, 655]. It remains a mystery how something unreasonable becomes reasonable and something unwillful – willful.

Autonomous theories are usually mistakenly associated with voluntarism (1). Wilhelm Wundt is known as voluntarist, although he explained willful processes on the basis of affections in an attempt to turn attention to the subjective side of willing – the perceived immediate relation of external action and internal experience. Wundt moved with the overall tendency to access the will as affectionately described in the experience of action, and to perceive it as the conscious transformation of passivity. For example, for Theodor Lipps “a man is free only to the extent, to which he is responsible for his actions” [Lipps 1905. Cit. ex: Lossky 1927, 29], and “every thought I think, every past wish, every time I yielded to or resisted temptation, also contributed to defining my character as it is now, – therefore, I have done something to elaborate my character and the moral structure of my personality” [Lossky 1927, 29].

Autonomous theories risk to turn heteronomous. In Lipps, for example, a subject feels his will as free. But he cannot freely will. Because willing should be an action, otherwise it is only a wish (Wünschen). An action requires an actor, a proprietor, and propriety over an action defines, limits freedom. So phenomenally a human subject is still under the rule of determinism. Lipps believes that there is a “real I,” independent of the self, of the sphere of individual subjective predispositions, and this “real I” belongs to the objective hierarchy of values. Values however are an explanation outside the will, it is a heteronomous force ruling over it in providing freedom. To go back to autonomy we need to go back to the origins of Lipps’s theory in the experience of actions. This is the “analysis of what is immediately given to consciousness” as practiced by Bergson or James. They showed that “in the system of experiences we know to distinguish actions, experienced as unfree, from actions, experienced as free, or independent” [Vygotsky 2005, 658]. And it turns out that we will willful action, which fact brings back to all willful processes a teleology of essential openness. This allows us then to

analyze as meaningful such notions as “guilt” and “retribution,” “responsibility” and “recognition,” etc.

Alexander Pfänder’s *Phenomenology of Willing* offers us an autonomous theory of will. It avoids all previous theories and turns to willing itself, irrelative to freedom and actions that seem to follow from the acts of will. Herman Lotze, whose “Medical Psychology” was one of the key influences on the development of the German science of the soul in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, believed that “will is such a basic expression of psychic life that it can only be experienced, but never explained” [Lotze 1852. Cit. ex: Ettliger 1903, 271], and Pfänder realizes that he is taking up a difficult task. And what makes explaining will difficult are the following facts. First, contrary to what psychological tradition tells us, psychic abilities cannot be isolated. In fact we always have them closely knit together. Is not the strive for truth prerequisite for thinking? Then, although we can distinguish psychology from natural sciences by limiting it only to the study of the states of consciousness, the study of will to be meaningful should also consider the material, objective (*Gegenständliche*) in consciousness. But it would also be a mistake to limit one’s search for content only by this objectivity, that is perceptions and representations. Behind the complex of perceptions and representations in the content of consciousness one can find the element of “intention” [Pfänder 1963a, 4–6.].

To explain will, Pfänder uses the following methodological framework:

- we may examine only human willing (“there is no sufficient reason to think there is will in the plant and inorganic world” [Pfänder 1963a, 5]);
- we should start from linguistic usage (“only a certain type of psychic facts deserves to be named ‘will’” [Pfänder 1963a, 6]);
- linguistic usage should be related to the phenomena of consciousness “Should willing be a special psychic phenomenon, there must

be phenomena of consciousness that in their distinctiveness form what one means with the word ‘will’ [Pfänder 1963a, 6].

– “will” as the fact of consciousness is taken in all its manifestations: choice, decisiveness, directedness, etc. “The analysis of will as the analysis of the whole process should give exact description of all those different stages” [Pfänder 1963a, 6]. Priority is given to “inner directedness on something” [Pfänder 1963a, 7];

– phenomena of will are studied “subjectively,” and not so much in the “direct observation of the immediately experienced,” as, which suits the subject of will better, in the “retainment of immediately given or past memories (Erinnerungsbilder)” [Pfänder 1963a, 7]. Objective methods are problematic because they are based on the assumption that internal processes of the will manifest in the observable physical processes, which presupposes several theoretical constructs: a preset psychophysical connection, a will already understood as an act, embedded into chains of cause and effect.

Will in the wide sense of the word is any kind of striving: wishing, hope, etc. In the analysis of striving Pfänder first turns to its objective side – the representations of experiences. What Pfänder discovers is the distinction between the representation of intuitive contents themselves and the “intent” (Meinen), i.e. the “supposition” of something not present (Nichtgegenwartiges) in a representation, of something, which it has in common with the experience. The object of striving in reality is not the experience of a representation, but the experience replaced by a representation. Without this distinction it remains unclear, why this or that representation is connected to a striving. This connection is usually explained by the fact that we strive for representations that are pleasant or “relatively pleasant” to us: and the closer (more vivid, accessible) a representation is, the stronger the striving. But the striving subsides as one gets closer to the strived representation, and pleasure increases, hence this pleasure is connected not to that representation, but to the “supposed movement from the representation of a nonexistent experience, which is



strived for, to its expectation” [Pfänder 1963a, 54]. In other words, pleasure comes from the elimination of the absence of experience in a representation.

Having defined the striving, Pfänder can now proceed to the consciousness of will in its narrow sense, i.e. to the will, which is necessary bound to the “belief in the possibility of realizing (Verwirklichung) of what one strives for (Erstrebte) with one’s own action” [Pfänder 1963a, 77]. For something to be willed, it is not enough to eliminate the absence of experience. It should be eliminated without help from outside. And willing presupposes the realization of a positive striving, relatively free if it comes despite the undesirable (widerstrebte) consequences, and absolutely free if there are no such consequences. Only here Pfänder touches the problem of choice, i.e. for him there cannot be any choice or deliberation without will. If there are several positive strivings, one cannot speak of the competition between them and the victory of one over another without the participation of a subject. The subject chooses what striving he may call his own, and such striving will be recognized by him as “spontaneous” [Pfänder 1963a, 115]. A Soviet psychologist Leontiev in his lectures gives an example from Leo Tolstoy’s *War and Peace*: Bezukhov plays cards to decide, whether to leave Moscow or stay, and when he gets an answer – he chooses for the opposite [Leontiev 2000, 482].

The fact that Pfänder turned to a commonsense understanding of “will” and constantly related his results to commonsense psychology allows to think of him as a precursor to the philosophy of ordinary language, for example, to John Austin [Salice 2016]. Ricœur believed that the reactivation of Pfänder’s heritage may bring linguistic analysis and phenomenology closer together. Both traditions aim to overcome the logical atomism and oppose clarification and distinction to mathematical perfection. But Husserl believes that the most important question is not that of speaking through the contents of experience, but the question of vision, perspective, and

the mode of givenness. If Husserl's phenomenology is essentially a phenomenology of perception, Pfänder tries to show the relation of an I to the contents of its consciousness, and the objectifying act – a representation – in his phenomenology of will has meaning only if an object of “striving” is “implied.” Pfänder finds in the phenomenon of will in its narrow sense a relation between the “consciousness of” and the “belief in.” This allows him to clearly distinguish between the reason of will and its motive, a teleological justification, which opens a possibility of a “science of voluntaria, analogous to logic” [Pfänder 1963b, 126]. The acts of will can be expressed in the form of “I want *P*,” “I do not want *P*.” As “judgments about the I and its will” [Pfänder 1963b, 134] they can be examined as a special kind of propositions (Sätze) of the form “*S* wants *P*,” “*S* does not want *P*.” But they can also be considered “resolutions (Vorsätze) or Voluntaria” [Pfänder 1963b, 135]. In a resolution an I presets (setzt vor) a certain behavior, a project, and through willful intention (Willensmeinung), conscious projecting, makes itself a subject of action. “Will” has the same role as “am” in the judgment: “I = intention.” Ricœur proposes to interpret this analysis linguistically and to relate it to the notion of illocutive acts [Ricœur 1982, 79–96].

Pfänder definitely considered preliminary analysis of ordinary language a prerequisite for phenomenological research. Spiegelberg gives one of Pfänder's unpublished notes to prove it: “One has always taken these words in certain senses and successfully communicated [by them] with other people. Whoever believes that he means something different than this ordinary meaning ought first to make sure of this (ordinary) meaning ... with the same conscientiousness that he would apply if he were to speak under oath” [Spiegelberg 1981, 88]. But Pfänder does not go deep into the nuances of ordinary language meaning, his work in this area is far from methodic, and, what is most important, language analysis plays only a propaedeutic role in his works: the meaning of words found point to the prelinguistic layer. The main motive for Pfänder was to redirect the psychological

research, which was in his time mostly psychophysical, to tear it from its physiological roots, and, as Spiegelberg puts it, he “aimed at relieving the poverty of its psychological content by a fresh phenomenological approach to the basic phenomena” [Spiegelberg 1975, 273]. Will and motive are those basic psychological phenomena, which unfortunately are nowadays perceived “as is” and hence can become mystified or naturalized.

#### NOTES

(1) Lapshin says that voluntarism is based “on a certain feeling of activity, or the feeling of striving (Strebensgefühl – Pfänder, Lossky), different from both the cognitive processes and the feeling of pleasure or displeasure.” [Lapshin 1999, 197].

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