

**Proto-Phenomenology in Communicology:  
H. G. Alexander's Philosophy of Thinking and Expression**

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Hubert Griggs Alexander was a doctoral student of Ernst Cassirer, Edward Sapir, and Marshal Urban, and a classmate of Benjamin Whorf, at Yale University. This *Yale School of Communicology* is a major source of the development of the conjunction of philosophy and human science as the pedagogy of communication and culture, i.e., teaching and learning. In 1939, Urban was the first scholar to champion the mutual influence of Saussure's *semiotics* and Husserl's *phenomenology* in the study of human communication and the symbolism of culture. Alexander's career as a teacher centered on the confluence of language, thought, and communication. My analysis focuses on Alexander's pedagogical concern as a philosopher to analyze and concretize the human capacity for rationality. He took philosophy to be the eidetic and empirical activity titled "thinking and expression". "If reason helps us to the *method* of philosophical thinking, the discussion group is its *laboratory*." In his undergraduate course with this title, which he taught for more than 25 years, the core *pedagogy* was to learn the human capacity for "*forming definitions*". My analysis takes Alexander's five step method (a *proto-phenomenology*) and correlates it to the three step method of semiotic phenomenology developed (in the French tradition of Merleau-Ponty and Foucault) as a pedagogy in my own communicological research and in the more than one hundred Ph.D. Dissertations I have directed and examined (after successfully completing Alexander's course in the Spring Semester of 1963 at the University of New Mexico).