

The Gesture of Awareness
An account of its structural dynamics¹

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Abstract

This article proposes a description of the structural dynamics of the act of becoming aware based on the phenomenological method of *epochè* (or reduction), but also incorporating observations from psychological and contemplative sources. We propose as the core of this specific act an initial phase of *suspension* of habitual thought and judgement, followed by a phase of *conversion* of attention from "the exterior" to "the interior", ending with a phase of *letting-go* or of receptivity towards the experience.

I. Introduction

1. A new phenomenological approach

We wish to present here a structural description of the basic gesture of becoming aware. Such a description does not come from nowhere: our work is rooted in a renewed, contemporary phenomenology. The phenomenology we advance is characterized by the way it works: its operational, procedural or performative dimension. In a word, its *praxis*, its center is the practice of the so-called phenomenological reduction or *epochè*. It is characterized far more by its enaction, than by its internal theoretical structure or an a priori justification of knowledge. Which amounts to saying that what is important to us is to actually *engage* directly in the description of phenomena. Only this allows moving forward in refining past work, and to confirm or invalidate past descriptions. That, rather than the discussion of the descriptions of other phenomenologists, past or contemporary, is our project. Nor are we interested in calling into question those of their doctrinal arguments that remain speculative, thus perpetuating the endless logic of commentaries upon commentaries. Our immediate purpose, we repeat, is to renew the very heart of the phenomenological approach as a method of categorical description and exploration of conscious life.

This stance towards phenomenology immediately implies a shift of philosophical paradigm, which leads takes us from hermeneutics to the pragmatic.² So it is from the philosophical horizon of pragmatism that the aptness and innovative nature of the following approach is best appreciated.

2. *Épochè*: the heart of the structural dynamics of bringing into consciousness:

The description of the practice of *épochè* presented here is embedded within a larger project (cf. footnote 1) which aims to recapture the different steps in a process whereby something comes into my clear consciousness, something which inhabited me in a way which was confused, opaque, affective, immanent; something that is pre-reflective, and eventually becomes part of shared, intersubjective knowledge. According to the demands of the disciplines called upon, essentially: philosophy, psychology, cognitive sciences, and spiritual traditions (mostly Buddhism), we have variously called this gesture "phenomenological reduction", "a reflective act", "becoming aware", or "mindfulness".

The scope of the broad project just evoked cannot be discussed here in its entirety. It needs to be broken down into several component dimensions that can be roughly sketched as follows:

- 1) A *basic cycle* of dynamic components: the *épochè* itself and intuitive evidence as truth criteria;
- 2) Two optional steps, *expression* and *validation*, which allow for communication and shared knowledge of the act;
- 3) The multilayered *temporality* of the act of becoming aware, that lends its necessary dynamic to the description.

Thus although *épochè* constitutes the real heart of the gesture that concerns us here, it is but an initial step, it primes the dynamic of the ensemble and gives the starting impulse. It is also a movement carrying across the other steps of the becoming aware in the sense that it maintains the required quality of presence for such an exploration of experience.

II. Practicing *épochè*: between exercise and training

*1. The three components of *épochè**

The present attempt at description follows a logic of *priming*, meaning that it is not presented as a finalized result. Rather, it is a first attempt at a thematic characterization of an individual experience, activated or reactivated individually and subjected to a progressive and intersubjective control. *Épochè* as a gesture is always complemented by a resulting intuitive evidence and its corresponding understanding

in a minimal self-sufficient cycle. In other words, *epochè* and intuitive evidence call to each other, so to speak. *Epochè* finds its natural accomplishment in the intuitive evidence of a strong internal obviousness, antecedent to and qualified by a gradual process of filling-in which is a characteristic property of suspension, at the heart of *epochè*.

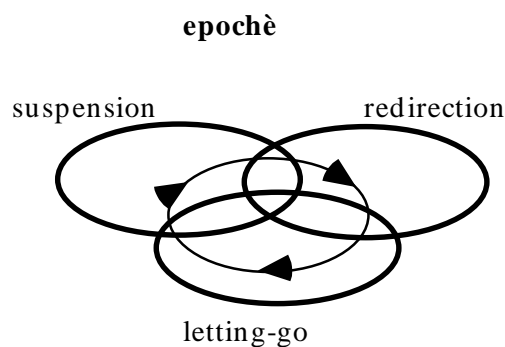
Let us now elaborate three principal phases we are proposing to describe the unfolding of *epochè*:

A. A phase of *suspension* of habitual thought and judgement. This is a basic precondition for any possibility of change in the attention which the subject gives to his own experience and which represents a break with a "natural" or non-examined attitude.

B. A phase of *conversion* of attention from "the exterior" to "the interior".

C. A phase of *letting-go* or of receptivity towards the experience

We call *epochè* the *ensemble* of these three organically linked phases, for the simple reason that phases B and C are always reactivated by and reactivate phase A. Note in passing that in this recursive movement, the suspending movement which begins the process, has a quality which is different each time around, at each step of the structuring of the reflective act.



2. *Suspension and its immediate sequels*

The initial suspension phase can be rooted or be started in at least three distinct ways:

- an external or existential event may trigger the suspending attitude. For example, confronting the death of others, or aesthetic surprise.

- the mediation of others can also be a decisive, for example a direct injunction to accomplish the act, or a rather less directive attitude, as is the case when someone plays the role of a model.
- exercises initiated by the individual, presupposing a self-imposed discipline including long phases of training and learning until the newly acquired habits are stabilized.

These three possibilities of priming are not exclusive, but come into play together, the one in relation to another. They amount to motivations: from living in the world, intersubjective, and individual. All three motivations are not of equal importance, depending on the unique characteristics of the individual and his/her stage of development. But all converge in making possible and then maintaining phases B and C.

To speak of the "initial", as if there was a supposed "starting point" regarding suspension, requires an immediate qualification. In some sense there cannot be of "starting point", since suspension has already taken place in one's life. Yet at the same time, it seems to unfolds anew each time it is mobilized. What is needed for the reflective act to be set in motion? - a suspending move. So we seem to land into a paradox where we must already have in action that we are trying to trigger. Thus the very fact of posing this question in this manner shows that there is a problem. Considered in terms of the products of its activity, the precise moment of the initiation of the reflective act, its priming, is perhaps not relevant. But at the same time it is not possible to describe the reflective act other than in having put it into action, that is, unless we already know how to trigger its initiation. Thus we find ourselves in the provisional circle of having to describe an act in its very putting it into play, as in a bootstrap. The central nature of the starting up process is obscured by the fact that this beginning has already taken place for someone who uses it to describe this very same transition, as we are doing here.

This pragmatic Gordian knot cannot be resolved theoretically. Its circular character must be addressed by means of different techniques (methods, know-how, training) which permit a person to internalize or become masterful of such ongoing re-instantiation at every moment. Only an actual engagement with such techniques will also enable the evaluation of the difficulties which must be overcome in order that suspension be a stable capacity, accentuating the unusual character of becoming aware.

The two subsequent phases B-C are complementary and presuppose, as we have said, the initial phase as well as its sustained recycling. They correspond to two fundamental changes in the orientation of cognitive activity. B emerges as a change of direction of attention, which, distancing itself from a worldly show, takes an inward turn. In other words, instead of perception, what is invoked is largely what in philosophy is termed an apperceptive act: turning from the content of the world to the mental which carries that perceiving. There is a massive obstacle to this change: the necessity of turning away from the habitual form of cognitive activity, usually oriented towards the exterior world. Change C consists in passing from the voluntary inward direction of attention to simple receptivity or an attitude of listening. That is, from B to C we pass from a "looking for" to a "letting come", a letting "reveal itself". The principal obstacle to this third phase resides in the traverse of an *empty time*, a time of silence, of the lack of take-up of the immediate givens which are available and already assimilated to consciousness.

Here, then, we are dealing with two reversals of the most habitual cognitive functioning, of which the first is the condition for the second; the second cannot happen if the first has not already taken place.

- A turning of the direction of attention from the exterior to the interior (B).
- A change in the quality of attention, which passes from the looking-for to the letting-come (C).

Whereas the first reversal remains governed by the traditional distinction between interior and exterior, that is to say, driven by a sort of an enhanced duality, and involves a portion of undeniably voluntary activity, the second is characterized by a passive, receptive waiting, which moves exactly in the opposite direction of the previous duality, a transient erasing of the inside/outside distinction.

From the point of view of phenomenological philosophy, these two reversals match quite well the Husserlian version of reduction as reflexive conversion and the Heideggerian notion of pre-comprehension which lets the event happen.³ In a similar way, in the Buddhist tradition of mindfulness, a principled distinction is made between the base-level *shamatha* as a voluntary movement where the attention is settled and its natural expansion via the coupling with a more panoramic consciousness (awareness-*vispasnya*), which is characterized by the letting go of voluntary searching, and the embracing of a mode of receptivity that is typically lived as openness.⁴

The non-habitual, unnatural character of these two reversals is manifest as the noticing of resistance, of difficulties in operating them, and typically require indirect strategies which allow them to be brought into effect (while avoiding the paradox of "be spontaneous!").

3. *The difficulties in the conversion of gaze*

Habitually engaged in the perception of others, in the grasping of worldly content, in the pursuit of goals or of interests linked in an immanent way with our everyday activities, attention is naturally interested in the world. It hardly ever turns away from the world spontaneously. Fink speaks here of a *Weltbefangenheit* (which can be translated as "imprisonment in the world")⁵, and the Buddhist tradition of the snare of *samsara*. The inward direction of attention, turned away from the world, disinterested, turned towards representations, towards thoughts, mental acts, and emotional tonality, is for many inhabitual, to the extent that there is relatively little occasion to exercise it spontaneously or in response to a training demand.

Husserl approaches this reversal from the angle of a change of attitude in the relationship I maintain with the world. Under the heading of "change of attitude" (*Umkehrung der Einstellung*), it is clear that he doesn't mean just a modification of my existential state relative to the world, but indeed the conversion of the natural interest from an object, whatever it is, to the direction of the *act* which allows me access to it. Strictly speaking, it is the very core of reduction as the shift from the object to the act, or again, as passage from the *quod* to the *quomodo*, which is at play here. But it is true that the founder of phenomenology describes this "passing to the act" as a result of analysis, rather than something that is explicitly brought about by an explicit account of examples. Whence the paucity of references made to the difficulty of such a turn; the Husserlian description is hardly procedural or operational. The only indication of difficulty lies in the several places where Husserl discusses the ambivalence of this phenomenological conversion, given the bootstrap nature of the motivation to initiate suspension, as we have already discussed.⁶

From a psychological perspective, Piaget's account of becoming aware allows¹¹ for a precise evaluation of the difficulties of diverting the attention from the external world, from aiming at a goal, or from the perception of the effects of action; these attention attractors are more spontaneously pregnant than on mental acts or representation.

His principle of "making-conscious", which mobilizes attention from the perimeter towards the center, underlines the dynamics of that which mobilizes the attention in the natural attitude, that is, from the perception of a content (center), towards the means by which such an action is performed, i.e. the mental act which organizes and regulates the perceiving. This dynamic also shows at what point the taking of interest in that which is *not* the most directly pregnant is something secondary in the spontaneous motivation of the subject. Piaget has also shown the primacy of what may be called "positive" information which exists in a directly perceptible way over "negative" information which is only manifest because it is not present directly. In this light then, it is to be expected that to turn one's attention towards the mental acts which organize acting on the world, can only come as an acquired learning.

4. Pragmatic difficulties

But there are other equally pressing obstacles to this redirection of attention, which most practices acknowledge. Turning attention towards the interior is for some synonymous with turning it towards *their* intimacy, at the risk of becoming conscious of things which are in the domain of the peripheral, or even the repressed. So rejection is based on the refusal of full contact with one's own intimacy.

In a situation where I am in the presence of other people (interviewer, small groups), this reversal of attention presupposes the acceptance of relaxing the social control which I exercise over others by my gaze or talk. So it presupposes a confidence which enables me to authorize myself to turn my attention more towards my interior world than the social one. Assuredly, a change in the direction of attention towards the interior world is not necessarily an act of becoming aware. This reversal of attention is common to many practices, such as those involving making explicit cognitive knowledge, mindfulness meditation, or psychoanalysis. Psychotherapeutic practice in particular has emphasized how this condition could meet solid refusal.

The fact remains that it is difficult, in the framework of a description of this change of direction of attention, to grasp what it is that makes for so much difficulty in its enactment. Only knowledge of the techniques developed with the intention of aiding people to *produce* this change of attention (the outstanding example being the Buddhist tradition of mindfulness) give the measure of the wrenching which can constitute this reversal for some. The most obvious symptom of the magnitude of this difficulty seems to lie in the fact that these techniques *aim only to produce* this change

of direction of attention, a little as if, once this change is induced, the rest (its exploratory reflective use) would go ahead automatically. These techniques commonly make use of the fact that this direction of attention towards apperception partly coincides with attention directed at kinesthetic and proprioceptive sensations, its organic support. In bringing attention to breathing, or to what is tense and what is not, we are brought to center ourselves on a the lived body as focal center, which can then be described as psychic or spiritual, and to leave the world as an extension beyond the bounds of the body.

So this turning back of the direction of attention presupposes becoming familiar with skilful *practices*. We can distinguish several types of pre-requisites for progress in such practices: methodological, theoretical, and pragmatic.

The methodological pre-requisite concerns the suspension mentioned earlier, now with that singular quality that it is imbued with a real investment. In effect, the conversion of gaze is for the beginner incompatible with the simultaneous engagement in ordinary action. It implies a form of non-action which is at the outset, *per force*, completely literal: to remain in a sitting position, or in an attitude of attentive listening, or reclined on a couch. Engagement without action is generally very pregnant and creates a motivation and a centering of attention stronger and more immediate than an apperceptive turning back (from content to mental act) and the inhibition of action which it presupposes. However, to the extent that the practice passes from the level of a beginner to a greater mastery, suspension can co-exist in a completely natural way with action in a fully worldly situation. In fact, a fluid coexistence of this sort is precisely the measure of a form of *mastery*. Throughout the intermediate stages, most practices explicitly include transitional steps. A simple example is the alternation between sitting and walking meditation in *shamatha* training.

So the change in direction of attention corresponds to a *doing* from the point of view of cognition: it involves (or is caused by) a change of attitude in my relation to the world. Analyzed from the point of view of enabling techniques for enactment, it is essentially perceived as a lifting of control, in the sense where we could almost accuse the "natural" attitude (can we accuse an attitude!) of having a hypnotic influence which is very difficult to interrupt. This primacy conferred on the very idea of lifting control leads to the use of a language which is that of release, abandonment, letting-go.

5. *Letting-go and*

5.1 *The quality of attention.* With the third phase, it is the *quality* of attention which changes tone: we pass from a conquering activity ruled by intentionality, which makes us search out for the interior to the detriment of the exterior, to a passive disposition of reception, to a *letting-come*, about which there is nothing passive other than the name. In fact, it eminently involves action.

Epochè also, in this phase of its accomplishment, aims at letting the reflection of the lived operate. In other words, it is an active movement of attention, which can be deliberative but, at the same time, presupposes *waiting* because what there is to reflect upon belongs by definition to the domain of the tacit, of the pre-reflective and/or the pre-conscious. So it involves maintaining a tension between a supported act of attention and an immediate non-filling. The immobile hunter knows at least what he awaits with vigilance and patience, even though here there is waiting without knowledge of the content of what is going to reveal itself. In varying degrees, the reflectable is not immediately available. It doesn't exist other than as a potential and will not come as revelation other than through a cognitive act borne by a particular intention. And so the gesture of letting-go presupposes a waiting, but is focused and open and so eventually void of content for a time, without any immediate discrimination other than "there is nothing", "it's foggy", "it's blurred", "it's confused", "nothing's happening".

This time of relative emptiness can be very brief or last several minutes, if not more. It is the time in which something first takes form, but can also be the time which the subject devotes to that which can create the object of this reflection. To the extent that he cannot "grasp" the object in a voluntary sense, this adjustment cannot take place other than structurally, without being able to immediately adjust itself to the detail of a content which is still not revealed.

It is a duration which is easily noticeable in the perception of stereoscopic images. Even when we have an expert ability at accessing this perception, there is a period when nothing is yet distinct, although we are already aware that we are no longer seeing in the normal way (the "natural attitude"). During that period, we sense the emerging of the form emerging up until the moment of brutally clear perception. We also see this type of phenomenon in psychotherapy, when the patient knows that something is in the process of coming back from his past, that he has the impression that "it is on the way to coming into consciousness". Sometimes he can even make out

that that something comes from afar, from very far, without at all knowing the content of the scene from the past, or the words which are going to come back to him.

But even when it is objectively very brief, this empty period has the subjective duration of a radio blackout, where a silence of a few seconds appears eternal. In fact, it is subjectively very long, in contrast with the subjective rapidity of our more habitual conscious cognitive functioning. In the practice of letting-go, this slowing of the rhythm of expression and the period of arrested reflectivity is often a reliable criterion for the emergence of *epochè*.

To recapitulate: the difficulty of putting into action the gesture of becoming aware seems to have two inseparable aspects: (1) abandoning the habitual or "natural attitude", and (2) being able to become receptive, (which includes learning to know how to deal with the paradox of aiming at something which is involuntary!).

5.2. The pre-reflective dimension. This period which is at the same time empty and subjectively long seems to us to be the major obstacle to discovery and to the spontaneous putting into action of the act of becoming aware. It is difficult not to immediately succumb to the fear or worry that can be induced by that stance of receptive attention. This period is troubling for anyone with the naive belief in an instantaneous, permanent and mechanical mastery of cognition over its functioning. In fact this dimension of pre-reflective access implies that I can become conscious that I do things which are efficient and effective, without knowing (in a reflective sense) how I have arrived at that consciousness. What can also be troubling is to discover a new form of cognition which opens me to the revelation of novel properties and extraordinary aspects of the real to which I find I have been insensitive.

It is clear that in the initial gesture of redirection which modifies the direction of attention, it was necessary to inhibit or abandon immediate action in order to make way for the shift between content and the mental act underlying that content. In the second receptive stage that which needs to be abandoned is an immediate filling-in by projection of categories, expectations, and identifications. Here again, the quality of suspension re-appears in a new form; in fact it permeates every step of the act of becoming conscious.

With this idea of a suspension of judgement, we are very close to the Husserlian intuition *epochè* interpreted in the widest sense as the principle of the absence of presupposition formulated as early as 1901 in the *Logical Investigations*

(§7). But it remains the case that the Husserlian presentation is foundational and does not deal with these differentiated qualities of suspension which we repeatedly come up against in practice.

In more practical terms, we are also close to the attitude which guides psychotherapeutic practice: the professional opens his presence to the other and gives him his attention whilst being vigilant not to interfere with the open reception of that which the other brings to light, by the therapist's own personal commentaries and his counter-transference to the patient. The practitioner takes simultaneously note of the verbal, the non-verbal (changes of posture, of gesture, of breathing - in rhythm, amplitude and localization - mimicry, micro-movements), the epi-verbal (what is said by means of the linguistic structures used and the categories of description of the world immanent in the patient's semantic choices), and the para-verbal (the variations of intonation). In psychoanalysis all this is not possible other than by a listening and an observation based on an open or "floating" attention, without grasping for something.

Perhaps we could apply the same analysis to the work of the painter:

It is interesting to notice here that the phenomenological reduction [...] has a double action. It must make us forget at the same time that it makes appear. The reduction is at bottom in philosophy the equivalent of a technique of seeing in painting. We must forget what appear to be things when we look at them superficially and make appear in the thing itself that which it is in reality. And so the practice of phenomenological reduction is less a matter of seeing than of learning to see (Piguet, 1963).⁷

In the tradition of mindfulness, the movement of letting-go is the very heart of what is described as the most "advanced" methods, the Mahamudra-Dzogchen schools of Tibetan and Japanese Buddhism. The repeated practice of letting-go becomes non-paradoxical as soon as a pre-discursive component is introduced. In Rinzai Zen, the repetitive work with koans provides a classical framework; in the Tibetan schools, the emotional association with the manifest qualities of a living master ("devotion") is considered essential, so much so that the student is coached into a pre-discursive attitude.⁸

We may say, then, that "phenomenological reduction", "reflective act", "becoming aware", or "mindfulness" all stem from what is not available in normal reflection, they are rooted in the non-verbal, the pre-reflective, the ante-predicative. But this amounts to proposing that becoming aware stems from "nothing", in the

sense that the lived experience which could be reflected upon is not immediately available. For, if it were, it would already have been brought under the spotlight of the reflexive attention; what we reflected upon can only modulate becoming awareness, but the fact that is set into action, not the choice of content. So the reflective act stems from a "silent" or "empty" relation with experience. It is more at the contemplative level of reception, of listening or of impregnation than of the looking-for in a pre-determined way. It seems to arise from a modality which is more passive than cognition, even if we are well aware that that relative passivity is woven into the background by our categorical filters, whose permanent activity is hard to suspend. In this sense, our description of the reflective act is not about forcing a passive, mechanical reflection. The mirror which represents the person who operates the reflectivity is anything but than neutral. What is in play is to give oneself the possibility of not immediately in-forming reality by a form of thought through a language which is already available, thereby establishing a relative and provisional zone of silence from which to set off with a new relation to the reality of the lived. There is a fertile dimension of emptiness which escapes the parameters of a "natural" world or a language, from the point of view of experience. It enables penetration at an ontological level which is openness to more basic form, a penetration which cannot appear other than as *chiaro-oscuro* (subtle contrasts) supplied by the suspension in letting-go.

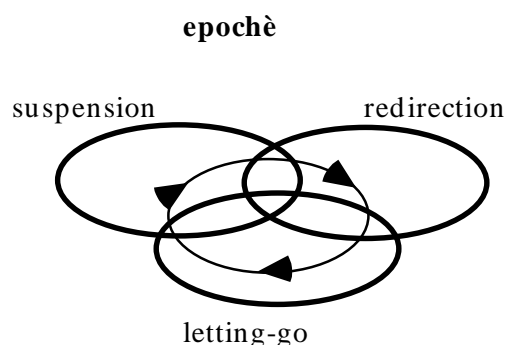
This cessation of the spontaneous movement that searches for "information" can only be relative. It involves a braking, an inhibition of habitual cognitive processes whose activity can completely eclipse the receptive dimension and make the reflective act impossible. It is the paradox whereby I can deliberately turn my attention towards the interior, not to look for something there, but to receive that which manifests itself there, or rather that which I am capable of letting manifest itself there.

Faced with this description of a reversal of the movement of attention and the difficulties it can meet in its realization, it might be that we are painting a dark picture. It could be thought that this gesture involves a reversal which continues *always* to be a great difficulty, if not a great mystery. But the period of reversal can be quick enough to pass unnoticed in the mind of someone who does not give it deliberate attention; the reflected content is sometimes easily accessible. The difficulty comes not just from the practice of the reductive act: it is perhaps also linked to the nature of that which is aimed at, or even with the relation which I

maintain with that which is aimed at which can make the availability to reflection more difficult.

III. Conclusion

Let us now consider again the diagram which shows the components of the basic cycle:



We can make out, at the heart of the process of becoming-aware which is the reflective act or the phenomenological reduction in action, the two sides of *epochè* which are the reflexive/redirection and the reception/letting-go, a correlated double movement. We can also describe its components as moments of emergence, as the unfolding of the process. The first unfolding, which leads to reflection (and on to expression) is characterized by a turning in on oneself; the second unfolding, which leads to a letting-go (and ends in a tacit intuition) is characterized by an openness to oneself.

In the first case, the described movement corresponds to a loop which leads back to itself without, however, closing in on itself, since from this loop the second movement sets out, that of receptivity towards oneself and the world. These two movements can be expressed by the metaphor of the braided axis, like diastole and systole, of contraction and dilation. The first axis is rooted in pre-reflective consciousness (pre-discursive, pre-noetic, ante-predicative, tacit, pre-verbal, pre-logical or non-conceptual; take your pick)⁹, whose reflective capacity partially deploys the structure of pre-reflectedness, an intentional content. This is the cognitive axis of becoming-aware. The second axis is equally rooted in pre-reflective consciousness, but whose manifestations are not due to its reflective capacity, but to the parallel and indissociable gesture of letting go, intrinsically related to the affective and involuntary dimension of experience.¹⁰ When the gesture of letting go

intervenes, it becomes a moment of revelation, a receptive availability. Such is the affective axis of becoming aware.

These two axis are braided in single thread, as the unity of cognitive reflection and its inseparable affect, overlapping each other in a dynamic way in bringing each other about. This dynamic structure of metonymy between the core of what we have called *epochè* and the act of becoming aware in its totality is, indeed, remarkable.

NOTES

1 This text is adapted from a forthcoming book: *On Becoming Aware: The pragmatics of experiencing* by N.Depraz, F.Varela and P.Vermersch. As in the present paper, the order of the authors is strictly alphabetical and authorship a shared collective. A German version will appear in: R.Kühn und Michael Staudigl (Hg.), *Epoché und Reduktion*, Karl Alber Verlag (in press). For more on our views on the question of methodology topic the reader should consult F.Varela and J.Shear (Eds.), *The View from Within: First-person methods in the study of Consciousness*, Imprint Academic, London, 1999.

2 In Anglo-Saxon literature, the closest antecedents to our attempt at a pragmatic phenomenology are the early efforts of H. Spiegelberg in *Doing Phenomenology*, Den Haag, M. Nijhoff, 1970), and more recently the pioneer work of Eugene Gendlin, *Experiencing and the Creation of Meaning: A philosophical and psychological approach to the subjective*, Free Press, Glencoe (1962); reprinted by Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1997. In the phenomenological tradition, Paul Ricouer is the only writer - so far as we know - to have tackled this question in his description of multiple "practical acts of consciousness" (attention, emotion, effort, habit) in his *Philosophie de la volonté I. Le volontaire et l'involontaire*, Paris, Aubier, 1950, reprinted 1988, before having decided to abandon this project and turn to hermeneutics. In the German domain, B. Waldenfels has clearly formulated this need in *Edmund Husserl, Arbeit an den Phänomenen*, Frankfurt, Fischer, 1993. Finally, the recent book by J.L.Marion, *Etant Donn e*, PUF, Paris, 1998 should be noted in this context.

3 Cf. R. Bernet *La vie du sujet*, Paris, PUF, 1994, Introduction, as well as J.-F. Courtine, "R duction ph nom ologique-transcendantale et diff rence ontico-ontologique" in *Heidegger et la ph nom nologie*, Paris, Vrin, 1990, p. 207-247; J.-L. Marion, *R duction et donation*, Paris, PUF, 1989; M. Henry, "Quatre principes de la ph nom nologie", *Rev.Metaphysique Morale*, [??], 1990.

4 Ch. Trungpa, *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*, Boston, Shambala, 1974, and F. Varela, E. Thompson and E. Rosch, *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and human experience*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1991.

5. E. Fink, *VI. Cartesianische Meditation* (hrsg. G. Van Kerckhoven), Dordrecht, Kluwer, 1988. English translation by R.Bruzina, Indiana University Press, Indiana, 1997.

6 cf. N. Depraz, "The Phenomenological Reduction as Praxis", in: F. Varela & J. Shear (Eds.) *The View from Within: First Person Methodologies in the Study of Consciousness*, Imprint Academic, London, 1999.

7 J.-Cl. Piguet 1963, op.cit. p.154. See also the much earlier letter from Husserl to Hofmannsthal of 1907 where Husserl makes use of a strict equivalence between the reductive and aesthetic attitudes (Cf. *Art et ph nom nologie*, n 7, Bruxelles, 1991, p. 13-19).

8 T. Namgyal, *Mahamudra: The Quintessence of Mind and Meditation*, Boston, Shambala, 1987.

9 For more details about this key distinction between pre-reflectiv/pre-reflexive and reflexive consciousness see the recent discussions in S. Gallagher, *The Inordinance of Time*, Evanston, Northwestern Univ. Press, 1998; D. Zahavi, *Self-Awareness and Alterity*, Evanston, Northwestern Univ. Press, 1999; and J. L. Bermudes, *The Paradox of Self-Awareness*, Cambridge, MIT, 1998.

10 Regarding these notions see *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis, Hua XI*, Den Haag, M. Nijhoff, 1966 ; P. Ricœur, *Le volontaire et l'involontaire*, Paris, Seuil, 1950 ; A. Montavont, " Le phénomène de l'affection dans les *Analyses sur la synthèse passive* ", *Alter* 2, Paris, Ed. Alter, 1994 ; G. Mazis, *Emotion and Embodiment : A fragile ontology*, Evanston, Northwestern Univ. Press, 1993, and more recently Y. Yamaguchi, *Ki als leibhaftige Vernunft. Beitrag zur interkulturellen Phänomenologie der Leiblichkeit*, München, W. Fink Verlag, 1997.

11. Cf. J. Piaget, *Sagesse et illusion de la philosophie*, Paris, PUF, 1968