

ADUMBRATION AND LANGUAGE USE IN J. OKONKWO: THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL METHOD EXPLAINED

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Abstract

It is understandable that one cannot talk about phenomenology adumbration and language use. Phenomenology is the starting point of the study human consciousness. It is ultimately a search for foundation. Phenomenology is the science of objective sciences as a totality. Going by this, it thus means that the world is real because each constituent is absolute in being-self and being. Therefore the business of this paper is to reiterate J. I. Okonkwo's position concerning the inseparability of adumbration and language use in the game of the phenomenological method.

Keywords: Adumbration, Language Use, Phenomenology.

Introduction

According to Okonkwo, (2004: 31), phenomenology must bring to pure expression, describe the terms of essential concepts and governing formulae of essence, the essences which directly make them known in intuition. In the same piece, Okonkwo further maintains that phenomenology provides by its very nature and methodology, the language and grammar of experience. This is to say that each phenomenon appears or presents itself in the consequence of meaning as entity. According to Robert (2001: 1), "phenomenology is ultimately a search for foundations".

This paper agrees with the views of J. I. Okonkwo that adumbration and language use is the taproot of phenomenology. Okonkwo (2002: 39) states that phenomenology is first hand because it is my individual experience of myself as worldhood and yourself as your worldhood and other aspects are second-hand born out of definitions and interpretations.

Phenomenology

An innocent mind may be pushed to ask- what is the meaning of phenomenology. According to Moran and Mooney (2002:5), phenomenology means literally the science of phenomenon, the science which studies appearances, and specifically the structure of appearing - the how of appearing- giving the phenomena or manifest appearances their due; remaining loyal to the modes of appearance things in the world, whether they belong to the physical, mathematical, cultural, aesthetic, religions, or other domains.

They further maintain that phenomenology begins with the essential correlation between objectivity and subjectivity, between the thing that appears and the conscious subject to which it appears, Based on the above quotation, it then means that the approach of phenomenology is descriptive and it seeks to illuminate issues in a radical, unprejudiced manner. It pays close attention to the evidence that presents itself to our grasp.

Adumbration

According to Okonkwo (2004.26), in 1917 at Breisgan in Freiburg, Husserl gave an inaugural lecture where he first talked about pure phenomenology from the point of view of a problem that he called in German *abschatting* or adumbration. He further maintains that adumbration is expected to project the philosophical tension between the science of consciousness and the objective science as a totality.

Speaking more on the origin/meaning of this concept called *abschatting* (adumbration), Okonkwo (2004) made us to know that, "when we talk of adumbration, we can understand the process in its reference to the Latin content of the word *umbra* (shadow). He further said that this concept *AD+UMBRA* underlines the umbrage in the aboutness of every phenomenon. Adumbration calls for the pure laws of experience that abound in the thing as such which signifies the "thing-aboutness".

Based on the above, one can agree with Okonkwo that adumbration is the process of unmasking' the lifeworld and worldhood concealments and expose the aspect and qualities of the object or subject in question. Adumbration is the exposition of the day-40-day style and mode of the "being' of the object or subject. In adumbration, the thing must present itself as it is. It is to uncover the covered and to unmask the masked. This could also be understood in the Igbo popular saying that goes thus "*amadouwajoji*-hat is when he world is covered with wrapper and this is to mask. On the other hand, *amapujojiahunwa*-uncover the wrapper and see the world. This could also be summarized as when truly people who are overburdened with problems but they try to cover their problems with a smiling face

thereby making people think that all is well. This is called pretentious life and adumbration abhors pretence. A thing must present itself as it really is.

Language Use

One cannot talk about phenomenology and bracket out language. According to Okonkwo (2004: 29),

The knowledge of the phenomenon in question is expected to take Shape in human language code in order to be found within human Worldhood of ordinary code of experimental and experiential geography of language and the hermeneutics we may term semantics of language use.

He further maintains that,

Since the engagement of the popular Vienna Circle', modern Scientific methods prove that it is no longer possible to present any serious content of any science without very explicit or implicit occupation with human phenomenon called language (Okonkwo,2006: 220).

Based on the above quotation, it then means that no one can talk or understand the world or the universe without language or speech. Okonkwo further states that, any given real worldhood is conserved inseparably through the socially constituted language use. One can summarize this section by saying that language presents reality in the worldhood of man. This is to say that any phenomenon that presents itself to human consciousness does this through the phenomenological presentation in its intimate relation with human language, For example, when one sees a mango tree, the question becomes how can one identify this mango tree without language? The mango tree must be described and interpreted through language.

The Inseparability of Adumbration and Language Use

Okonkwo (2004: 32) made it clear that ordinary language as a life-form is therefore the adumbrating-necessary-condition for the phenomenological method. Through adumbration and language, true objects (phenomena) of logical research can be defined to a clarity that excludes all misunderstanding. He further maintains that phenomena can only claim reality on the background of language and linguistic codes of human conduct because knowing my knowledge is consciousness of something. This position becomes more real when we consider the fact that language is the primary source of reference, which presents meaning to the conscious apprehender of the objects and/or phenomenon. One can give example with visual arts. It is understood that visual arts operate from the source of what 'is'.

The visual arts like painting and drawing etc, take off from what is present in the worldhood of humankind as 'response, interpretation, meaning and appearance (Okonkwo, 2002: 43).

Conclusion

This paper has tried to say that visual art is the representation of personal experience. Therefore one cannot separate adumbration from language in the game method. This is because every phenomenon must present itself to consciousness through the functionality of language.

Adumbration cannot take the shape of abstraction devoid of human possibility in meaning and language. This is because the phenomenon presenting itself to human knowledge can only do so through the human code of language, meaning and the logic of use.

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