

Subjectivity, Memory, and Human Science

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Abstract

Natural scientific psychology still fails to address the issue of subjectivity in a meaningful way. Amedeo Giorgi's descriptive phenomenological psychological method enables human scientific researchers to approach the realms of subjectivity while still meeting the rigorous criteria of science. The purpose of this essay is to highlight the notion of subjectivity in Giorgi's method as it applies to human science, and to do so by using the phenomenon of memory as an example. Recent efforts to place the phenomenon of memory in a biological and/or cognitive scientific model are critically examined from a phenomenological perspective. By utilizing Giorgi's qualitative method one is able to capture essential subjective, psychological aspects of lived memory. Some examples of descriptions of memory are provided with earlier human scientific results on memory, and they are integrated with the overall phenomenological dialogue on the intricate relationship between the phenomena of the body, memory, and self.

Memory requires more than dating of a fact in the past. It must be dated in my past. In other words, I must think that I directly experienced its occurrence. It must have that "warmth and intimacy" [...] as characterizing all experiences "appropriated" by the thinker as his own.

– William James, *Principles of psychology*.

Amedeo Giorgi, who established the descriptive phenomenological psychological method (Giorgi, 1975, 1985, 1997) as applied to human science research, has made it possible for researchers to access the qualitative aspects of human phenomena without sacrificing the rigorous criteria of modern science. In other words, what makes Giorgi's method so appealing to the human scientist is that it provides an option for scientifically describing the meaning of a phenomenon as lived by human subjects. Giorgi's qualitative method lets the researcher access the subjective realm in which lived meanings are pre-reflectively constituted and also allows for

the possibility (through the use of the phenomenological psychological reduction, critical reflection, and the use of imaginative variations) of a discovery of a general, human scientific psychological structure about a human phenomenon of their interest. Hence, researchers in, for example, the fields of psychology and nursing science that are particularly interested in human meaning, as it is lived by subjects, find Giorgi's method to be a legitimate alternative to mainstream research methods that, more often than not, uncritically adopt a natural scientific approach in researching human phenomena. Human scientists that utilize Giorgi's method seem interested in the meaning of the phenomenon as it is lived by human subjects. The motivation for using a descriptive qualitative method has for its obvious reason that researchers, such as psychologists and nurses, in their actual work setting frequently encounter the subjectivity of a human being. For that reason alone they have a genuine interest of being true to the lived aspects of phenomena when they are conducting their scientific research. To further one's understanding of the meanings of phenomena that are experienced by one's clients or patients can evidently be helpful in therapeutic or caring situations in which connecting to a sense of inter-subjectivity is necessary.

In other words, these human scientists do not find it useful to give up certain qualitative aspects of the phenomenon present in the subjective realm in order to remain faithful to a traditional, natural scientific agenda. To use Sokolowski's (2008) recent expression, the *veracity* of these human scientists is in harmony with what they are looking for and thus they maintain a sense of responsibility in regard to the search for human knowledge. This does not imply that, for instance, psychologists or nursing scientists using natural scientific, research methods are not conducting legitimate science; however, it only suggests that there are qualitative methods that can, at times, be more appropriate in regard to certain research questions and purposes of a study.

The main purpose of this essay is to point out the necessity of staying with subjectivity in order to capture human scientific meaning as opposed to objectifying subjectivity for the sake of the natural scientific position. The phenomenon of memory will be used as an exemplar throughout the text of this essay. First, a critical examination of the cognitive and biological approaches to the phenomenon of memory is undertaken, especially in order to emphasize how such approaches can lead to misrepresentations of subjectivity. Second, a human scientific understanding of memory is considered, highlighting phenomenological themes such as the pre-reflective and reflective self. The argument here is that Giorgi's (1985, 1997) method can provide for the discovery of the meaning of the phenomenon of memory and thus re-direct the psychology of the phenomenon to the subjective realm. Such effort can aid in establishing more fruitful interdisciplinary labors in our quest for knowledge of human memory.

Since this essay's theme is the interrelation of subjectivity, memory, and Giorgi's (1985, 1997) human scientific method, it is essential at this point to clarify the term subjectivity before going any further. My intention here is to use the term subjectivity in the same sense as Giorgi (2004, p. 2) has done, that is, "[...] as a generic term to speak about persons, consciousness, experience, psyche, agency, the lived body, ego, self and all other such terms that refer to our source of life and awareness". This generic term, subjectivity, implies a commonality that Giorgi (2004, p. 2) claims to be a concept that is at the "center of all of the human sciences". Giorgi (2004, p. 2) also states, "Coming to grips with subjectivity is one of the key problems in the human sciences and this task was not approached properly by the natural science psychologist". I will not explicitly go into all the difficulties surrounding the "noun subjectivity and the adjective

subjective” nor the “pejorative term *subjectivism*” since this has already been done by Giorgi (2004, pp. 3-5) elsewhere. However, there is what Giorgi (2004, p. 5) states a “key problem” in regards to subjectivity and human science that I think will be essential to set the stage for our present discussion. Giorgi (2004, p. 5) states:

The key problem, therefore, is to try to understand how an experienced object necessarily requires subjectivity and yet can be known in such a way that one can claim that it is known unbiasedly. That is the central issue that is responsible for all of the vulnerabilities surrounding the effort to get knowledge of subjectivity. Science seeks knowledge that is objective. In the natural sciences that task means that scientists try to apprehend things and processes as they really are and subjectivity does not pose an insurmountable problem there. In the human sciences, however, an objective understanding usually means apprehending human activity including subjective expression. The paradox seems to be that human beings who are scientists must efface their own subjective biases in order to apprehend objectively the subjective expressions of others. This is the seemingly paradoxical task that the human sciences must face [...].

The solution offered by Giorgi (2004) is for human scientists to find a more balanced view on subjectivity. In other words, it is more rigorous to take subjectivity into serious consideration than to ignore it or misrepresent it (Giorgi, 1997).

A Phenomenological Critique of Biological and Cognitive Scientific Attitudes and Approaches Towards the Phenomenon of Memory

In a time and age of computer technology we use the term memory as a metonymy for both intelligence and efficiency. Memory has simply become an "abstract commodity" which we depend on at work and in everyday life. The term is also the main focus in the neurobiologist's laboratory in which a search for the underlying cellular and molecular mechanisms is of high priority on today's natural scientific agenda (Kandel, 1996). And, of course, memory has always had its privileged place in psychoanalytic theory (Freud, 1989/1899).

Other popular, contemporary, clinical theories such as, for example, eye movement desensitization reprocessing (EMDR) has memory at the core of their theory (Shapiro, 1995). In general, the phenomenon has become to the 21st century cognitive psychologist what learning was (and still is) to the behaviorist. However, the main direction of all the above mentioned attempts still looks at memory through the eyes of the natural scientific paradigm highlighting such issues as causality, trace, speed, and storage capacity in relation to biology and cognitive schemas. Not to mention the false memory debate that has amounted to almost nothing but the quest for the factual aspects of memory (Brown, 1996). Although some cognitively-oriented psychologists have tried to address autobiographical memories (e.g., Howe, 2000), its mode of inquiry is still limited to a pre-established cognitive scientific model. Nevertheless, memory has also always been at the heart of phenomenological theory and Husserl (1991/1893-1917) knew that he had to be able to account for temporality, and thus memory, in order to clarify his

philosophical studies on consciousness.

Consequently, phenomenological psychologists have always shown a special interest in the phenomenon of memory and have throughout the 20th century launched heavy critiques against mainstream, natural scientific, psychological research efforts. Perhaps most notable is Straus' (1966) critique of psychologists' search for the memory trace and Giorgi's (1989) phenomenological psychological overview of learning and memory. Lately there have also been some fruitful, interdisciplinary efforts by scholars to integrate phenomenological philosophical insights (although in a highly critical manner) with cognitive-neuroscience (Gallagher and Zahavi, 2008). Now, if one would move away from the abstract notion or the metaphorical meaning of the term memory merely being something associated with modern day computers systems, cognitive science, or intellectual discourses in artificial intelligence and instead approach memory as something lived, then one would enter the experience of the horizon of the past. Then we are also truly in a different "order of reality", as Sartre (1956) would have claimed, and as human scientists we are entering phenomenological psychological aspects of such a phenomenon. If we want to move away from the narrow quest for the natural scientific facts and move in the direction of human meaning, it is also plausible that this path will lead us to discover something about our own motivation (in a phenomenological sense) and how we constitute a relation within our embodied-self-world-others (Giorgi, 1997).

I will not exhaust nor reiterate all the critique that has been prevalent among phenomenological human scientists and philosophers against the cognitive scientific and/or neurobiological models of memory here since it can be found more developed elsewhere (for a recent account, see for example, Gallagher & Zahavi, 2008). However, I find it essential to provide the reader with a critique against the general attitude towards studying the phenomenon of memory that is prevalent among contemporary natural scientists, as we are now almost a decade into the 21st century. Unfortunately (from a human scientific perspective), it seems as if mainstream psychological issues concerning human memory has found its permanent home in the natural scientific model. Eric Kandel, the 2000 winner of the Nobel Prize for his work on the biology of memory, captures today's research attitude as he writes:

Imbued with new knowledge and confidence, biology turned its attention to its loftiest goal, understanding the biological nature of the human mind. This effort, long considered to be prescientific, is already in full swing. Indeed, when intellectual historians look back on the last two decades of the twentieth century, they are likely to comment on the surprising fact that the most valuable insights into the human mind to emerge during this period did not come from the disciplines traditionally concerned with mind – from philosophy, psychology, or psychoanalysis. Instead they came from a merger of these disciplines with the biology of the brain, a new synthesis energized recently by the dramatic achievements in molecular biology. The result has been a new science of mind, a science that uses the power of molecular biology to examine the great remaining mysteries of life. (Kandel, 1996, p. XII).

It does not come as a surprise that a biologist like Kandel would argue for his own scientific field to "examine the great remaining mysteries of life", nor is it surprising that a biologist would

argue for a reductionistic model. What is surprising is the fact that we still are bound to experiments on a sea snail or a laboratory rat (that Kandel uses as his “research subjects”) to “examine the great remaining mysteries of life”. Note that Kandel, midway through the paragraph suggests the advances to be due to an interdisciplinary effort, although, in a way, undermining this effort by the recent “achievements in molecular biology”.

From a phenomenological point of view that is interested in the lived, human meaning of a phenomenon, it is difficult to understand how we could ever enter the stream of consciousness of a rat or the world of a sea snail by comparing its biological structure and processes to a human being’s. Many researchers in the field of memory tend to look at the phenomenon from a biological-behavioristic way, using animals as their “research subjects” (see for example, LeDoux, 1993; Davis et al., 1995; Cahill and McGaugh, 1998). The question is whether we learn anything from animal experiments about human memory as it is lived? According to Straus (1966, p.61), animal experiments:

[...] can never test the re-call of the past as past. Animal experiments are necessarily confined to the study of recognition, for the most part of re-enacting, and this in the wake of vital needs renewed from day to day. Such doing or avoiding under the actual pressure of desire may require not more than a minimum of guidance; [...] it does not require a more or less exact replica of the training situation.

In other words, animal experiments on memory lack the necessary distinctions regarding the phenomenon under investigation. If we want to understand memory as it is lived, would it not be more appropriate to choose a method that began its investigation with human subjectivity? Although Kandel (2000) make some suggested inferences about human meanings in regard to the phenomenon of memory, he is also acting carefully, and at the end of his Nobel Prize lecture, he makes sure that all that we really know at this point from his research is the memory of a laboratory animal. This last point is essential because it gives us the essential distinction between what we are studying and what we strive to understand; and most important of all, implicitly, it is an encouragement for future interdisciplinary efforts. Could it actually be feasible in our day and time that the natural scientific method is still the owner of the exclusive rights to the "great remaining mysteries of life?"

Let us take a brief look at how brain-behavioral scientists study, for instance, the phenomenon of emotional memory. The biological theories of emotional memories are many. Most scientists, however, point to the amygdala as the anatomical structure that is involved in this phenomenon (LeDoux, 1993). Studies done on the impact of the amygdala in correlation with animal behavior have shown that this anatomical unit is a functional unit of most emotional related phenomena (LeDoux, 1993). The main claim of Davis et al. (1995), following research on rats, using a fear-potentiated startle paradigm is that, “A great deal of data now indicate that the amygdala and its efferent projections to the hypothalamus and brainstem form a central fear system” (p. 32). LeDoux & Muller (1997) claim that emotional memory can be understood from complex activity in the cells and synapses in the amygdala and its direct connections to other brain activity centers such as the thalamus and the cortex. Even older studies, for example, Kluver and Bucy (1937) and Weiskrantz (1956) provided empirical support for the amygdala’s leading role of emotional processing in monkeys. Now, in what way have these brain-behavioral

scientists clarified the complex issues surrounding the subjectivity of emotional memory? As can be seen in Davis et al. (1995) emotional memory is being represented by a fear-potentiated startle paradigm. Fear could be interpreted as an emotion and if one gets startled it can leave a memory of that fearful situation, and in a rational and operational sense then, these scientists are studying an emotional memory. And not to forget, a laboratory rat is supposedly experiencing this emotional memory. It is one thing to be interested in the biology of emotional memory; however, as soon as the term behavior is introduced and inferences are made to account for how human beings work, this is when we need to become critical. I can only agree with Giorgi (2004, p. 10), “[...] such studies should be viewed as being interdisciplinary and complementary to research that focuses on subjectivity, and not a substitute for them”.

Phenomenologists have made a number of solid arguments against brain-behaviorists’ types of scientific reasoning in the past and it seems as if they will have to continue to do so into the 21st century. As I mentioned earlier, Sartre’s (1956, p. 280) words stand out as he pointed out, in his discussion on the body, that we cannot forget that we might be “[...] dealing with two essentially different orders of reality”. In other words, we cannot be sure that a biological account can get us closer to an understanding of the lived meaning of human memory. As Giorgi (1989, p. 110) states, “To seek a physiological or chemical model is to try to understand memory externally and non-psychologically. An attempt to measure memory would be a quantification of it and would presuppose the lived experience”. Straus (1966) reminded us of this that when psychology searched for the engram, a human being must still at the end read biology, no matter how sophisticated the nature of the inquiry. In other words, and as Straus (1966) points out, biology cannot read itself. And of course, it seems reasonable to clarify what is meant by a memory trace, before one starts to look for it (Strauss, 1966). To discover and describe the many human meanings present in a phenomenon like memory, we will instead have to go back to the source in which such meanings thrive; namely in the lived experience of a human being. In Straus’ (1966, p. 99) words, “Human experience, the attitude of man toward the world and to himself, should not be assimilated to events within the organism [...] After many years of being accustomed to a scientific terminology, we have to relearn the mother tongue of human experience”.

In general, the cognitive scientific view of memory is that it consists of mental images representing something from the past. In many ways, the cognitive model of memory has the same problem of approaching the phenomenon of memory as the biological; that is, both approaches are bound to the natural scientific paradigm and thus tend to force the lived phenomenon into the format of what Husserl (1998/1913) would have called a real object. Like most psychological phenomena, memory is a mixed object that has characteristics of an ir-real as well as a real object. To then force the phenomenon into a real object in order to stay with the natural scientific agenda is thus to put method before sense. What happens is that the lived aspects of the phenomenon become objectified and abstract (perhaps "dead" and misrepresented), and thus lose their original meanings for the sake of the cognitive scientist’s motivation to stick to their own paradigm’s sense of what it means to be objective. Giorgi (1989, p. 110) writes, “The cognitive approach is descriptive, but it is more faithful to the model, which is formal and abstract, and thus the description remains external to the lived experience”. Hence, although the cognitive approach seems interested in human meaning, it sometimes fails methodically due to its

attitude towards what it means to be scientific.

What happens then when the cognitive scientist is trying to fit the meaning of memory into the natural scientific formula? There are numerous problems, but let us take a look at the most foundational. Although this problem is quite obvious, it is worth noting here because it involves the notion of the choice of scientific, research method and hence it becomes relevant to our overall discussion. As most of us are familiar with, the natural scientific method was designed to make an inquiry into things (i.e., real objects); hence, natural scientists also tend to be very successful in its investigations of things. However, human subjectivity and consciousness is not necessarily motivated in the same way as a material thing that exists in space, time and is regulated by causality (Giorgi, 1997). Hence, what the cognitive scientist must do to make consciousness "thing-like" is to fit the whole subjectivity of remembering something into the format of a real object. What happens then is that memory becomes objectified and loses its human meaning. Memory is now abstract and "thing-like". The real problem here is that in making memory into a real object, it becomes very similar to another intentionality; namely that of picturing something. In doing so, the cognitive scientists have distorted not just our scientific understanding of memory, but also, in an implicit sense, our lived experience of remembering versus picturing something. Sokolowski (2000, p. 67), points this out:

We might be tempted to think of memory in the following way: when we remember something, we call up a mental image of the thing and recognize this picture as presenting the same thing we once saw. In this view, remembering would be not all that much different from looking at a photograph of someone and recognizing who the person is and the setting in which the photograph was taken. The only difference would be that the photograph is in the "extramental" world, while memory is in the "intramental" world.

This interpretation of remembering is very wrong. It confuses remembering with another kind of intentionality, picturing. It is not surprising that we tend to confuse these two types; it does seem that we have inner images in the mind's eye, and once we learn about the brain it seems inevitable that we are going to postulate some sort of projection of some sort of image on some sort of screen in the brain. But the incoherence of this interpretation becomes obvious when we consider the type of identity that occurs in remembering.

Sokolowski (2000, p. 67-68) continues:

Suppose we are willing to say that we do not look at internal pictures when we remember; what else are we supposed to say? How can we express, from the transcendental viewpoint, what happens in remembering? If we do not look at inner pictures, why does it seem that we do, and how can we account for what seems to show up in our mind's eye or our mind's ear? Our reply to such questions can be put this way: what we store up as memories is not images of things we perceived at one time. Rather, we store up the earlier perceptions themselves. We store up the perceptions we once lived through. Then, when we actually remember, we do not call up images; rather, we call up those earlier perceptions. When these perceptions are

called up and reenacted, they bring along their objects, their objective correlates. What happens in remembering is that we relive earlier perceptions, and we remember the objects as they were given at that time. We capture that earlier part of our intentional life. We bring it to life again. That is why memories can be so nostalgic. They are not just reminders, they are the activity of reliving.

Hence, forcing lived memory into the natural scientific realm confuses us not just scientifically, but also contributes to a distorted, everyday understanding of the phenomenon. In this way, the cognitive scientists have contributed to an abstract view of memory that has objectified or perhaps even de-personalized our understanding of this phenomenon and that has forced us into analyses built upon formal cognitive theoretical constructions in order to remain in harmony with the natural scientific paradigm. As Merleau-Ponty (1962/1945, p. 22) once pointed out, “To remember is not to bring into the focus of consciousness a self-subsistent picture of the past; it is to thrust deeply into the horizon of the past and take apart step by step the interlocked perspectives until the experiences which it epitomizes are as if relived in their temporal setting”.

One aspect of showing why the psychology of memory also should be seen from a phenomenological point of view is that memorial events are more often than not connected by embodied re-awakenings (Giorgi, 1989). Embodiment is something that belongs to the living subject and to translate embodiment to the natural science paradigm, that is, to the biology of the body, is to distort the meanings present in the lived experience, and hence distort human subjectivity. After natural scientists have observed the biological structures and/or processes involved, they are forced to make interpretations based on these observations in order to present meanings that they can introduce back to the life world of human beings. Often the meanings must harmonize with the investigation, making the interpretations cognitive-scientific in character, and thus they tend to be abstract and distorted in relation to how they are actually lived. In other words, if we as psychological researchers want to remain within the sphere of natural science, we will have to make the phenomenon into a real object, and to follow up on our inquiry, we will have to construct meanings that are within the limits of our initial rationale and paradigm, resulting in cognitively-scientific based interpretations. The body as seen by natural scientists tends to become a body that is anybody’s body, whereas the phenomenologist focuses on the lived body (See for example, Sartre, 1956). More specifically, as Merleau-Ponty argues, “[...] our physical body is not experienced by us as an object among other objects in space” (Moran, 2000, p. 423). This does not imply the dichotomy of individual versus the general, leaving the phenomenological to be the individual. Meanings can also be generalized and since phenomenology rests on the notion of inter-subjectivity (Zahavi, 2001; 2003), it is of utmost importance that the apparent dichotomy between my body and anybody’s body instead is understood as the lived body versus the biology of the body. Thus, the lived body just like time-consciousness has a leading role in phenomenological theory. According to Moran (2000, pp. 424-425):

[...] my body occupies the “zero point”, as Husserl had already described in *Ideas II*.
 [...] The body, for Merleau-Ponty, has its own set of motivations [...] The body discloses the world for us in a certain way. It is the transcendental condition for the

possibility of experiencing objects at all, our means of communication with the world.

If one then is interested in psychological meaning, it is more rigorous to capture these meanings by returning to where these meanings are lived; that is, in our subjectivity. To distort or objectify the subjective just to remain natural scientific is to “make a mess” of veracity (cf., Sokolowski, 2008, p. 21).

Considering a Phenomenological Human Scientific Understanding of Memory

As we have seen in the above critique of the biological and cognitive scientific attitudes and approaches towards the phenomenon of memory, an essential aspect of human subjectivity and time-consciousness is the lived body. If we look at the lived body, it can make us self aware of our own sense of subjectivity. For example, in an emotional memory as we initiate a return to the perceptions in the original event in the past, we tend to re-live such emotions (Englander, 2007). That brings about not just the embodiment; however, for when we think about the memory, or perhaps dwell on it, or share it with somebody, we also (although not always explicitly) are present to a first-personal givenness of it. We are through our lived body connected to our lived time. In other words, it is as if the lived body reminds us of our own subjectivity through our lived time by connecting us to the past. Let us take a look at some examples provided by Giorgi (1989, p. 108) of how embodiment tends to show up in descriptions of memory.

(Subject 4) As I recall this incident. I feel pain [...] I find that I really don't want to remember it, and yet it remains a vivid memory of a day in my life [...] Neither of us spoke, but as I sat there, I remembered as clearly today as then, and that I felt very close to him [her son].

(Subject 5) It was sunset, and the warm breeze that had been drifting through my window all afternoon was becoming chilly. It sent a shiver through me [...] A similar cold breeze was coming in the house through the back screen door. The cold air sent a shiver through me, and as I got up to close the back door, I saw my *fiancé* coming up the back walk.

(Subject 6) This event took place 31 years ago. A minimal amount of background seems necessary, and I feel a little anxious about getting to hard parts of the story; I start tightening up around my center [...] Bodily, when remembering about this, my head wants to sink down into my shoulders – I feel like closing up, disappearing [...] [Subject was required to leave a pet squirrel behind because of state laws and she abandoned it in a forest. Part of the description of the event at that time reads:] I can feel the cage wire hurting my fingers, and the difficulty of walking up that hill. I feel tight, like I am trying to keep from falling.

Giorgi (1989, p. 108) hence concludes:

Because these are previously lived perceptual acts that are being reawakened, it is not surprising that there should be a bodily role. Often, the feelings that the awakened perceptual acts evoke reverberate back to the present and subjects re-experience in the present the feelings that are being evoked in memory. It is as though the body is the silent carrier of these meanings through feelings [...]

In other words, as a "communicator with the world", the lived body also earns the role of a communicator in the history of the subject, making it the possible "zero point" for some structures of the self to remain while we move through time, through life. Of course, this is not to claim that the body is the cause of everything, but rather the means for the possibility for a subject to have an experience (Moran, 2000).

When one remembers something it is experienced in the sense of the subject's own experience. Simply put, it is I, myself, who is doing the remembering and not somebody else, hence carrying that "warmth and intimacy" as James (1890/1950, p.650) once wrote. In a sense then, memory makes us connected in the present to our past and thus to our own primary sense of subjectivity through time. Even so, it is essential to stress that this sense of subjectivity is often pre-reflective. Zahavi (2005, p. 65) makes this point clear:

When Husserl claimed that the experience is constituted in inner time-consciousness, he was not saying that the experience is brought to givenness by some other part of subjectivity, as if one part took the other as its object. Rather, to say that an experience is constituted in inner time-consciousness is to say that it is brought to awareness by its own means. It is called inner time-consciousness because it belongs intrinsically to the innermost structure of the experience itself. To put it differently, inner time-consciousness simply is the pre-reflective self awareness of the stream of consciousness (protention-primal/presentation-retention) should consequently be appreciated as an analysis of the (micro)structure of first-personal givenness.

At this point, it starts to become clear that this first-personal givenness is a pre-reflective self-awareness and that it is directly linked by meaning to the lived body through emotional expressions.

Let us consider another example, an excerpt taken from an interview in a descriptive phenomenological psychological study (using Giorgi's method) on the phenomenon identified as *The Lived Persistent Meaning of an Early Emotional Memory* (for a more extensive account on this study, see Englander, 2007). Perhaps this description is a bit longer than the previous one's quoted from Giorgi (1989) and can thus better serve as our primary example in explicating the embodied role and first-personal, pre-reflective givenness in emotional memory. The subject responds to the researcher's request for a description of a situation in which the subject remembered an early emotional event.

This past week, as I guess I didn't express before one trigger that actually works within me that takes me back to my childhood happened on Tuesday, you know, after parking the car right off campus and walking around the back of the chapel, I was

aware again as I mentioned of the flight pattern and an aircraft flying overhead and as I came around the corner what was happening was the reflection of the aircraft was in the pool outside the chapel and it was absolutely beautiful. And as I looked up what I see again beginning at the reflection and you've got overhead an aircraft in final approach to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, and I tried to stop and figure out exactly what are the components that go into what I am feeling at that point in time. Because of studies of feelings and experience actually going back to the beginning of psychology, I tried to break it down into what I was behaving and what I was feeling, how I was affected, and see if I could do that. What I was feeling is very similar, surprisingly very similar to what I was feeling as a child. If you look at my behavior, it stops me. It's a break in my momentum of my walk. There's actually a physical response to it. And I think there is a physiological response as well as an affective response. Actually there is almost a warmth. If I allow which I did on that particular day to just rest with me, I physically slow down, I get a sense of almost warmth and almost a sense of longing, and a sense of reflection that is very comforting, very, very comforting. It gives me mentally and physical both ties it almost into a sense of peace. And that sense of peace allows me to transcend back to different portions of my life, and specifically because of our focus here to when I was a young child.

It becomes quite obvious that the subject is a psychology student and uses technical terms such as “trigger” and “physical response”. In fact, at times, the subject comes through as providing a quasi-behavioral analysis while describing the experience. However, this will not be a methodological concern due to the fact that Giorgi's method accounts for all data because the goal of the method is even to describe the psychological meaning of a person's own interpretation of their experience.

Nevertheless, the embodied-self present in the experience can clearly be seen from expressions like:

“If you look at my behavior, it stops me.”
 “It's a break in my momentum of my walk.”
 “Actually there is almost a warmth.”
 “I physically slow down [...]”

Now, let us return to a quote used earlier in which Giorgi (1989, p.108) writes, “It is as though the body is the silent carrier of these meanings through feelings [...]”. One could perhaps argue that the lived body plays such a vital role since we had asked the subject to describe an emotional memory and one could also argue that the examples provided by Giorgi would also fit the description of an emotional memory although the subjects were asked the more general question to describe a situation in which he/she remembered something.

A particular aspect of Giorgi's (1985, 1997) qualitative method is that it includes in the situation the subject who experienced the phenomenon under investigation. In a sense then, the factual aspects of memory that natural scientific approaches to psychology is so interested in also lacks the life world context in which meanings are constituted, emotions are experienced, and feelings are felt, etc. Now, constructing a situation, that is, an experiment, in which measuring or

testing is carried out in the experimental situation, is that which the natural scientific approach suggests. This means that its method is not "contextless". However, to control the situation in terms of trying to avoid the subjective involvement of the researcher and at times even the subjectivity of the participant points to the natural scientific agenda and also to the idea that a "thing" should exist in itself whether or not subjectivity is there or not. In other words, natural scientific psychology seeks the exclusion of subjectivity in order to assure factual objectivity, leading to a sense of objectivism. Ebbinghaus' classical experiment on memory using nonsense syllables could perhaps be seen as an example of this particular point. In the true natural sciences, such as the physical sciences, human subjectivity is not an issue, however, in a natural scientific psychology it cannot be avoided. Would it not then be more rigorous to take subjectivity into serious consideration as Giorgi (2004) does in regard to his methodology, instead of uncritically adopting the method and reasoning from the natural sciences? In order to discover human, psychological meaning, we also need to have a human being in a situation as it is lived, because human meaning is different from a natural scientific fact simply because meaning cannot exist in itself. Meaning depends on subjectivity. The critique of subjectivity depends on inter-subjectivity and not whether subjectivity is present in the first place (Giorgi, 2004). As Giorgi (2004, p.23) states, "In the human world, capturing the subjective as subjective is objective".

So far I have tried to point out the necessity of using a qualitative method, like that developed by Giorgi (1975, 1985, 1997), that critically incorporates the notion of subjectivity in order to capture the meaning of human memory. Evidently, I have been very critical towards natural scientific psychology in its attempt to establish psychology primarily as a natural science particularly because such an approach towards research does not address human subjectivity appropriately and critically in relation to the phenomena that are being studied.

Now, let us integrate the notion of reflective consciousness with the pre-reflective one, in order to address some methodological issues of the subjective realm of the human science researcher. By critically reflecting on the meaning of a phenomenon through using the phenomenological psychological reduction and imaginative variation, one might be accused of objectifying the phenomenon as it is lived by the research subject. Nevertheless, it is not my intention to go into this philosophical debate about reflection and objectification, since it can be found more developed elsewhere (see for example, Zahavi, 2005). It is useful, however, for the purpose of our discussion to cite a brief paragraph by Giorgi (2006) as he clarifies this issue by going back to Husserl. Giorgi (2006, p.105) states:

[...] the very idea of a non-objectifying presence to consciousness is in Husserl. While often mistaken among social scientists, it is well known by Husserlian scholars that Husserl never said that intentionality is the essence of consciousness. It is an important characteristic of many acts, but it is not essential because there are aspects of consciousness that do not partake of it, e.g., hyletic data. More importantly in this context, however, is the fact that Husserl acknowledges that consciousness is reflexive as well as reflective. With reflexivity, consciousness is aware of itself independent of intentionality. This would provide a basis for a non-objectifying awareness of consciousness, but a proper understanding of certain types of reflection can perform the same function. Husserl mostly worked within the context of reflective phenomenology.

Giorgi (2006, p.103) also summarizes Zahavi's (2005) point that, "Husserl's reflective phenomenological method does indeed alter (not distort) the prereflective consciousness, but in a way that actually enhances it". This is exactly the point of describing the human scientific meaning in Giorgi's method, it explicates the meanings to be useful in the world of psychology, hence it provides us with eidetic knowledge and a generalizability of the results without distorting, that is, going beyond or reducing the pre-reflective givenness present in the raw data.

The human scientific researcher's ability to address the subjective realm might be difficult to comprehend for somebody not well acquainted with phenomenological theory. Let us consider a concrete example of a general structure of a memory-related phenomenon, i.e., a study of the lived persistent meaning of early emotional memories (Englander, 2007). The general structure is as follows:

In the context of an early emotional situation in which a person's emotional equilibrium has been significantly challenged, a person incorporates the meaning of a present object as a personal value constituting a foundation of one's emotional life. The meaning of the object is perceived by the person as a constitutive of his or her emotional life and is fully accepted as part of the permanent perception of self that is frequently relived and never challenged. The early emotional situation is vividly remembered throughout life in similar or analogous emotional challenging situations in which the meaning of the object is present. The lived persistent meaning of an early emotional memory is revealed by the person's motivation to go to extraordinary efforts throughout life to maintain his or her emotional equilibrium using the meaning of the object as a thematic foundation for his or her emotional coping strategy. To maintain one's emotional equilibrium and to continue perceiving one's self as whole, the person structures daily activities as well as life-long goals in conjunction with the emotional coping strategy (based on the meaning of the object). The meaning of the object is directly used or avoided (as an emotional coping strategy) in real and potential situations in which a person's emotional equilibrium is, or could be, challenged. (Englander, 2007, p. 189)

By using critical reflection through the phenomenological psychological reduction and imaginative variations, the researcher attempts to describe the psychological meaning of the phenomenon, that is, the researcher makes the psychological in the raw data explicit that was implicitly given from the pre-reflective point of view of the research subjects. In a phenomenological sense then, the raw data is not distorted but offered a meaning from a psychological perspective as opposed to the lived perspective of the research subject. This is an essential point because it also implies another important aspect of subjectivity in relation to Giorgi's human scientific method; that is, it is no point in going back to the research subject to check to see if one's description of psychological meaning is valid, just because of the fact that the research subject is not a psychologist and is thus not acquainted with the psychological perspective. The critique has to come from the same inter-subjective level, namely that of fellow psychologists. This is not to say that a psychologist's opinions are valued more than that of their research subjects, which would clearly be an ethical dilemma instead of a methodological one.

Let us now take a closer look at the knowledge of memory that we can gain from such a structure and appreciate how it directly relates to our discussion on the necessity of addressing subjectivity in psychological research. From the above general psychological structure we can get a sense that people who have experienced this phenomenon constitute it as an essential part of their emotional self, as an essential part of their being, perhaps we could even go as far as saying that it belongs to the constitution of their identity. This is in harmony with what Giorgi has found in the work of J.N. Mohanty. Giorgi (2004, p. 16) states:

The natural sciences, dealing with things, found it easy to accommodate the term "substance", along with its correlate, "accidents". Substance referred to what intrinsically belonged to a thing, made it what it was, and accidents were characteristics that were contingent. However, when it comes to understanding subjectivity, Mohanty (2000) has argued rather convincingly that identity is the better term, especially when it is a matter of speaking about what unifies subjectivity. Identity also refers to characteristics quite different from substance. Mohanty (2000, p. 84) notes that the identity of the subject is not pre-given and it has to be continually re-established and that it is never finished. One's ultimate identity is a higher order identity among various levels or specific types of identity that are established throughout the course of a life. The achievement of identity is unreal or invisible.

Giorgi (2004, p. 18) continues:

Because of the relationship between the acts of the subject and the objects towards which the acts are directed, the subject has a stability that is beyond the changing contents of consciousness; it is something self-identical. The self-identity is related intimately to the inner experiences of lived time that end up constituting an enduring identical self.

Hence, in a phenomenological analysis like the one presented above on *the lived persistent meaning of an early emotional memory*, the essential issue of subjectivity is apparent. The basic notion of the self is part of the whole basic structure in which the lived body and time-consciousness interact on a pre-reflective level, making the subject in subjectivity possible (e.g., Zahavi, 2005). By making use of reflection in order to describe the psychological meaning, we can gain psychological insight into how we pre-reflective "define" ourselves through life.

If we turn to the whole notion of our personal identity that is of prime interest to, for example, a clinical psychologist or perhaps a personality psychologist, it seems difficult, from our discussion above, to avoid the lived emotional memory and the lived body in discussing this aspect of human psychology. If memory is just a collection of pictures or images like the cognitive scientist thinks, and the biological body is analogous to a thing, like a computer with software (schemas) a very extensive hard drive (nervous system), then where in this formula does human subjectivity fit in? Just like the psychological search for the engram, maybe the terms image, picture, software, and hard drive can at best be used as metaphors, appropriate for our present *Zeitgeist*.

The fact is that if we force the whole notion of the phenomenon of memory into the

empirical format of a real object, we do miss out on its *ir*-real qualities that makes it into the mixed object that it is. What we neglect is the whole aspect of how it is connected to our subjective constitution of the self. As Sokolowski (2000, p. 70) concludes, "Just as the past object is brought to light again, so my past self as an agent of that experience is brought to life again. Through memory a distinction is introduced between the remembering self and the remembered self". Hence, we can conclude at this point that the "first-personal givenness", the pre-reflective consciousness allows us to be subjects. By remembering an emotional event, this primary sense of our subjectivity ("the zero point") is expressed through embodied reawakening that confronts us with our own development and self-awareness, and even at times, forces us to re-constitute a sense of our own personal identity.

Let us briefly return to the biological and/or cognitive scientific approaches and how, in general, such understandings differ from that of the phenomenological psychological. One could say that since the natural scientific approach does not start off from the subject and subjectivity, but instead from the "object", it is doomed to reach an abstract and a de-personalized account of the self. Take for example, testing a person's memory to reach a diagnosis. I am not saying that a diagnosis cannot help a person, mostly since a diagnosis among other things implies the meaning of getting possible help for something. Here, I am merely suggesting that in starting to understand lived memory and seeing the role of subjectivity of the self and the constitution of identity through time, we can also reach the active, meaning-constituting, human being in the quest to identify his or her own self-awareness. Is this insight something that we can "afford" to leave out in our attempt to help a person? The sense of self in phenomenology is thus something fundamental to the very notion of being human. Gallagher & Zahavi (2007) writes:

To have a self-experience does not entail the apprehension of a special self-object; it does not entail the existence of a special experience of a self alongside other experiences but different from them. To be aware of oneself is not to capture a pure self that exists separately from the stream of experience, rather it is to be conscious of one's experience in its implicit first-person mode of givenness.

In other words, the cognitive-biological model is leaving out the basic sense of an experiencing self. "Translated", this theoretical stance becomes a third-person account that is derived from an already abstract third-person account and then later translated into psychological meaning accompanied by possible, therapeutic strategies. In this context of research, memory is external to the lived experience. In contrast, Giorgi's method can aid the researcher in describing the psychological meaning as derived from a first-person mode of givenness and, as we can see in the above line of reasoning, it can capture that psychological structure of lived memory, which brings us back to the lived body and which is a reminder of the pre-reflective sense of self in constituting our self-awareness and personal identity.

Discussion and Conclusion

The many aspects of subjectivity such as the pre-reflective self and the embodied re-awakenings so often present in the lived connection among memorial events cannot be accounted for by cognitive and biological scientists without losing their lived meanings. Their attempt to do

so results in the loss of the lived meanings of memorial events. This is due mostly to the fact that a person's biology and cognitive schema are *dimensions* far too abstract in relation to the basic dimension of lived meanings. The natural scientific effort in psychology is too narrow in this regard. Thus, this strongly suggests that some answers to some question are better left to the human scientific psychologist. Giorgi's method can provide answers from within the human scientific realm of lived emotional memory and it can contribute to a re-direction of our psychological understanding of the phenomenon of memory. Note that it has never been my intention to claim that biologists or cognitive scientists are not conducting legitimate scientific research, nor has it been my attempt to degrade interdisciplinary efforts. In many ways, this account might also be interpreted as having had a focus primarily on the "individual" self. It is worth noting that phenomenological philosophy is inter-subjective (Zahavi, 2001). Simply put, without the other, there would be no individual and vice versa. The notion of the self is thus rooted in the whole sphere of an inter-subjective world. In other words, the value of subjectivity depends on inter-subjectivity. Nevertheless, it has been my purpose to highlight the possibility of a phenomenological approach to the psychology of memory using Giorgi's method and to show that in so doing we could interlock some of the possibilities for what it means to be an embodied-self who is experiencing oneself as a human being through lived time.

Now, how is this discussion of any value to the practicing psychologist? If we as clinicians want to therapeutically help a person to change, we cannot just think of changing that person's behavior or make them redefine their negative schemas to positive ones or to give them medication to alter their neural activity. We also have to be able to engage their sense of their own subjectivity, of that aspect that makes them human; that is, their primary sense of being a subject. For example, even though a person receives cognitive-behavioral therapy at the same time that he or she is put on an anti-depressant medication plan, this person can still remember him or herself as having been depressed and what that "depressed person" did in the past and thus, if our above analysis has something to it, the person now also has to deal with issues of identity and self-awareness through lived time. How does the cognitive-behaviorist deal with these issues? Do they simply encourage the client to do the cognitive exercises when they are experiencing the negative cues? Of course, cognitive exercises can be helpful; however, the effort seems short-lived if the embodied, pre-reflective self is not engaged more deeply. For example, even though an active effort to change one's negative thinking at the same time that one is on an anti-depressant medication plan directing one's life less self-destructively, the change still needs to be integrated into the self as a whole through lived time and the constitution of human meaning. In a phenomenological sense, cognitive strategies are as if my problem becomes "anybody's problem" and my body becomes "anybody's body". If say the least, with cognitive strategies, it seems that one becomes, in theory, an abstract subject who is manipulated in a way that is analogous to a machine that can be re-programmed.

It is also worth noting that the pre-reflective self can also be seen in more extreme cases of pathology. For example, even a person diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, hearing voices belonging to someone else, is by pre-reflectively recognizing this as happening to him/herself engaged in a "sense of ownership", i.e., I am hearing voices, "but the lack of self agency is missing", i.e., "someone else is putting them there" (Gallagher & Zahavi, 2008, p. 160). This sense of identifying one's pre-reflective ownership as a subject with the help of, for instance, the empathic engagement of a therapist seems crucial if one considers self awareness (and perhaps

even self-worth) as an issue in the treatment process. Hence, I am not saying that recognition of the pre-reflective consciousness makes the client capable of solving his or her own problem. Rather, I am merely suggesting that we cannot avoid this basic sense of subjectivity if we want to recognize the subject who constitutes meaning in regard to his or her own self-awareness. Now, whether this will make for a more successful therapeutic outcome is another question belonging to another discussion.

It has been my attempt to show that Giorgi's human scientific research method can enhance our understanding of the phenomenon of memory partly because such a research strategy actively engages the concept of subjectivity. To reach out to this dimension of embodied subjectivity and lived time is to engage the self-initiated, pre-reflective psychological mobility of the person. Perhaps it is to engage our "zero point". As Zahavi (2005, p.67) writes, "Whereas we live through a number of different experiences, the dimension of first-personal givenness remains unchanging. It stands, to use a striking image from James, permanently, "like a rainbow on a waterfall" (James 1890, I/630), its own quality unchanged by the events that stream through it".

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