

# Phenomenology

1902 [c.] | Minute Logic: Chapter II. Prelogical Notions. Section I. Classification of the Sciences (Logic II)  
| CP 1.280

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The first of these is *Phenomenology*, or the Doctrine of Categories, whose business it is to unravel the tangled skein [of] all that in any sense appears and wind it into distinct forms; or in other words, to make the ultimate analysis of all experiences the first task to which philosophy has to apply itself. It is a most difficult, perhaps the most difficult, of its tasks, demanding very peculiar powers of thought, the ability to seize clouds, vast and intangible, to set them in orderly array, to put them through their exercises. The mere reading of this sort of philosophy, the mere understanding of it, is not easy. Anything like a just appreciation of it has not been performed by many of those who have written books. Original work in this department, if it is to be real and hitherto unformulated truth, is - not to speak of whether it is difficult or not - one of those functions of growth which every man, perhaps, in some fashion exercises once, some even twice, but which it would be next to a miracle to perform a third time.

1902 [c.] | Minute Logic: Chapter II. Section II. Why Study Logic? | CP 2.120

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If this be so, and if the scheme of classification of the sciences that has been proposed be correct, it will follow that there are but five theoretical sciences which do not more or less depend upon the science of logic. [—] The second of the five is that department of philosophy called Phenomenology, whose business it is simply to draw up an inventory of appearances without going into any investigation of their truth.

1902 [c.] | Minute Logic: Chapter II. Section II. Why Study Logic? | CP 2.197

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In the derivation of this word, “phenomenon” is to be understood in the broadest sense conceivable; so that phenomenology might rather be defined as the study of what seems than as the statement of what appears. It describes the essentially different elements which seem to present themselves in what seems. Its task requires and exercises a singular sort of thought, a sort of thought that will be found to be of the utmost service throughout the study of logic. It can hardly be said to involve reasoning; for reasoning reaches a conclusion, and asserts it to be true however matters may seem; while in Phenomenology there is no assertion except that there are certain seemings; and even these are not, and cannot be asserted, because they cannot be described. Phenomenology can only tell the reader which way to look and to see what he shall see. The question of how far Phenomenology does reason will receive special attention.

1903 | Harvard Lectures on Pragmatism: Lecture I | CP 5.37-38

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But before we can attack any normative science, any science which proposes to separate the sheep from the goats, it is plain that there must be a preliminary inquiry which shall justify the attempt to establish such dualism. This must be a science that does not draw any distinction of good and bad in any sense whatever, but just contemplates phenomena as they are, simply opens its eyes and describes what it sees; not what it sees in the real as distinguished from figment – not regarding any such dichotomy – but simply describing the object, as a phenomenon, and stating what it finds in all phenomena alike. This is the science which Hegel made his starting-point, under the name of the *Phänomenologie des Geistes* – although he considered it in a fatally narrow spirit, since he restricted himself to what actually forces itself on the mind and so colored his whole philosophy with the ignorance of the distinction of essence and existence and so gave it the nominalistic and I might say in a certain sense the *pragmatoidal* character in which the worst of the Hegelian errors have their origin. I will so far follow Hegel as to call this science *Phenomenology* although I will not restrict it to the observation and analysis of *experience* but extend it to describing all the features that are common to whatever is *experienced* or might conceivably be experienced or become an object of study in any way direct or indirect.

Hegel was quite right in holding that it was the business of this science to bring out and make clear the *Categories* or fundamental modes. He was also right in holding that these *Categories* are of two kinds; the Universal Categories all of which apply to everything, and the series of categories consisting of phases of evolution.

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1903 | Harvard Lectures on Pragmatism: Lecture II | CP 5.43

A very moderate exercise of this third faculty suffices to show us that the word *Category* bears substantially the same meaning with all philosophers. For Aristotle, for Kant, and for Hegel, a category is an element of phenomena of the first rank of generality. It naturally follows that the categories are few in number, just as the chemical elements are. The business of phenomenology is to draw up a catalogue of categories and prove its sufficiency and freedom from redundancies, to make out the characteristics of each category, and to show the relations of each to the others.

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1903 | Harvard Lectures on Pragmatism: Lecture V | EP 2:196-197; CP 5.121-122

Philosophy has three grand divisions. The first is Phenomenology, which simply contemplates the Universal Phenomenon and discerns its ubiquitous elements, Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness, together perhaps with other series of categories. The second grand division is Normative Science ... The third grand division is Metaphysics ... [—]

For Phenomenology treats of the universal Qualities of Phenomena in their immediate phenomenal character, in themselves as phenomena. It, thus, treats of Phenomena in their Firstness.

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1903 | Lowell Lectures on Some Topics of Logic Bearing on Questions Now Vexed. Part 1 of 3rd draught of 3rd Lecture | MS [R] 464:28

Phenomenology is the science which describes the different kinds of elements that are always present in the Phenomenon, meaning by the Phenomenon whatever is before the mind in any kind of thought, fancy, or cognition of any kind. Everything that you can possibly think involves three kinds of elements.

1903 | Syllabus: Syllabus of a course of Lectures at the Lowell Institute beginning 1903, Nov. 23. On Some Topics of Logic | EP 2:259

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Philosophy is divided into (a) *Phenomenology*; (b) *Normative Science*; (c) *Metaphysics*.

Phenomenology ascertains and studies the kinds of elements universally present in the phenomenon; meaning by the *phenomenon*, whatever is present at any time to the mind in any way. Normative science distinguishes what ought to be from what ought not to be, and makes many other divisions and arrangements subservient to its primary dualistic distinction. Metaphysics seeks to give an account of the universe of mind and matter. Normative science rests largely on phenomenology and on mathematics; metaphysics on phenomenology and on normative science.

1904 | A Brief Intellectual Autobiography by Charles Sanders Peirce | Peirce, 1983, p. 71; MS [R] L107:18-19

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Phenomenology considers the phenomenon in general, whatever comes before the mind in any way, and without caring whether it be fact or fiction, discovers and describes the elements which will invariably be present in it, that is, the categories.

This quote has been taken from Kenneth Laine Ketner's 1983 reconstruction of Peirce's 'Autobiography'

1904 | Reason's Conscience: A Practical Treatise on the Theory of Discovery; Wherein logic is conceived as Semeiotic | NEM 4:192; HP 2:825

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*Phenomenology* is that branch of philosophy which endeavors to describe in a general way the features of whatever may come before the mind in any way.

nd | A Suggested Classification of the Sciences | MS [R] 1339:12

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*Phenomenology* [...] examines the objects before the mind and ascertains what are the categories of elements found everywhere...