STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS
BABEŞ-BOLYAI

PHILOSOPHIA

1/2021

STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI PHILOSOPHIA

Vol. 66, No. 1, April 2021

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YEAR **Volume 66 (LXVI) 2021**
MONTH **APRIL**
ISSUE **1**

PUBLISHED ONLINE: 2021-04-30
PUBLISHED PRINT: 2021-04-30
ISSUE DOI: 10.24193/subbphil.2021.1

S T U D I A
UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI
PHILOSOPHIA

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BOOK REVIEW

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Publishing Date: April 2021

STUDIA UBB. PHILOSOPHIA, Vol. 66 (2021), 1, pp. 7-20
(RECOMMENDED CITATION)
DOI:10.24193/subbphil.2021.1.01

CRITICAL PHENOMENOLOGY AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

DELIA POPA*, IAAN REYNOLDS**

ABSTRACT. Phenomenological critique attempts to retrieve the lived experience of a human community alienated from its truthful condition and immersed in historical crises brought by processes of objectification and estrangement. This introductory article challenges two methodological assumptions that are largely shared in North American Critical Phenomenology: the definition of phenomenology as a first person approach of experience and the rejection of transcendental eidetics. While reflecting on the importance of otherness and community for phenomenology's critical orientation, we reconsider the importance of eidetics from the standpoint of Husserl's genetic phenomenology, highlighting its historical and contingent character. Contrary to the received view of Husserl's classical phenomenology as an idealistic and rigid undertaking, we show that his genetic phenomenology is interested in the material formation of meaning (*Sinnbildung*), offering resources for a phenomenological approach to a materialist social theory.

***Keywords**: critical phenomenology, critical theory, genetic phenomenology, community, normativity*

Whether exemplified in Kantian criticism, Marxian political economy, or critical theory, philosophical critique has traditionally been driven by the effort to disentangle humankind from the hold of prejudices and disempowering political conditions. In this tradition of thought, clarity can only be obtained through a struggle whose epistemological dimensions are necessarily connected to the social and historical aspects of human experience. In critical social theory, more specifically, emancipatory thought is oriented toward a reflection on the social and epistemological effects of an exploitative social order, whether this order is understood in terms of reification, alienation, oppression, or more recently, colonization. Our aim in this special issue is to reflect on the way in which the phenomenological project is connected to these critical approaches through the ethos driving its research and its continuously revised philosophical methodology.

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Since its earliest stages, phenomenology articulated a radical reflection on the possible uses of the philosophical method in light of a responsibly anchored world-vision.[1] Meditating on "the ultimately constitutive achievements of the heart and the will,"[2] Edmund Husserl thus experimented with various methodological tools – such as eidetic variation, phenomenological reduction and the recourse to intuition (*Anschauung*) – in order to gain clarity of philosophical vision and expression. Through methodological investigation, phenomenological critique attempts to retrieve the lived experience of a human community alienated from its truthful condition and immersed in historical crises brought by complex processes of objectification and estrangement. As phenomenology shares this orientation with the broader critical tradition, reflection on the specifically phenomenological approach to critique is likely to provide insights to contemporary projects in critical social philosophy.

Critical phenomenology has become a growing field of philosophical research. Recent years have witnessed the appearance of a journal dedicated to the topic,[3] an edited volume describing key terms for the field,[4] and several monographs.[5] In its departure from the classical phenomenological tradition, North American critical phenomenology has emphasized various modalities of the intersubjective life of gendered, racialized, and otherwise marginalized subjects. In these contributions, methodological tools such as the first-person account of lived experience and the bracketing of the natural attitude are used to disclose the "quasi-transcendental" structural conditions of the world, while contesting classical phenomenology's presupposed lack of focus on contingency, due to its stress on transcendental eidetics.[6] Yet, is phenomenological eidetics truly incompatible with a critical approach of the experience of social marginalization? Is the first-person account of lived experience the only way to access it?

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1 As Andrea Staiti argues, the phenomenological worldview is about visualizing the world as a whole before theorizing (judging) it. Andrea Staiti, *Husserl's Transcendental Phenomenology: Nature, Spirit, Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 267.

2 "The highest and ultimate responsibility, however, arises in the cognition in the transcendental attitude concerning the ultimately constitutive achievements of the heart and the will." Edmund Husserl, *First Philosophy* (Hua VIII), Lectures 1923/24 and Related Texts from the Manuscripts (1920-1925), transl. S. Luft and T. N. Naberhaus (Dordrecht: Springer, 2019), 194.

3 *Puncta: Journal of Critical Phenomenology*: https://journals.oregondigital.org/index.php/pjcp.

4 Gail Weiss, Ann V. Murphy and Gayle Salamon (eds.), *50 Concepts for a Critical Phenomenology* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2020).

5 See, *e.g.*: Michael Marder, *Phenomena–Critique–Logos: The Project of Critical Phenomenology* (London and New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014); Lisa Guenther, *Solitary Confinement: Social Death and Its Afterlives* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

6 *E.g.*: "But where classical phenomenology remains insufficiently critical is in failing to give an equally rigorous account of how contingent historical and social structures also shape our experience, not just empirically or in a piecemeal fashion, but in what we might call a quasi-transcendental way." Lisa Guenther, "Critical Phenomenology," in Gail Weiss, Ann V. Murphy, and Gayle Salamon (eds.), *50 Concepts for a Critical Phenomenology*, 12.

Regarding the second question, Yasuhiko Murakami has argued that instead of developing a first-person account of lived experience, phenomenology should rather be seen as the study of the lived experience of the "other", in such a way that even when I attempt to describe my own experience, I have to see it as "another". Yet, I can embody myself in the other's life through my fantasy-lived bodily (*Phantasieleib*) experience, re-articulating its sense in close relationship to the situation in which it is lived. Phenomenological investigation is thus ultimately about "an interpersonal experience that opens an unexpected space of mutual comprehension."[7] As for the first question concerning the relationship between transcendental eidetics and critical phenomenology, it is important to remember that "transcendental eidetic inquiry necessarily relies on historically embedded types and concepts,"[8] channeled by processes of meaning-sedimentation that continuously recreate the phenomenal cohesion of the world through hyletic relations of fusion and contrast.[9] Owing to this material character of eidetic analysis, Andreea Smaranda Aldea further argues that "transcendental phenomenology understood as *radical immanent critique* is able to diagnostically and normatively tackle not solely the eidetic, necessary, and ahistorical structures of experience, but also its historical, contingent, conceptual, and discursive ones."[10]

But if phenomenological criticism is about thinking through the crust of already sedimented meanings, interrogating their inner sense and hidden teleology,[11] the normativity at stake in phenomenological description still remains to be questioned.[12] Rather than endorsing the problematic task of directly apprehending and "setting-

[7] Yasuhiko Murakami "La communication avec les patients en état végétatif. Une approche phénoménologique" in Delia Popa, Benoit Kanabus and Fabio Bruschi (eds.) *La portée pratique de la phénoménologie*. *Normativité, critique sociale et psychopathologie*, (Bruxelles: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2014), 247. (Our translation).

[8] Andreea Smaranda Aldea, "Phenomenology as Critique: Teleological–Historical Reflection and Husserl's Transcendental Eidetics," *Husserl Studies*, 32, 2016, 21–46, 23.

[9] "Affective unities must be constituted in order for a world of objects to be constituted in subjectivity at all. But for this to be possible, affective hyletic unities must become and must intertwine with one another homogeneously in essential necessity, initially in the hyletic sphere, that is, again, initially in the living present." Edmund Husserl, *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis. Lectures on Transcendental Logic* (Hua XI), transl. Anthony Steinbock (Dordrecht: Kluwer, [1918-1926] 2001), § 34, 210. See also *Ibid*., Appendix 21, 522.

[10] Andreea Smaranda Aldea, "Comments on Johanna Oksala's *Feminist Experiences*," *Continental Philosophy Review*, 52, 2019, 125-134, 126.

[11] Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (Hua VI), transl. David Carr (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, [1938] 1970), 16-17.

[12] See: Maren Wehrle, " 'There Is a Crack in Everything'. Fragile Normality: Husserl's Account of Normality Re-Visited" *Phainomenon*, 28, 2018: 49-75. See also, Thiemo Breyer and Maxime Doyon (eds.), *Normativity in Perception* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

right… the wrongs perpetrated by failures of justice,"[13] isn't phenomenology's aim to reflect on how such wrongs are even possible and how they modify our understanding of our humanity and of our situation in the world? A rapid leap from description to prescription threatens to cover the deep levels of meaning-formation whose provenance and development the phenomenological method is called to reflexively observe and question.

This methodological caution mainly concerns objectifications of social norms that leave little room for further inquiry and analysis. Alia Al-Saji discusses such an example of objectification in her phenomenological analysis of the temporality of colonial racism when she writes:

> To move on, leaving it [racism] unchallenged in the background, allows its colonial construction of the past to become normative—adherent, generalized, and atmospheric. Critique requires not only the recognition of simultaneous, multiple *durées*, but resistance at the level of the past: reconfiguring its relations to generate intervals of buoyancy, ebb and flow, to make the past hesitate.[14]

As a critique of objectification, phenomenological methodology offers resources for a disruption of sedimented or instituted meanings and practices that hinder access to a shared life-world, where self-exposure, hesitation, and vulnerability shape our human connections and the practice of our freedom. If, as Lewis Gordon puts it in his comments on Sartre's "bad faith," "freedom involves taking responsibility for living in a world with others,"[15] phenomenological critique is a grounding component of such a responsible exercise of freedom. In support of the idea of a "critical freedom," Emmanuel Levinas points out in *Totality and Infinity* that "the knowing whose essence is critique cannot be reduced to objectification; it leads to the Other,"[16] who is understood as the source of an ethical awakening. However, following Levinas, this awakening is only possible if the movement of epistemological thematization is *inverted*, unifying spontaneous freedom and a critique "where freedom is capable of being called in question."[17] Opening itself to an alterity preceding

[13] Gayle Salamon, "What's Critical About Critical Phenomenology?" *Puncta: Journal of Critical Phenomenology*, 1(1), 2018, 8-17, 12.

[14] Alia Al-Saji, "*Durée*" in Gail Weiss, Ann V. Murphy, and Gayle Salamon (eds.), *50 Concepts for Critical Phenomenology*, 103.

[15] Lewis Gordon, "Bad Faith" in Gail Weiss, Ann V. Murphy, and Gayle Salamon (eds.), *50 Concepts for Critical Phenomenology*, 22.

[16] Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An essay on Exteriority*, transl. Alphonso Lingis (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, [1961] 1979), 85.

[17] *Ibid*., 89.

objectification, phenomenological critique thus discloses the abyssal responsibility pervading human relationships.[18]

In this regard, Husserl's genetic phenomenology is an invaluable resource,[19] since this underappreciated methodological direction understands the ethical form of life to result from an "essential formation"[20] of human existence whose historical dimension is necessarily bound to the irreducible contingency of the social world. Here Husserl abandons the static polarity between the intentional act of grasping and its content (*Auffassung-Inhalt*), in order to measure the temporal dynamic and material depth of lived experience in its motivational genesis and its plurally intentional implications.[21] A promising development of this genetic path is found in Marc Richir's phenomenology, for which lived experience presents the double dimension of being blindly absorbed in what it posits on the one hand, and of critically addressing it on the other.[22] From Richir's architectonic perspective, the transcendental dimension of phenomenological investigation depends on a critical viewpoint that observes the temporal journey of the self toward itself (*auto-traversée de soi*) through implicit past meanings and anticipations that intermittently blink and overlap. Interestingly, for Richir, the suspension effected by the phenomenological reduction allows for a new engagement of the self in its experience that frees it from its blind absorption in the values it posits, opening it to a "common presence."[23]

Similarly, in his commentary on Husserl's famous manuscript, *The Origin of Geometry*, Jacques Derrida develops a genetic account of the meaning of phenomenological critique. Following his interpretation, the ultimate legitimation (*Endstiftung*) of phenomenology lies in the operative approach towards an idea whose direct determination is impossible, being only announced in a "concrete *consciousness* which is made *responsible* for it despite the finitude of that consciousness, and insofar as it grounds transcendental historicity and transcendental intersubjectivity."[24] This leads Derrida to locate phenomenological critique in "*lived*

[18] See: Delia Popa "L'imaginaire de la vulnérabilité sociale. De la culpabilité à la responsabilité" in Elodie Boublil (ed.), *Vulnérabilité et empathie* (Paris: Hermann, 2018), 283-309.

[19] See: Christian Ferencz-Flatz and Andrea Staiti (eds.), *Studia Phaenomenologica* XVIII. *The Promise of Genetic Phenomenology* (Bucharest: Zetabooks, 2018).

[20] See: Donn Welton, *The Other Husserl* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 199.

[21] See: Bruce Bégout, *La généalogie de la logique. Husserl, l'antéprédicatif et le catégorial* (Paris: Vrin, 2000).

[22] Marc Richir, *Variations sur le sublime et le soi* (Grenoble: Millon, 2010), 159. We offer here our own interpretation of Marc Richir's phenomenological account of social engagement. See *Ibid.*, 158-161.

[23] *Ibid*., 152.

[24] Jacques Derrida, *Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry, an Introduction*, transl. John P. Leavey Jr. (New York: Stony Book, [1962] 1989), X, 141. Derrida opposes operative and thematic concepts, following Fink's methodological clarifications in "Operative Concepts in Husserl's Phenomenology" in William McKenna and Robert M. Harlan (eds. and transl.), *A priori and the World* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, [1957] 1981), 56-170.

anticipation as a radical responsibility."[25] Through critique, phenomenology can investigate ways in which this lived anticipation is shared and transmitted further, cultivated in specific cultural contexts, and modified over time. But the formation and transformation of cultural traditions also runs parallel to a history of loss and forgetting.

How does an idea that has been discovered once outlive its momentary oblivion? To this question articulated in *The Origin of Geometry*, Husserl's answer is an inquiry back (*Rückfrage*) and a reactivation (*Reaktivierung*) of the evidence of its discovery, which can be thus renewed at different moments of the history of its sense.[26] However, this history is not only made of actualized versions of instituted meaning (*Sinnstiftung*), but also of passive sedimentations entailing material processes of association and leading to new sense-formations and modified attitudes. Therefore, one question we need to raise in this context is about the historical transformation of, and political resistance to, sedimented meanings whose weight is oppressive and exclusive.

Contrary to the received view of Husserl's classical phenomenology as an idealistic and rigid undertaking, his genetic phenomenology is deeply interested in the material formation of meaning (*Sinnbildung*). Critical reflections on this material dimension of phenomenological investigation have been carried out from Tran Duc Thao to Michel Henry,[27] stressing the importance of the hyletic infrastructure of lived experience. While Tran Duc Thao conceives of this infrastructure as a level of experience organized by the dialectical temporality of empirical historicity, Michel Henry attaches it to the self-affection of life in its inescapable singularity. Yet, the proper critical dimension of a materialist phenomenology can only be captured by an approach that takes into account a history whose genesis is transcendental (and not only empirical, as in Thao) and whose element of alterity and worldliness remains impossible to suspend (as opposed to Henry's description of life as pure immanence). Jean-Francois Lyotard's attempt to push Thao's materialist reading of Husserl's phenomenology in the direction of a revolutionary historicism thus returns to the need for phenomenological investigations of the consciousness specific to politically oppressive situations.[28]

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[25] *Ibid.*

[26] See: Edmund Husserl, "The Origin of Geometry," in Hua VI, [1936], 353-378.

[27] See: Michel Henry, *Material Phenomenology*, transl. Scott Davidson (New York: Fordham University Press, [1990] 2008); and Tran Duc Thao, *Phenomenology and Dialectical Materialism,* transl. Daniel J. Herman and Donald V. Morano (Dordrecht: Kluwer, [1951] 1971).

[28] "Faire à la phénoménologie sa part, c'est prendre en compte le rapport dialectique entre la conscience et l'infrastructure économique, et par exemple, respecter l'épreuve qu'existentiellement, les hommes font de leur liberté". Daniel Giovannangeli, "Husserl entre Tran Duc Thao et Derrida" in Jocelyn Benoist and Michel Espagne (eds.), *L'itinéraire de Tran Duc Thao. Phénoménologie et transfert culturel* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2013), 133-146, 139.

Paolo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* connects precisely this dimension of phenomenology to a program of social and political struggle. "In problem-posing education," writes Freire, "people develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality but as a reality in process, in transformation."[29] The cultivation of new forms of perception – a collective historical transformation – underlies Freire's project of education as the practice of freedom. Drawing on Husserl's concept of horizon, Freire reflects on modalities of dismantling objectified meanings in order to reorganize the social world through shared knowledge and action:

> That which had existed objectively but had not been perceived in its deeper implications (if indeed it was perceived at all) begins to 'stand out,' assuming the character of a problem and therefore of challenge. Thus, men and women begin to single out elements from their 'background awareness' and to reflect upon them. These elements are now objects of their consideration, and, as such, objects of their action and cognition.[30]

In Freire's work, the philosophical tools of phenomenological methodology are turned to the concrete task of transforming the consciousness of the oppressed, supporting collective practices of struggle.

However, absent an engagement with historical approaches to critical theory, even a practically oriented conception of phenomenology risks a reliance on interpretive conventions shaped by institutions of the same oppressive social order it strives to resist. This problem is particularly visible when it comes to the reading (or the absence) of Marx and the Marxist tradition in recent contributions to critical phenomenology. While many of these works orient their theoretical perspective toward the improvement of an unjust social order, authors in the Marxist and revolutionary decolonial traditions have often stressed the need to articulate a materialist social theory criticizing, or even suspending, these idealized normative conceptions.[31] The way in which "critical theory" aligns with and relates to a commitment to social improvement is a matter for extensive epistemological, political, and organizational debate. Indeed, it has long been an open question whether social

[29] Paulo Freire, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, transl. Mira Bergman Ramos (London: Continuum, 2005), 83.

[30] *Ibid*.

[31] See, *e.g.*, Frantz Fanon's reflections on the normative force of the colonial order, for example: Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, transl. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, [1961] 2004); and, Max Horkheimer, "Materialism and Metaphysics," in *Critical Theory: Selected Essays*, transl. Matthew O'Connell (New York: Continuum, [1933] 1992).

critique should be normatively grounded at all, rather than focusing on a historical genealogy of discursive formations,[32] or a materialist analysis of social forces.[33] For many authors in these latter traditions, critique must interrogate precisely our attachment to normative ideals themselves, as these are often screens behind which power is allowed to flow unimpeded.

How can we ensure that our meaning of "justice" is not merely a reflection of an exploitative social order, confirmed and sedimented through daily experiences and shared practices? While contemporary approaches to critical theory inspired by the Frankfurt School are often concerned with theoretically interrogating and grounding the normative commitments guiding critique, whether through the rational reconstruction of universal norms or historical learning processes,[34] or through a "metanormative contextualism" that seeks to combat the coloniality of Enlightenment universalism,[35] it is interesting to note that other approaches to the Frankfurt School tradition of critical theory reject the project of normative justification entirely.[36] Far from offering a clear social or political orientation to a prospective critical phenomenology, "critical theory" is itself a house divided. At the same time, the debates over the methods and purposes of critique connect the history of critical theory to the broader traditions of social and political philosophy traditions critical phenomenology also indirectly benefits from.[37]

Relying on the methodological directions sketched in this introduction, we would like to argue in favor of a phenomenological approach to a materialist social theory. For the genetic perspective we have indicated, normative imperatives –

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[32] *E.g.*, Niko Kolodny, "The Ethics of Cryptonormativism: A Defense of Foucault's Evasions," *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 22(5), 1996, 63-84.

[33] *E.g.*, Louis Althusser, *For Marx*, transl. Ben Brewster (New York: Verso, [1965] 2005).

[34] These projects follow from the influential approaches of Jürgen Habermas and Axel Honneth, for example: Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, transl. Frederick G. Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, [1985] 1998); Axel Honneth, *The Critique of Power: Reflective Stages in a Critical Social Theory*, transl. Kenneth Baynes (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, [1985] 1993).

[35] Amy Allen, *The End of Progress: Decolonizing the Normative Foundations of Critical Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016).

[36] See, for example, Christian Lotz, *The Capitalist Schema: Time, Money, and the Culture of Abstraction* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014), xii-xiv; Frieder Vogelmann, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: Idealism in Critical Theory," *Constellations*, Early View: https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8675.12548, 2021; Fabian Freyenhagen, "What is Orthodox Critical Theory?" *World Picture*, 12, 2017; and the authors cited in note 38 below.

[37] We are referring here to the critical line of thought initiated by Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jacques Derrida, Gérard Granel, Tran Duc Thao, Jean-François Lyotard, and others, for whom the discovery of phenomenology entailed a irreducible socio-political dimension. This line of thought has been continued by the Nice school of phenomenology represented by Dominique Janicaud and Françoise Dastur.

even if they are limited to a specific social context – tend to cover over living processes of collective emancipation, in the same way in which for Husserl theoretical substructions obscure the realm of the life-world, veiling its intuitive evidence and disorienting the critical work of clarification.[38] If this tendency toward abstraction is rooted in the actual conditions of the production and reproduction of the social world – a process some have called "real abstraction"[39] – a materially-oriented phenomenology can provide an indispensable set of resources for critical theory, allowing for an in-depth investigation of the lived experience of social forms such as reified individuality and abstract labor, as part of a broader critique of capitalism.[40]

Closer attention to the Kantian tradition seems necessary in this connection, since Kant's critical project underlies both the earliest works in phenomenology and the methodological experiments with Marx in the early 20th century that would eventually become critical theory. More attention to this shared historical background is bound to show that the distance between classical phenomenology and critical theory is less than is often implied, as well as revealing a richer, more nuanced – and indeed, more *critical* – understanding of both traditions.[41] Following Eugen Fink's early lead in situating Husserlian phenomenology in relationship to the Kantian and post-Kantian critical project,[42] we thus seek to revive the phenomenological vision of criticism as a radical interrogation of the philosophical foundations of the

[38] See: Hua VI, §34 (d), 127.

[39] This theoretical conception, which originates in the work of Alfred Sohn-Rethel, is one result of the "New Reading of Marx" (*Die Neue Marx-Lektüre*) undertaken by some students of the Frankfurt School in the 1960s, and carried on in works conceiving critical theory as a critique of political economy. See: Alfred Sohn-Rethel, *Intellectual and Manual Labor: A Critique of Epistemology* (London: Macmillan, 1978); Riccardo Bellofiore and Tommaso Redolfi Riva, "The *Neue Marx-Lektüre*: Putting the Critique of Political Economy Back Into the Critique of Society," *Radical Philosophy*, 189, 2015, 24-36. For contemporary work on critical theory as a critique of political economy, see: Werner Bonefeld, *Critical Theory and the Critique of Political Economy: On Subversion and Negative Reason* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014); Chris O'Kane, "The Critique of Real Abstraction: From the Critical Theory of Society to the Critique of Political Economy and Back Again," in Antonio Oliva (ed.), *Marx and Contemporary Critical Theory* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 265-287.

[40] For one example of a project moving in this direction, see: Anita Chari, *A Political Economy of the Senses: Neoliberalism, Reification, Critique* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), as well as the works by Freire and Tran Duc Thao above.

[41] See: Lucien Goldmann, *Lukács and Heidegger: Towards a New Philosophy*, transl. William Q. Boelhower (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, [1973] 1977).

[42] Eugen Fink, "The Phenomenological Philosophy of Edmund Husserl and Contemporary Criticism," in R. Elveton (ed.), *The Phenomenology of Husserl. Selected Critical and Contemporary Readings*, transl. Roy Elveton (Seattle: Noesis Press, [1933] 2000), 70-139. In his own work, Fink goes further, radicalizing the Husserlian method from an analysis of the individual toward an analysis of the phenomenal field and from mere description toward speculation. See: Ovidiu Stanciu, "La radicalisation de la phénoménologie chez Eugen Fink" in *Phänomenologische Forschungen* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2020), 27-48.

present time, of the different meanings of ongoing structural crises, and of the new possibilities these crises reveal.

In Fink's view, Husserl's transcendental phenomenology generated a question that could not have emerged within Kantian transcendentalism, namely the question about the genesis of the world. With its critical delimitation of philosophy's reach to the objects of possible experience, Kantian philosophy already understood the world itself as a problem. However, this limitation also obstructed a view encompassing the world's genesis. According to Fink, Husserl found a way to go beyond the Kantian methodological limitation through the multiple phenomenological reductions leading ultimately to the life-world (*Lebenswelt*) understood as a sub-soil for a "we-subjectivity."[43] When the question of the *origin* of the world arises as a transcendental problem, it sheds new light on the freedom characterizing transcendental subjectivity,[44] and on the phenomenological community in which this freedom is both discovered and cultivated.[45]

The question made possible through the unfolding of the Husserlian transcendental project concerns not only the world as it can be currently experienced and normatively evaluated, but also the ongoing genesis of its meaning for us, within a system of motivations that is intersubjectively built, shared, and criticized. It remains to be seen what this genetic viewpoint can reveal of the invisible aspects of our social and political environment, whether it might yet free possibilities of thought and action capable of combating exploitation at its deepest levels, and in so doing, reorienting human life itself. If there is a phenomenologically embodied mode of community that grounds all social interactions, our presence and absence to each other is probably decisive for cultivating new modes of mutual attention and resistance that liberate the world in its material genesis, rather than merely reproducing the patterns of its exhaustion.

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[43] "Constantly functioning in wakeful life, we also function together, in the manifold ways of considering, together, objects pregiven to us in common, thinking together, valuing, planning, acting together. Here we find also that particular thematic alteration in which the we-subjectivity, somehow constantly functioning, becomes a thematic object, whereby the acts through which it functions also become thematic, though always with a residuum which remains unthematic—remains, so to speak, anonymous—namely, the reflections which are functioning in connection with this theme." Hua VI, 109.

[44] Eugen Fink, *The Sixth Cartesian Meditation: The Idea of a Transcendental Theory of Method with Textual Annotations by Edmund Husserl*, transl. Ronald Bruzina (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, [1932] 1995), 140-149.

[45] Marc Richir, "Community, Society and History in the later Merleau-Ponty" in Bernard Flym, Wayne T. Froman and Robert Vallier (eds.), *Merleau-Ponty and the Possibilities of Philosophy* (New York: SUNY Press, 2009), 68.

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Bringing together scholars from a variety of geographical contexts and phenomenological orientations, this special issue aims to open conversations on the social and political aspects of phenomenological critique, in relationship to the historical background in which it is articulated, and the ethical responsibility it requires. From this perspective, **Stella Gaon's** "Phenomenology, Deconstruction, and Critique: A Derridean Perspective," engages with recent literature in critical phenomenology, putting these discussions into contact with the Kantian conception of critique, and the treatment of this latter project in the work of Jacques Derrida. Through an investigation of the "criticality" of phenomenology, Gaon shows that Derrida's deconstructive project has particular importance for a critique of normative commitments. A similar historical sensitivity is at work in **Christian Ferencz-Flatz**'s "Naivität als Kritik," in which affinities and tensions between Theodor W. Adorno's and Edmund Husserl's respective critical projects are uncovered through a reading of the methodological role of naivety in their philosophical systems. Identifying a meta-critical element in both Adorno's critical theory and Husserl's work, Ferencz-Flatz brings attention to a historical connection between early projects of critical theory and phenomenology. **Yasuhiko Murakami**'s, "The Rhythm of Reorganizing the World. Maldiney and the Theory of Crisis" develops a phenomenological account of existential crises and the rhythms of moving through them. This paper's attempt to ground Henri Maldiney's psychopathological and aesthetic phenomenology in Kant's third Critique, as well as its careful phenomenological attention to crisis – a topic with increasing relevance in critical theory – interestingly connects critical phenomenology to its clinical applications. In her "'Phenomenological Variation and Intercultural Transformation: Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology and Abu-Lughod's Ethnography in Dialogue," **Laura McMahon** develops an account of intercultural understanding, drawing on Merleau-Ponty's reflections on science, as well as Abu-Lughod's ethnographic investigations of Bedouin communities. Showing a path between relativism and universalism in debates involving cultural difference, McMahon's paper questions prevalent social and political norms through the phenomenological application of imaginative variation. In "The Mending of a Fractured Self: On the Self as a Produced and Sustained Entity," **Sterling Hall** considers the persistence of subjectivity amid traumatic fractures as a problem fitting for political critique in its own right. Drawing on Levinas and his theory of subjective closure, Hall considers the moments of rupture characterized by the colonial situation as problems disclosing the deeper dynamics of subjectivity at work in the relationship to the other.

We would like to thank all our contributors for their inspiring reflections and for their collaborative work on this special issue. We address special thanks to Ion Copoeru and to the editorial team of *Studia UBB. Philosophia* for their support in the process of preparing this dossier. Last but not least, we want to thank our readers for their interest in the papers we have gathered here and in the phenomenological problems they debate.

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STUDIA UBB. PHILOSOPHIA, Vol. 66 (2021), 1, pp. 21-46
(RECOMMENDED CITATION)
DOI:10.24193/subbphil.2021.1.02

PHENOMENOLOGY, DECONSTRUCTION, AND CRITIQUE: A DERRIDEAN PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT. Critical phenomenology is gaining currency as a progressive philosophy of emancipation, but there is no consensus on what its "criticality" entails. From a Derridean perspective, critique can be said to involve radical self-interrogation; a philosophy that questions its own conditions of possibility or grounds is one that opens itself to its auto-deconstruction. Deconstruction produces undecidability, however, which means that the philosophy in question can no longer account for its political claims or its normative force. This is the predicament in which critical phenomenology, like any other critical theory, will find itself when it takes its critical injunction to heart.

Keywords: *Critical theory, Derrida, Gödel, Kant, politics, post-phenomenology, undecidability*

Introduction

One might well ask, as Gayle Salamon does in the inaugural issue of *Puncta*, "What's Critical about Critical Phenomenology?"[1] The question obviously echoes one that Nancy Fraser had asked many years earlier, namely, "What's Critical about Critical Theory?"[2] The answer, however, will depend on just what one means by the terms "criticality" and "critique." In Fraser's view, for example, a "critical theory," unlike an "uncritical" one, is avowedly partisan; it satisfies Marx's criterion of contributing to the "self-clarification of the struggles and wishes of the age." As Fraser puts it, "A critical social theory frames its research program and its conceptual

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1 Gayle Salamon, "What's Critical about Critical Phenomenology?" *Puncta: Journal of Critical Phenomenology*, 1(1), 2018, 8.

2 Nancy Fraser, "What's Critical about Critical Theory? The Case of Habermas and Gender," *New German Critique*, 35, 1985, 97.

framework with an eye to the aims and activities of those oppositional social movements with which it has a partisan though not uncritical identification."[3] This definition underlies Fraser's inquiry into the relationship between Jürgen Habermas's critical theory of society and the contemporary women's movement, and it allows her to demonstrate how and where his theory falls short.

If Fraser's definition is viable, then questions about the relationship between a philosophical description of the nature of experience and various oppositional social movements can be asked with respect to phenomenology as well. Salamon mobilizes this particular perspective herself, for instance, when she notes that recent developments in so-called "critical phenomenology" investigate its relation to issues of queerness, feminism, traumatic violence, and colonialism.[4] But the issue is not nearly so straightforward. First, how is one to decide between oppositional social movements that are emancipatory and progressive, and those that are regressive or reactionary? White supremacist and anti-immigration groups also embody contemporary struggles. But it is highly unlikely that anyone working in the areas of critical theory or critical phenomenology will encourage the inclusion of these oppositional social movements in their research programs in the way that Fraser proposes. Second, even if a criterion for distinguishing between progressive and regressive social movements could be delineated clearly, how would one impose a limit on the number and variety of social or political issues that must be addressed before a theory can qualify as "critical"? By what additional criterion, in turn, would this limit be set?

To be sure, Fraser undertakes a persuasive, immanent critique of Habermas's theory of communicative action to show that it is blind to its gendered subtext.[5] This is evidenced by the way in which his theory falsely bifurcates the distinctions between the public and private spheres, and between paid and unpaid labour, among others. The theory thereby obscures rather than illuminates "the situation and the prospects of the feminist movement."[6] Of course, Habermas's social-theoretical framework also obscures rather than illuminates many other struggles

[3] Ibid.

[4] Salamon, "What's Critical about Critical Phenomenology?" 15. This is not the only definition of "criticality" which she and others provide. I address the different understandings of the term "critical" in the literature on "critical phenomenology" below.

[5] The fact that contemporary forms of gender identification such as trans, gender queer, non-binary, and so on were not commonly invoked or understood by critical theorists writing in 1985 does not necessarily limit the power of Fraser's analysis. Her strictly binary understanding of gender could (arguably) be extended or modified to address other oppositional struggles. But this is not decisive with respect to the argument I develop here.

[6] Fraser, "What's Critical about Critical Theory?" 97.

as well, including those related to ecological crises, violence against animals, queer and trans issues, Indigenous rights, race relations, and so on. If these particular movements were all encompassed by the theory, would it then be definitively "critical"? Would a social theoretical framework have to include every issue ever raised by every marginalized group before it would qualify as sufficiently partisan? Could it do so, even in principle? Or, would it only have to support some of these issues, in identification with only some of these groups? How would this be determined?

These questions suggest there is a problem, but it does not lie with Fraser's immanent critique of the theory of communicative action. On the contrary, her analysis is careful, perspicacious, and important, particularly given that it was published during the height of Habermas's influence in the broad field of social and political thought. The problem, rather, stems from the definition of "criticality" itself, which is too vague to be of use, notwithstanding the effectiveness of the article's title or the compelling reference to Marx which appears to support it. Indeed, when the meaning of "critique" has been refined, as I undertake to do below, it becomes evident that Fraser does not show that Habermas's theory of society is insufficiently critical. She shows that it is not empirically adequate as a description of social reality with respect to the particular issue of "male dominance and female subordination."[7] As a result of this inadequacy, Habermas's descriptive framework arguably reinforces certain hegemonic, asymmetrical, and unequal social relations between women and men, rather than egalitarian ones, notwithstanding the theory's own normative claims. But this demonstrable *political* failing does not make it any less *critical*.

As far as its criticality is concerned, rather, the limitation of Habermas's theory of communicative action (and the theory of communicative ethics associated with it) concerns his attempt to legitimize a principle of normative judgement – a standard of critique in the narrow, ethical-political sense – on the basis of his inquiry into its philosophical grounds (a "critique" in the broader, philosophical sense). For, like any other theory that involves a philosophical inquiry into the conditions of possibility for judgement, whether theoretical, practical (as in this case), or reflective, the theory will be vulnerable to deconstruction. That is to say, the theory will be open to a quasi-critical interrogation of its own claim to critical responsibility. This means, essentially, that a theory can be critical or it can be prescriptive, but it cannot simultaneously be both. Consequently, the relationship between philosophy and politics must be differently construed. A critical theory or

[7] Ibid.

critical phenomenology *can* intervene politically, I will venture, not because it provides a truer or better description, but on the contrary, to the extent that it undoes or disrupts the assumptions and norms that constitute our descriptions of the social order at any given time or place. This disruption, I conclude, is the opening in which political struggle takes place.

Undecidability or *différance*

The problematic concerning "criticality" that I outline above can be spelled out as follows. On one hand, the demand for the foundational conditions of possibility (the imperative associated with the principle of reason), is the philosophical demand itself. As Derrida elaborates,

> To respond to the call of the principle of reason is to "render reason," to explain effects through their causes, rationally; it is also to ground, to justify, to account for on the basis of principles or roots. Keeping in mind that Leibnizian moment whose originality should not be underestimated, the response to the call of the principle of reason is thus a response to the Aristotelian requirements, those of metaphysics, of primary philosophy, of the search for "roots," "principles," and "causes." At this point, scientific and technoscientific requirements lead back to a common origin. And one of the most insistent questions in Heidegger's meditation is indeed that of the long "incubation" time that separated this origin from the emergence of the principle of reason in the seventeenth century. Not only does that principle constitute the verbal formulation of a requirement present since the dawn of Western science and philosophy, it provides the impetus for a new era of purportedly "modern" reason, metaphysics and technoscience.[8]

This is why Kant undertook the critique of pure reason, why Habermas developed the theory of communicative reason, and why Husserl, for his part, insisted that he could not call himself a "philosopher" unless he was prepared to take on the general task "of the critique of logical and practical reason, [as well as] of axiological reason in general."[9] Husserl's project, as is well known, involved the

[8] Jacques Derrida, "The Principle of Reason: The University in the Eyes of Its Pupils," transl. Catherine Porter and Edward P. Morris, *diacritics* 13(3), 1983, 8.

[9] Edmund Husserl, diary entry, September 25, 1906, cited in the "Introduction" to *Die Idee der Phänomenologie. Fünf Vorlesungen*, ed. W. Biemel (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950), vii, quoted and translated by Michael Marder in *Phenomena–Critique–Logos: The Project of Critical Phenomenology* (London and New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 15.

attempt to identify the subjective conditions of possibility for experience. His intent was to produce knowledge that can be qualified as apodictic – "both necessary and certain"[10] – and thereby to overcome the "crisis of the sciences" by sending logos back to "the things themselves."[11] Husserl's later turn to the question of genesis further reflects his recognition of the same requirement. As Michael Marder reminds us, Husserl mobilizes the arguments of Aristotle and Kant to justify phenomenology as "*prima philosophia*," insofar as it "reunites under one roof all questions of possibility."[12] But this is not surprising, given that the need to respond to the demand for grounds is the philosophical imperative as such.

On the other hand, however, when this call is answered rigorously in any particular case, without compromise, one finds that "roots, principles, and causes" cannot be determined without an ideological move that closes or halts the critical investigation. This is because, as deconstruction shows, the difference between logic and rhetoric is strictly undecidable. The rhetorical, figurative, or literary dimensions of language cannot be finally separated from its logical and grammatical functions, and this undecidability must be covered over ideologically. In reading after deconstructive reading, the fundamental logical oppositions through which various philosophical arguments are constructed are shown to come undone. This outcome is evident throughout Derrida's oeuvre, whether one considers his deconstruction of the logical distinctions between law and violence in Walter Benjamin texts, or between politics and friendship in those of Carl Schmitt, or whether one turns to Derrida's consideration of the fraught relation between ethics and ontology in his reading of Levinas, or of the difference between expression and indication in his reading of Husserl's analysis of the sign.[13] In these and countless other cases, we find that the logical condition of possibility for the fundamental *difference* on which the argument rests is a spatial and temporal "movement," an irreducible spacing and deferral within meaning as it were, which Derrida calls *différance*.

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[10] Duane Davis, "The Phenomenological Method," in Gail Weiss, Ann Murphy, and Gayle Salamon (eds.), *50 Concepts for a Critical Phenomenology* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2020), 6.

[11] Marder, *Phenomena–Critique–Logos*, 24.

[12] Ibid., 19.

[13] The works by Derrida to which I refer are, respectively, "Force of Law: The 'Mystical Foundation of Authority,'" in Drucilla Cornell, Michel Rosenfeld, and David Gray Carlson (eds.), *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice* (New York and London: Routledge, 1992), 3–67; "The Politics of Friendship," transl. Gabriel Motzkin, *The Journal of Philosophy* 85(11), 1988, 632–644; "Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas," in *Writing and Difference*, transl. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978); and *Voice and Phenomenon: Introduction to the Problem of the Sign in Husserl's Phenomenology*, transl. Leonard Lawlor (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2011). The list of possible examples is immense.

This notorious neologism, *différance*, expresses the Gödelian idea of "undecidability" to which I have just alluded. Kurt Gödel, it will be recalled, demonstrated in 1931 that for any formal axiomatic mathematical system (or calculus) whose consistency is given, it is possible to derive a mathematical proposition that belongs to the calculus, but which cannot be determined as either true or false on its basis. This is referred to as the "undecidability" theorem, because it states that "if the calculus is consistent, neither G nor ~G [not G] is formally derivable from the axioms of arithmetic."[14] Gödel then showed that although formula G is literally "undecidable" in formal terms, it *is* a true arithmetical statement.[15] This second theorem formulates the condition of consistency itself *as* a mathematical proposition, and states that the proposition can be proven as both true *and* false within any formal axiomatic system. Thus Gödel showed (through a recursive move) that one of the key conditions for any calculus, namely, its internal consistency as reflected in its capacity to exclude contradictions, cannot be established mathematically. In this sense, the second theorem also demonstrates the structural incompleteness of every calculus. Together these theorems show why the fundamental conditions of possibility *for* formal mathematical systematization, namely consistency and completeness, must necessarily escape the possibility *of* arithmetical proof (that is, they are logically impossible), notwithstanding that they nonetheless must be assumed for the calculus in question.

Derrida's readings demonstrate that the Gödelian insight applies to philosophical systems too. An unremitting investigation into a philosophy's own conditions of possibility, namely, the demand for decidable, logical grounds, will result in the inevitable discovery of its conditions of *im*possibility; that is, it will reveal the undecidability (and, hence, the inconsistency and incompleteness) on which the philosophy is based. *Différance* is thus closely related to Gödel's formula G because, like the Gödelian theorems, it discloses what is neither an intrinsic feature of, nor external to, the closed philosophical system. *Différance* is what is undecidable by the system or claim, and yet logically inseparable from it.

Once revealed, *différance* thus undoes (or deconstructs) the logical *differences* on which the system depends. And, insofar as deconstruction exposes the irreducibly undecidable dimensions of logical, philosophical thought, it reveals that a certain dogmatic quality must attend the determination of any principled judgement, including an ethical one. This dogmatism will have to be covered over if a principle of judgement is to stand. In other words, whenever principles or causes are determined for particular forms of judgement, they will (have to) have been

[14] Ernest Nagel and James R. Newman, *Gödel's Proof* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959), 86.
[15] Ibid., 85, 86.

established illegitimately. As a result, the *critical* demand for grounds, the very imperative by virtue of which normative legitimacy is established, will not have been fulfilled.

The Kantian paradigm: Critique and/or critique

This paradox, whereby the conditions of possibility for criticality are necessary and yet impossible due to the ineradicability of logical undecidability, comes into its sharpest relief in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. Kant's critical project provides not only a paradigmatic example of the undecidability that conditions the possibility of systematic knowledge in general. Beyond this, Kant designed the original blueprint for the logical structure and reach of ethical-political "critique" in particular. Thus, his critical architectonic is the quintessential test case regarding the question of how critical judgement is possible.

Specifically, Kant set out to establish the a priori principles underlying all the interests of human reason. These interests were embodied in three critical questions: what may one know (the conditions of theoretical reason); what ought one to do (the conditions of practical reason); and for what may one hope (the conditions of reflective, teleological judgement).[16] His intention was to produce a doctrinal account of the conditions of possibility for knowledge in general, based on his principled answer to each question. And, indeed, his critical project (the "critique of pure reason" as a whole) culminates in a set of principles that are said to determine the legitimacy – the scope and limitations – of each of the forms of knowledge under investigation. Taken together, these would then constitute an architectonic plan of the transcendental conditions for knowledge in general. From this perspective, in other words, critique is none other than the radical interrogation of philosophical grounds or conditions; it entails the interrogation of the claim to "science" in the philosophical sense of systematicity. The Kantian undertaking was aimed, accordingly, at producing a "scientific" account of reason, an epistemological doctrine of knowledge in all its essential forms, in order to fulfill the modern project of replacing ideology, dogma, and opinion with enlightenment.

Now, this "critical" project writ large is what I will call "Critique" in the meta-sense; it is designated by a capital "C." It is what Habermas was up to when he undertook his analysis of communicative action, an analysis that is similarly intended as a part of a systematic account of how different forms of rationality are possible. This project bears directly on "critical theory" in the narrow, political

[16] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, transl. Norman Kemp Smith (London: MacMillan, 1929), 635.

sense of the term, because a Critical inquiry into the conditions of practical reason, in particular, is needed to establish a standard of ethical-political critique. A standard of judgement is the basis for "critique" in Fraser's sense (lower case "c"); it allows one to *criticize*, that is, to decide what one ought and ought not to do. Put briefly, a Critique establishes the conditions of possibility for (ethical-political) critique (for *krinein*) by determining its governing principle. Thus, just as Kant's Critique of pure reason is said to authorize the principle of the moral law in terms of "freedom" or "autonomy," so Habermas's theory of communicative action is intended to authorize the moral principles of solidarity and dialogical reciprocity. Such normative principles, in turn, can then be mobilized by a particular critical theory (such as one based on feminism or anti-racism, for example) which is aimed at the eradication of a particular form of injustice. This is how a critical theory, as such, is typically thought to intervene.

From a structural or logical point of view, then, the criterion that is specified is not what matters. Nor, for that matter, does it matter which philosophical approach one adopts for the broader Critique. What matters is their logical relationship. Unless a particular standard of moral judgement is justified by its connection to a larger conceptual framework (whether epistemological, ontological, phenomenological, or pragmatic, for example), one cannot lay claim to a legitimate, ethical-political critique. For, in this case, one will not have escaped the possibility that one's values are merely relative. For the modern era, in other words, what is at issue as far as criticality is concerned is not any particular moral value or approach, but rather the structural connection (designed by Kant) between a philosophical justification in general (a consistent, systematic Critique), and a logical principle of normative judgement in particular (the moral lever for critique).

When deconstruction is brought to bear on the relationship between "Critique" and "critique" within the Kantian architectonic, therefore, it will have significant implications for any theory that purports to be "critical," including those associated with the burgeoning field of critical phenomenology. For deconstruction shows that the principle of moral action that is needed to qualify a *critical* conception of reason cannot be transcendentally established, because the distinction between Critique and critique cannot be logically sustained. Consequently, the system is neither consistent nor complete.[17]

As I elaborate below with respect to phenomenology, this structural relationship between Critique and critique holds regardless of the partisanship of the conceptual framework; the problematic thus displaces Fraser's definition of

[17] The discussion of Kant here and in what follows is the schematic of an argument I have elaborated at length elsewhere. For the full account see, *The Lucid Vigil: Deconstruction, Desire and the Politics of Critique* (New York and London: Routledge, 2019), esp. 59-69, 70-81.

"critique." It is important to see, therefore, how the system comes undone. Specifically, this outcome becomes evident when one attends to three significant moments of argumentative slippage that occur at various levels of Kant's analysis. The first of these concerns the difference between a "doctrine" of knowledge and its propaedeutic (or preparatory) "Critique."[18] The doctrine refers to "metaphysics" or "pure philosophy," according to Kant. It is said to encompass "everything that can ever be known a priori as well as the exposition of that which constitutes a system of the pure philosophical modes of knowledge of this type."[19] This is the "idea of science," or "transcendental philosophy."[20] The purpose of the Critical project as a whole, accordingly, is to lay down an architectonic plan *for* that "idea of science" by systematically establishing its a priori conditions of possibility.[21] "As such," Kant insists, "it should be called a [C]ritique, not a doctrine, of pure reason."[22]

Yet, despite the fact that these two terms are not identical, their meanings are effectively collapsed. On one hand, the metaphysical doctrine is said to be "inclusive of criticism" and thus all-encompassing.[23] On the other hand, Kant says that, together with metaphysics, it is "especially that criticism" of reason (the "introduction or propaedeutic to metaphysics") which "alone properly constitutes what may be entitled philosophy."[24] Moreover, he also specifies that the intended result of the Critical investigation – the architectonic plan for the scientific doctrine – is itself "the *doctrine* of the scientific in our knowledge," precisely because *systematic* unity is what "first raises ordinary knowledge to the rank of science."[25] It would thus appear that the propaedeutic Critique itself, when complete, constitutes a "scientific doctrine" of pure philosophy, insofar as it provides a systematic, unified plan of knowledge as a whole, which (when understood as pure philosophy) includes its propaedeutic Critique. Critique is, thus, impossibly, the philosophical doctrine of a doctrine of philosophy that includes it.

The slippage between the terms "doctrine" and "Critique" serves an important purpose, because Kant actually needs to have it both ways. On one hand, the Critique (of pure reason) has to be identified with the doctrine (of philosophy) as a whole because, as the transcendental investigation into the conditions of possibility

[18] I use the upper case throughout to distinguish this meta-level of logical analysis from an ethical-political critique, as per the previous explanation.
[19] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 659.
[20] Ibid., 60.
[21] Ibid., 20.
[22] Ibid., 58-59.
[23] Ibid., 659.
[24] Ibid., 665.
[25] Ibid., 653, emphasis added.

of knowledge, it is what establishes the *scientific* quality of each of reason's interests, including, most importantly, the preeminent, moral interest of pure practical reason.[26] Moral knowledge is verified scientifically by virtue of its qualification for placement within the Critical (doctrinal) framework. Within this framework the critical form of reason that Kant calls "practical" is governed by a distinct logical principle. On the other hand, the Critique also has to be distinguished from the doctrine, because moral (practical) knowledge can only be established as critical in the narrow, ethical-political sense insofar as reason is explained in moral rather than in strictly logical terms. For this purpose, a normative rather than an epistemological mode of Critical inquiry is required.

The second moment of equivocation reflects this paradox. The Critical inquiry can be distinguished from the encompassing doctrine of pure philosophy, it turns out, but only insofar as its sense slides from the broad epistemological into the narrower, normative meaning of "critique." This becomes clear when we examine Kant's investigation into the conditions of practical reason in particular. Here the intent is to provide the ground for moral knowledge in the form of a logical principle that governs this specific form of judgement. On Kant's view, moral knowledge is governed by the law of "freedom"; this moral principle is contrasted to the theoretical laws of nature and also (subsequently) to the subjective principle of reflective (or axiological) judgement. But, unlike his determination of the laws of nature, Kant's Critical evidence for our knowledge of the law of freedom rests on an ungrounded moral claim rather than on a logically definitive one. Specifically, his answer to the question of how moral knowledge is possible is essentially that the moral law of freedom *is*, itself, a subjective motive; it is a "drive" that takes the form of a "purely nonsensuous interest" in "obedience to the law."[27]

This moral "feeling" of respect for the moral law – which is what "autonomy" as self-legislation in its positive sense means – is the only feeling "we can know completely a priori and the necessity of which we can discern."[28] It is therefore the real ground of practical reason on Kant's account. Hence, as I have put it elsewhere,

[26] For Kant's claims about the superiority of practical reason among reason's occupations, see the *Critique of Pure Reason*, esp. 653-658, and *Critique of Practical Reason*, third edition, transl. Lewis White Beck (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1993), 3, 128.

[27] Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 83.

[28] Ibid., 77

> the "apodictic law of practical reason" through which the reality of freedom is "proved" turns out to be not the principle of freedom as such, not the moral law which expresses it, and not even the mere consciousness of the moral law. What alone is "apodictic," rather, is the specific experience of the "sublime" feeling of "respect" for the law.[29]

What is most important, then, is that the a priori law of freedom can only be established as a logical principle insofar as the subject is restricted, dogmatically, to its capacity to respond to the moral law. What characterizes the rational subject as such, in other words, is our responsibility (our response-ability) to the moral law. Respect is simply given as the "mysterious and wonderful, but frequent, regard which human judgement *does have* for the moral law."[30] It is because of what is sublime about *us*, in short, that the moral good can be logically established as such.

On one hand, it thus emerges, the moral feeling of respect is needed to establish the logical principle of freedom; indeed, as far as Kant is concerned, respect for the law "is morality itself."[31] We cannot establish the principle of moral knowledge as freedom, in other words, unless we are already able to determine the difference between what we ought and ought not to do, and it is only our *feeling* of respect for, our subjective response to, the law of morality that makes this possible. To this extent, criticality in its narrow, moral sense, that is, the possibility of a judgement based on an ethical principle, precedes the epistemological Critique in the case of practical reason, and provides *its* ground.

On the other hand, however, it nonetheless remains that Critique is also the epistemological condition for "critique." For, by virtue of a Critical inquiry into the conditions of possibility for practical reason, the principle of moral knowledge can be placed among the others within the architectonic of pure philosophy, and thereby legitimated scientifically. Reason in its pure practicality qualifies for such inclusion, in other words, because its a priori principle has actually been established; this principle is specified by the Critical inquiry as "freedom," that is, as autonomy in its positive sense, as we have seen. Thus, just as the moral feeling of respect grounds the possibility of moral knowledge, so the Critique of moral knowledge grounds the principle of respect for the law, a principle that takes the form of freedom, as expressed in the categorical imperative.

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[29] Gaon, *The Lucid Vigil*, 77. The internal quotations are from Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 3, 8.
[30] Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 85n, emphasis added.
[31] Ibid., 79.

Importantly, this second equivocation – whereby the Critique is essentially collapsed into the narrowly critical form of knowledge (i.e., into reason in its pure practicality) – makes it possible to assert that the Critique and the doctrine are *not* the same. For in this case the Critique establishes reason as normative (as critical), not as scientific. And, once again, the slippage serves an important argumentative end. It allows Kant to argue that, despite the fact that the Critique was initially aimed at systematizing what is scientific in our knowledge, including the knowledge of morality, Critique can also be called in, ultimately, to provide the normative legitimation of reason in its scientificity. In particular, Kant writes towards the end of the *Critique of Pure Reason* that, in addition to the "scholastic concept of a system of knowledge which is sought solely in its character as a science," there is also "another concept of philosophy"; it is "the science of the relation of all knowledge to the essential ends of human reason (*teleologia rationis humanae*)."[32] In other words, the conception of philosophy with which Kant is most concerned does not, finally, have to do with its character as science, but rather with its relation to our ultimate moral vocation as human beings. This telos is reflected only in the question of practical reason, namely, "what ought I to do?" It is precisely because a Critique differs from a doctrine of pure philosophy that this ultimate conception of philosophy can prevail.

Thus a third moment of logical undecidability actually underwrites the other two: by virtue of the way in which the Critique becomes critical, reason can be said to provide the moral justification for the very doctrine of philosophy that was supposed to provide moral knowledge with *its* scientific legitimacy. While the identity of the doctrine and the Critique establishes reason's scientificity, so to speak, their difference is necessary to establish reason's normativity.

The argument is therefore bought at the cost of its logical consistency. For it is only when "critique" is mobilized in both senses at once that Kant actually instantiates the ethical-political ideal of *critical* reason; that is, an ideal of reason that is simultaneously scientifically legitimate *and* practically normative. This simultaneity is the logical condition of possibility for such an ideal. When they are taken together, these distinctions entail a play on the term "Critique," whereby it oscillates between the meaning of "doctrine" and that of (lower case) "critique." This equivocation is not immediately apparent as long as only one of the distinctions is being put to work at a time. But when they are mobilized simultaneously, it emerges that "Critique" is *both-neither* "doctrine" *and-nor* "critique."

[32] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 657, 658.

And this means that what is strictly inside the critical system, and what constitutes the system itself, is literally undecidable in the Gödelian sense. In play at the heart of the Kantian architectonic, one finds, is what Derrida calls *différance*: an undecidable movement between, in this case, the inside and the outside of the conceptual system. For here "Critique" signifies not only a unified "doctrine" of pure philosophy, or the frame of the Kantian architectonic, but also its "inside"; as "critique," Critique also indicates the standard for moral legitimacy in particular. A *différantial* movement that one can designate as "C/critique," therefore, seems to be the logical condition of possibility for the fixed *difference* between "doctrine" and "critique." And this means, in turn, that the system cannot be complete.

What's critical? ... redux

If the Kantian problematic is generalizable, I have suggested, it is because what matters is not the specific principle of moral (or critical) judgement that Kant finds out. Rather, it is the logical structure by virtue of which what is normatively "critical" can be established at all. Like any theory that attempts to determine the conditions of possibility for judgement in general, a critical theory that determines the grounds for ethical-political judgement in particular will be vulnerable to deconstruction, because (ironically) it will be insufficiently Critical. This does not mean the theory fails to illuminate a particular political struggle (i.e., that it is not sufficiently partisan or not empirically adequate), but rather that it fails to acknowledge its own implication in political and social forces (i.e., that it is already partisan, in ways that are not avowed).

Specifically, I have argued that a philosophical doctrine or social-theoretical framework that provides a logical criterion for a moral decision (for *krinein*) – which is what a critical political theory always needs – will do so at the cost of obscuring its own constitutive undecidability. In this case, the theory will have betrayed the classic philosophical imperative, because it will have covered over the theory's own ungrounded ground – namely, the undecidable *difference* between Critique and critique – on which the determination of what is progressive and emancipatory, as contrasted to what is regressive or oppressive, depends. If, as deconstruction persuasively shows, the rhetorical, ideological, or dogmatic dimensions of Critical inquiry are irreducible, then we cannot get to the principle, fundament, or root. Consequently, a logically-determined ethical norm, unsullied

by any unavowed ethical, political, or social interests, is strictly impossible.[33] This is the result of the recursive (Gödelian) move, whereby the conditions of possibility of the Critical inquiry itself are subjected to interrogation. When a theory is made hyperbolically "critical" in this way, by being turned back upon itself, it deconstructs itself.

If the foregoing discussion is correct, it will have implications for a wide assortment of critical theories, not just those based on Kantian ethics. For, I have argued, no critical theory can do without a determinable standard of critique, and such a standard must be grounded (the reason for it must be rendered) through a Critical analysis of its conditions of possibility, regardless of the political agenda it supports. On the view that I have presented here, a critical theory does not merely identify with a given set of purportedly laudable political movements. It offers a philosophical account of why those movements are laudatory, emancipatory, or progressive to begin with. It specifies and justifies, in order to mobilize, a particular criterion of ethical-political critique. Now, this understanding of the structural requirements of "critique," which is both gained from and problematized by a deconstructive reading of Kant, is enormously useful. First, it makes it possible to sort through the many ways in which "criticality" is defined in current phenomenological research. And, second, it allows us to understand what is "critical" about phenomenology and what is not. In other words, the deconstruction of the Kantian paradigm allows us to recast the political limitations and possibilities of "criticality" in the wake of its undecidability.

Before I outline those conclusions, however, it is necessary to review some of the recent developments in critical phenomenology to illustrate the first point. For, just as in critical theory more broadly, so too in phenomenology; scholars working in this field are questioning some of its basic tenets with a view to making phenomenology more relevant with respect to the social and political struggles of the times. The question is, however, to what specific end?

[33] Levinas's phenomenological account of the ethical relation (as prior to or beyond being) appears to bypass the demand for a logically-determined ethical norm, because the ethical relation is said to precede cognition. A key question here is whether the argument can stand on strictly phenomenological grounds, or whether it depends upon a phenomenologically unwarranted religious belief. But in any case, Levinas develops a theory of ethics, not a critical political theory of society. For my discussion of some of the difficulties associated with Levinasian ethics and with its relation to political critique, see *The Lucid Vigil*, esp. 180-190.

Within the literature there is no solid consensus about what criticality can accomplish. One finds instead a wide variety of claims about how a revised form of phenomenology can contribute to, explain, or itself take the form of social and political critique. For example, Duane Davis and Laura McMahon distinguish critical phenomenology from its classic forms by virtue of its capacity to produce descriptions that are themselves normatively prescriptive[34] or, in Johanna Oksala and Lisa Guenther's terminology, politically transformative.[35] For Marder and Salamon, in contrast, what is specifically critical about phenomenological descriptions is that they shore up new principles for political judgement, such as rupture, wonder, openness, or affirmation.[36] Davis also invokes this version of "criticality" when he claims that phenomenology's "paraxial promise" lies in its capacity to reveal "instability" rather than "unshakeable truths."[37] Finally, the editors of the new journal *Puncta* explain critical phenomenology differently again; they say (among other things) that it offers descriptions that (themselves) participate in "the ethical becoming of the social structures or essences" under investigation, which therefore demand "responsible critique."[38] As McMahon expresses this idea, critical phenomenological descriptions can "help us to articulate more honest forms of cultural identity and more just forms of cross-cultural engagement" because they offer more expansive accounts of the cultural differences that constitute our "dynamic, historical world."[39]

The plethora of definitions may seem confusing, but if one maps them onto the Kantian blueprint, the variations start to make sense. Broadly speaking, critical phenomenology is portrayed either as **a)** a philosophical description of experience that can *contribute* to a critical theory of society once it has been adequately "Criticized"; **b)** a meta-theoretical account of the conditions of possibility for

[34] See Davis, "The Phenomenological Method," esp. 4, 9n2; and Laura McMahon, "Religion, Multiculturalism, and Phenomenology as a Critical Practice: Lessons from the Algerian War of Independence," *Puncta: Journal of Critical Phenomenology*, 3(1), 2020, 19.

[35] Johanna Oksala, "Reply to Beata Stawarska," *Puncta: Journal of Critical Phenomenology*, 2(1), 2019, 42; and Lisa Guenther, "Critical Phenomenology," in Gail Weiss, Ann Murphy, and Gayle Salamon, (eds.), *50 Concepts for a Critical Phenomenology* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2020), 14.

[36] See Marder, *Phenomena–Critique–Logos*, 12, 77, 83, 127; and Salamon, "What's Critical about Critical Phenomenology?" 11, 12, 15.

[37] Davis, "The Phenomenological Method," 7-8.

[38] Martina Ferrari et al., "Editors' Introduction: Reflections on the First Issue," *Puncta: Journal of Critical Phenomenology*, 1(1), 2018, 5, 7.

[39] McMahon, "Religion, Multiculturalism, and Phenomenology," 3, 21.

theoretical knowledge which, when properly undertaken, can *explain* how a standard of ethical political critique is possible; or **c)** a normative, prescriptive, or transformative description *itself*, so to speak, in its own right.

Consider the first definition, for example, which is that a "critical" form of phenomenology is one which offers a better "Critical framework" (in my terminology) because it is more expansive, dynamic, or inclusive. Guenther takes this approach when she interrogates the methodological condition of possibility *for* a rigorous account of experience (in the apodictic sense of Husserlian "rigour"), namely, the perspective of first-person, singular consciousness, upon which Husserl insists.[40] Through a ground-breaking analysis of the consequences of extended periods of solitary confinement, Guenther shows that,

> if one is deprived for long enough of the experience of other concrete persons in a shared or common space, it is possible for one's own sense of personhood to diminish or even collapse, while the transcendental ego, or the pure capacity for experience, remains, now unhinged from a shared world in which its perpetual flow of impressions could receive the bodily validation of others. Without the concrete experience of other embodied egos oriented toward common objects in a shared world, my own experience of the boundaries of those perceptual objects begins to waver.[41]

Unless intersubjectivity is seen as an essential condition for experience, Guenther argues, the phenomenological description will be "insufficiently critical." That is, it will have failed to account for the ways in which "historical and social structures also shape our experience, not just empirically or in a piecemeal fashion, but in what we might call a transcendental way."[42] An immanent Critique of its own conditions of possibility thus reveals that Husserl's own phenomenological Critique of experience, no less than Habermas's social-theoretical Critique of communicative action, is empirically and conceptually impoverished.

This interrogation of the conceptual framework (the overarching Critique) is the form that "criticality" takes in a number of recent discussions. Salamon says this explicitly, for example, when she submits that a "critical phenomenology" is one which "reflects on the structural conditions of its own emergence, and in this it is following an imperative that is both critical in its reflexivity and phenomenological in its taking-up of the imperative to describe what it sees in order to see it

[40] Lisa Guenther, *Solitary Confinement: Social Death and Its Afterlives* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), xxviii.

[41] Ibid., 34-35.

[42] Guenther, "Critical Phenomenology," 12.

anew."[43] The editors of *Puncta* make the same point. They write, "If phenomenology is a descriptive practice, then critical phenomenology questions the conditions of the possibility of a phenomenological description and, in so doing, modifies the scope, content, and method of said description."[44] In a similar vein, Beata Stawarska agrees with Oksala that classic phenomenology is insufficiently attentive to gender and thus "needs to be transformed"; she merely contests Oksala's assertion that an "immanent critique" of the phenomenological method will result in a radical break between phenomenology and what one might variously call "critical," "political," "transformative," or "post-phenomenology."[45]

Whether the break between classic and critical phenomenology that the immanent critique produces is definitive or not, however, does not alter the structural point. For what is in question in all of these cases is the descriptive framework itself, the Critical inquiry into the conditions of possibility for (in this case) experience, not the critical standard of judgement by virtue of which a critique can be said to intervene. In other words, while a duly Critical (i.e., a self-Critical) framework might be more "honest" or more "encompassing," it could not be considered more "just." For that purpose, it would have to be coupled with a critical theoretical standard of judgement, which is to say, it would have to establish the conditions of possibility for "critique" in its ethical-political sense. Merely modifying or transforming the framework itself cannot accomplish that end. Thus, when McMahon asserts, for instance, that "the epistemological commitment" to the recognition of different cultural horizons "must also be an ethical-political commitment to the value of multiculturalism," we must underline that there is no immediate reason why it should.[46]

In fact, as Salamon explains, when philosophy directs "toward itself the very same interrogation that it directs toward all forms of knowledge" as Merleau-Ponty commends, the result is not "verification but strangeness."[47] This is why, as she says, critical theory should not be dismissed: it is needed as a "supplement to phenomenology," because (unlike phenomenology) critical theory is engaged with issues of violence, power, injustice, and inequality.[48] Guenther tacitly admits as much as well. In the conclusion to her book on *Solitary Confinement*, she writes that not only is "phenomenology not enough," but, "even critical phenomenology is not enough. We must also build a social movement of

[43] Salamon, "What's Critical about Critical Phenomenology?" 12.
[44] Ferrari et al., "Editors' Introduction," 3.
[45] Beata Stawarska, "Feminist Experiences: Foucauldian and Phenomenological Investigations by Johanna Oksala," *Puncta: Journal of Critical Phenomenology*, 2(1), 2019, 39; and Oksala, "Reply to Beata Stawarska," 42.
[46] McMahon, "Religion, Multiculturalism, and Phenomenology," 21.
[47] Salamon, "What's Critical about Critical Phenomenology," 11.
[48] Ibid., 13.

resistance to social death – a movement that makes good on the insights of critical phenomenology with ethical responsibility and political solidarity."[49] As Guenther puts it elsewhere, "critical phenomenology must go beyond a description of oppression [by] developing concrete strategies for dismantling oppressive structures."[50]

Taken on its own, neither an epistemological nor a phenomenological Critique of the conditions of possibility for knowledge can help to explain the meaning of justice or the nature of the "responsibility" for which one calls, unless the Critique discloses the a priori conditions for ethical-political judgement in particular. For this purpose, the Critical doctrine must be separable from, so that it can authorize, a normative standard of critique. If the philosophical framework is subjected to an interrogation of its own conditions, however, this becomes impossible. For what we find when phenomenology is subjected to Critique is that, as in the case of Kant, it deconstructs itself. The values to which it purportedly gives rise are thus destabilized too.

This problem is evident when one adopts the second approach identified earlier, namely, the attempt to explain how a standard of ethical political critique is possible, especially in the wake of a phenomenological philosophy that already has come undone. In other words, among those who take the Critical interrogation of the conditions of possibility for phenomenology as read, we find the further assertion that what is "critical" about this development is precisely that a new criterion of critique is thereby revealed. For Salamon, for instance, the result of the reflective and reflexive turns that Merleau-Ponty advocates is the recognition that the *goal* of phenomenology is "an opening."[51] Marder develops the same point at length. He writes,

> There is – despite the persistent philosophical dream of a seamless integration of judgement and experience, signification and perception, language and things – a cut in the fabric of phenomenology in which phenomena are kept apart from *logos*, even as they are intrinsically articulated with it. The name of the cut, signalling this basic division, is, precisely, "critique" (derived, as the reader will recall, from the Greek *krinein*: to separate, to distinguish, to discern), which thwarts the closure of phenomenology in a self-validating circle of ratiocination and sends the first cracks through the façade built around a way of thinking that was never meant to achieve doctrinal stability.[52]

[49] Guenther, *Solitary Confinement*, 255.
[50] Guenther, "Critical Phenomenology," 16.
[51] Salamon, "What's Critical about Critical Phenomenology," 11.
[52] Marder, *Phenomena–Critique–Logos*, 10, 12, 18, 77, 83, 127.

For Marder, accordingly, what gains critical force in this context is precisely the power of the break, rather than the synthesis of the system, contrary to traditional assumptions. Indeed, he asserts, phenomenologists have tended to suffer from a "*déformation professionnelle*"; they "have grown allergic to splits, fissures and caesurae of all sorts" and so, instead of acknowledging "the excessive plentitude of givenness, they have left unconsidered the positive potential of rupture and negativity."[53] Davis underlines the same potential when he submits that "new ways to appreciate the phenomenological method might open up just where it bespeaks instability and generates awe and wonder about the ever-shifting, trembling ground."[54] Specifically, Davis continues, we need to recognize "the encroachment and overlapping of differences both among us all and as the intersectionality of differences *which we are*. In order to achieve a critical phenomenology, phenomenology must be seen as a philosophy of difference rather than identity."[55]

What Salamon, Marder, and Davis fail to appreciate, however, is that *différance* does not equal difference, because it does not signify *this* thing or *that*. As I have explained, *différance* is the spatial and temporal movement within meaning – or, one might say, the opening, the rupture, or the irrecoverable affirmation – that makes discernable *differences* possible. Thus, quite apart from the point that (contra Marder) *krinein* signifies the latter (the cut or the decision), rather than the former (the undecidable conditions of its possibility), what is important is that *différance* is not an identity but a "trace." It does not signify any determinable *thing*. As soon as *différance* is determined as a concept (as in the phrase, "differences *which we are*"), therefore, even as an ambiguous one, it is no longer an undecidable trace. As Derrida explains,

> Henceforth, it must be recognized that all the determinations of such a trace – all the names it is given – belong as such to the text of metaphysics that shelters the trace, and not to the trace itself. There is no trace *itself*, no *proper* trace. Heidegger indeed says the difference could not appear as such. ("Illumination of the distinction therefore cannot mean that the distinction appears as a distinction.") The trace of the trace which (is) difference above all could not appear or be named *as such*, that is, in its presence. It is the *as such* which precisely, and as such, evades us forever. Thereby the determinations which name difference always come from the metaphysical order.[56]

[53] Ibid., 12.

[54] Davis, "The Phenomenological Method," 7.

[55] Ibid., 8.

[56] Jacques Derrida, "*Ousia and Grammē*: Note on a Note from *Being and Time*," in *Margins of Philosophy*, transl. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 66, internal reference omitted.

What the acknowledgement of *différance*, "rupture," or "opening" entails for phenomenology, rather, is that neither the first-person perspective, nor the pure description, nor the complete reduction, are methodologically sound. On the contrary, just as the first-person, singular standpoint is made possible through prior, intersubjective, embodied and concrete relations, so the eidetic reduction depends upon the contingency of lived experience. As a result, neither the border of phenomenological knowledge, nor its phenomenological objects, can be decisively confirmed.

In an important respect, then, the deconstruction of the conditions of possibility for Critique – the recursive, Gödelian move whereby one attempts to systematize the very conditions for systematicity, as it were – is not a "critical operation" in any ordinary sense. It does not endorse any particular social movement, nor does it supply a critical standard of judgement (a foundational principle), by virtue of which one can take a determinate, political stand. It cannot do so, as Derrida says, precisely because "the instance of *krinein* or of *krisis* (decision, choice, judgment, discernment) is itself, as is all the apparatus of transcendental critique, one of the essential 'themes' or 'objects' of deconstruction."[57] Similarly, Derrida writes elsewhere, deconstruction "always aims at the trust confided in the critical, critico-theoretical agency, that is, the deciding agency, the ultimate possibility of the decidable; deconstruction is a deconstruction of critical dogmatics."[58] Kant establishes the possibility of the decidable dogmatically when he appeals to the subject's sublime responsibility to the law of reason as the ground of the moral law, as we have seen. Scholars of phenomenology appear to be doing something similar today when they identify the subject's capacity for exposure, or wonder, or awe as the basis for moral critique. Deconstruction thus disrupts the critical operation itself, insofar as it reveals the particular, contingent, political interests that are conveyed by those rhetorical figures, and which are not acknowledged, as such, within the theories themselves. It effectively reveals the limits, harms, occlusions, or violence of the philosophical inquiry or the critical theory itself.

One can show, for example, that the phenomenological description of pure experience, or the bracketing that it calls for, is irreducibly entwined with norms and suppositions that are socially-constituted.[59] That demonstration is itself "critical" in a certain way – it is quasi-critical, so to speak – but it does not make the philosophy

[57] Jacques Derrida, "Letter to a Japanese Friend," in David Wood and Robert Bernasconi (eds.), *Derrida and Différance* (Evanston, Il.: Northwestern University Press, 1988), 3.

[58] Jacques Derrida, "*Ja*, or the *Faux-Bond* II," in *Points...: Interviews, 1974-1994*, transl. Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 54.

[59] See, for example, Ferrari et al., "Editor's Introduction," 3.

under investigation more *critical* as a result. It cannot do so, because the demonstration of a philosophy's inconsistencies or incompleteness does not legitimate any particular political claim. Such a quasi-critical interrogation of a Critique may, arguably, support a particular political struggle, insofar as one could approach the philosophical text from a given position in order to contest it. But this would merely show how the philosophy in question is complicit in oppression in ways that were not previously seen – as, for example, Fraser shows when she argues that the theory of communicative action is blind to the oppression of women, or Guenther shows when she argues that phenomenology is blind to the violence of solitary, penitentiary confinement. Such an interrogation of a given Critical doctrine does not give rise to any particular standard of critique, however, nor does it transform the philosophical account into a transformative practice.

This is why the third version of criticality listed above is not tenable either. This is the idea that what is "critical" about phenomenology is its capacity to stand *as* a normative or prescriptive description on its own. In its very capacity *as* descriptive, it is claimed, phenomenology can produce social change. McMahon invokes this notion, for example, when she suggests that, insofar as "phenomenology can help us to bracket common prejudices regarding both the neutrality of our own cultures and the monolithic simplicity of other cultures," it can enable "more honest and just visions of multicultural human existence and political transformation to come to the fore."[60] Indeed, she concludes, "by descriptively attending to the nature of such change, we can arrive at some normative prescriptions for how we should approach intercultural criticism and dialogue going forward."[61] As the editors of *Puncta* put the same point,

> Critical phenomenology is an ongoing process of exposing the structures of structures, and of challenging exhaustive understanding through a commitment to tailor methodology to the shape-shifting objects of inquiry. In critiquing phenomenology, then, we can say that critical phenomenology takes up the task of social critique.[62]

From this third perspective, phenomenology is not said to be critical because it provides a truer account of human experience that can *contribute* to a critical theory, nor is it considered critical because it *explains* how a criterion for social critique is possible. In this case, rather, it is the Critical doctrine as such, the descriptive

[60] McMahon, "Religion, Multiculturalism, and Phenomenology," 3.
[61] Ibid, 19.
[62] Ferrari et al., "Editor's Introduction," 3.

framework *itself*, which is said to be normatively imbued. On Davis's view, even Husserl's phenomenology can be qualified as critical in this sense, "insofar as it offers descriptions that reveal truths, thus which are at once prescriptive."[63]

As I argued earlier, however, the collapse of the scientific Critique into the ethical-political critique is logically unsound. In Kant, we saw, it involves the paradoxical claim that even while an epistemological inquiry into grounds (a Critique) is needed to establish the principle of moral judgement on a "scientific" basis, so too is a moral inquiry into epistemology (a critique) needed to establish the normative status of the science. Kant can only establish reason as both scientifically *and* normatively legitimate – that is, as "critical" – by obscuring the tautology behind his appeal to the intrinsic moral value of the transcendental subject. The same must hold for phenomenology too: descriptions can constitute prescriptions only to the extent that they are (transcendentally) true, which is precisely what cannot be confirmed in the wake of phenomenology's Critique. To say that a description constitutes a prescription is to say, essentially, that whatever is, *ought* to be the case, that what is more honest is, by definition, more just.

If one is to avoid the risk of dogmatism – whereby criticality will have been illegitimately foreclosed for the sake of the political claim – one must confront exactly the questions with which we began. Which struggles, which crises, which experiences, or which particular political perspectives have to be encompassed before the description can be said to be "true"? When will we have adequately described them all? In the absence of a critical standard that is separable from the Critique, there is no way to answer this question. Conversely, the presence of a criterion for judgement is problematic too. For, insofar as the "critique" of Critique reveals the impossibility of grounding an ethical-political standard of judgement on apodictic foundations, it undermines the authority of any so-called "critical theory" that calls itself legitimate. On one hand, if the Critical inquiry is taken all the way down, it emerges that the principles, origins, or roots are not there to be found. The grounds for ethical-political decision will have been rendered undecidable. On the other hand, if a standard of ethical-political critique is established, the claim to Criticality is foregone. In order to see what limits and possibilities "criticality" may be said to entail, one therefore would have to recast the relationship between theory and practice significantly. By way of conclusion, I venture some initial remarks.

[63] Davis, "The Phenomenological Method," 9n2.

Concluding reflections on critique

I have been arguing that a theory does not become "critical" when it is added to, intermixed with, or supplemented by a particular political issue or selection of issues, such as feminism, racism, environmentalism, or colonialism, for example. Instead, on my view, a theory can be said to be "critical" when it takes itself, recursively, as its own object of critique. From a classical perspective, in other words, critique involves the radical interrogation of philosophical grounds or conditions – that is, an interrogation of the claim to "science" in the philosophical sense – and, as we have seen, such an interrogation opens the theory to its own (its auto-) deconstruction. This is because the recursive, critical turn exposes a theory's conditions of *im*possibility; the theory's imbrication in social and political conditions, and thus the impossibility of its scientificity, is thereby revealed. A theory becomes (hyperbolically) "critical," paradoxically, only when it deconstructs (itself).

The first and most obvious consequence of this claim is that a theory cannot be said to be "critical" by virtue of being able to contribute to political struggles on the basis of an ethical-political standard, because the legitimacy of the standard cannot be established non-dogmatically. Insofar as the relation between Critique and critique is undecidable, the subject has to be ideologically given. This is the "dogmatism" to which deconstruction relentlessly attends: insofar as the trace of C/critique that this involves has to be covered over, certain *political* interests will always be in play. To be sure, one must always hold to a particular standard or political position in order to intervene. My point is merely that the position cannot be authorized in the way that critical theories attempt, which means that theory cannot intervene in political struggles on that basis. The occlusion of this problem is what was inadequately "critical" about Habermas's social-theoretical framework all along: the theory of communicative action could not have established a political good unless it was driven by a particular normative stance in the first place.[64]

The second corollary of the analysis is that the normativity of the philosophical demand to provide grounds and so to reveal the political stakes – that is the demand for "philosophical responsibility" – is no longer authorized either. This is because, just as in Kant, the investigation into grounds is impelled by a demand (for reason) that cannot ultimately be met (by reason). Again, in other words, because the relation between Critique and critique is tautological, philosophical responsibility cannot be directly explained. Nonetheless, it remains that one cannot expose the imbrication of philosophy and politics at the deepest level of the philosophy's conditions of possibility unless one adheres even more strictly to the

[64] For an extended discussion of the limitations of Habermas's theory, see my "Pluralizing Universal 'Man': The Legacy of Transcendentalism and Teleology in Habermas's Discourse Ethics," *The Review of Politics* 60(4), 1998, 685-718.

demand for grounds than does the philosophical attempt to establish them in the first place. In this respect, deconstruction is not "a critique, in a general or in a Kantian sense,"[65] but it might nonetheless be characterized as a radical or hyperbolic, and paradoxical, form of (quasi) criticality. This is why deconstruction might be said to qualify as a *certain* form of critique: it both is and is not critical, as is a phenomenology that puts its own methodological conditions into question.

This suggests, in the third place, that a hyperbolic, critical move actually opens the political field, rather than closes it. In other words, to the extent that deconstruction in particular, or hyper-criticality more generally, reveals the imbrication of philosophical conceptuality in language, in politics, and in social and cultural life, there is clearly something critical and something political about this mode of critique. Perhaps the political force of critical phenomenology, no less than that of critical theory more generally, can be correspondingly revised. One possible approach is Guenther's suggestion that critical phenomenology can contribute to the remaking or reshaping of the world through a "collective practice of critical interrogation and social change."[66] Guenther's invocation of Audre Lorde's insight, which concerns the political importance of poetry as both "illumination and transformation," is compelling in this context, but it does not quite get at the point.

For Guenther, as she reads Lorde, poetry is illuminating because it allows one to cast new light on one's experiences, thereby giving voice to what had hitherto been felt but not known, and simultaneously creating and changing its meanings. I want to suggest instead, however, that if "poetry is not a luxury," it is not so much because it reveals the "truth" of previously mute experience, but because new descriptions can puncture the given, just as radical, deconstructive critiques can break into, and break open, the always-contestable, *différantial* interpretations that structure the world. Such a form of disruptive critique is what one can call "politics" from an entirely different perspective. On this view, as João Pedro Capocho explains (drawing on Rancière), "politics is not primarily the exercise of power or the deciding of common affairs," but,

> an interruption, a precarious disruption of the "police order," which is construed as a well-ordered "distribution of the sensible" [*partage du sensible*] – that is to say, a system of coordinates that defines modes of being, doing, communicating and thinking, and so establishes borders between visible and invisible, audible and inaudible, thinkable and unthinkable.[67]

[65] Derrida, "Letter to a Japanese Friend," 3.

[66] Guenther, "Critical Phenomenology," 15.

[67] João Pedro Capocho, "Disagreeing before Acting: The Paradoxes of Critique and Politics from Adorno to Rancière," *Theoria and Praxis* 1(1), 2013, 67. The internal quotation is from Jacques Rancière, "Introducing Disagreement," transl. Steven Corcoran, *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, 9(3), 2004, 6.

So conceived, Capocho continues, the "radicality" of politics is close to "the 'radicality' of critique, when it conceives of reason as susceptible of being criticized," which is exactly how I have described "critique" here.[68] The quasi-critical intervention, as I understand it, disrupts what constitutes what is thinkable, sayable, or visible, thereby opening the field of politics to contestation or transformation. Deconstruction, or radical critique more generally, is thus "political" insofar as it is the breaking into, and the breaking up of, the philosophical-empirical order. Note, however, that critique so understood is not directly transformative; it intervenes by opening the political field at the heart of the given, and by showing that there is space for contestation. Perhaps phenomenology, like deconstruction in its radical, quasi-critical mode, can be "critical" in this political sense too. Not by revealing what is true, but on the contrary, by challenging the givenness of experience relentlessly, without telos, without closure, and without respite.

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[68] Capocho, "Disagreeing before Acting," 67-68.

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STUDIA UBB. PHILOSOPHIA, Vol. 66 (2021), 1, pp. 47-66
(RECOMMENDED CITATION)
DOI:10.24193/subbphil.2021.1.03

NAIVITÄT ALS KRITIK

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ABSTRACT. ***Naiveté as Critique.*** The present paper addresses the similarities between the concept of "critique" used in phenomenology and the one put forth by critical theory in analyzing their corresponding understanding of "naiveté". While Husserl develops a broad concept of naiveté in his reflections regarding the phenomenological reduction, where he characterizes the natural attitude as such as "transcendentally naive", this concept becomes more nuanced when considering the unavoidable naivetés of phenomenology itself, on the one hand, and the complications brought to the mutual relationship between naiveté and critique with his turn towards the life-world. This turn, the paper shows, can be seen as a metacritical reinvestment of naiveté that can also be traced in the works of Adorno.

Keywords: *Husserl, Adorno, life-world, metacritique, physiognomics.*

1. Kritische Phänomenologie

Der Begriff der „kritischen Phänomenologie" erfährt in den letzten Jahren besonders Konjunktur. Damit wird durchgehend ein Versuch gemeint, das Verfahren der phänomenologischen Deskription im Dienste einer Form von Gesellschaftskritik zu stellen. Kritik wird dabei – so die Darstellung der offiziellen Zeitschrift dieser neuen Tendenz: *Puncta. Journal for Critical Phenomenology* – weit gefasst als „ein Prozess der Enthüllung und Hinterfragung der konkreten Bedingungen, Institutionen und Voraussetzungen, die unsere Lebenserfahrung strukturieren."[1] Wohl hat es auch früher nicht an Versuchen gefehlt, Phänomenologie mit politischem Engagement in Zusammenhang zu bringen, so etwa noch unlängst im Zeichen von Marx.[2]

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1 https://journals.oregondigital.org/index.php/pjcp. Siehe dazu auch Gayle Salamon, "What's Critical About Critical Phenomenology?" *Puncta: Journal of Critical Phenomenology*, vol. 1, 2018, 8-17; und Lisa Guenther, "Unmaking and Making the World in Long-Term Solitary Confinement" *Puncta: Journal of Critical Phenomenology*, vol. 1, 2018, 74-89.

2 Siehe etwa Bernhard Waldenfels, u.a., *Phänomenologie und Marxismus*, Bd. 1-3, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1977.

Demgegenüber ist nun aber der Erfolg der gegenwärtigen Initiative vermutlich dadurch zu erklären, dass diese sich zugleich als eine neue Wende der Phänomenologie präsentiert gleich darin anderen „neuphänomenologischen" Initiativen, dabei aber mit ihrem zentralen Begriff der „Kritik" auch das Erbe der klassischen Phänomenologie, und zwar nicht bloß jenes Merleau-Ponty sondern sogar Husserls antritt. Daher geht es der Kritischen Phänomenologie nicht mehr bloß darum, der Phänomenologie eine ihr zunächst mangelnden kritische Funktion aufzupfropfen, sondern sie will vielmehr zeigen, dass der Phänomenologie eigentlich schon seit jeher ein kritisches Potential im Sinne der gegenwärtigen Kritischen Theorie innewohnt.

Dies geschieht genauer dadurch, dass der phänomenologische Gebrauch des Kritikbegriffs zum einen mit Kants Kritizismus und zum anderen mit der Tradition der Kritischen Theorie in Verbindung gebracht wird. Diesem Versuch wäre freilich leicht entgegenzuhalten, dass „Kritik" in beiden Fällen keineswegs auf das Gleiche hinausläuft. So ließe sich etwa behaupten, dass es bei Kant auf einen rein erkenntnistheoretischen Kritikbegriff ankommt, während die Frankfurter Schule Kritik als einen gesellschaftstheoretischen Begriff auffasst. Dieser Einspruch wäre indessen voreilig, was sich schon aus einer oberflächlichen Betrachtung des entsprechenden Gegenbegriffs der Kritik beiderseits erhellt. So setzt Kant bekanntlich seine kritische Philosophie einem philosophischen Dogmatismus entgegen, dem zunächst freilich vorgeworfen wird, dass er die Begriffe der Vernunft jenseits ihrer legitimen Grenzen objektiv als Bestimmungsbegriffe, statt bloß als Reflexionsbegriffe einsetzt. In Kants Terminologie klingt aber desungeachtet auch noch das aufklärerische Ziel eines Ausgangs des Menschen aus seiner „selbst verschuldeten Unmündigkeit" nach. Demnach wird der philosophische Dogmatismus nicht bloß dessen beschuldigt, dass er ein wissenschaftliches Irrtum begeht, sondern auch dessen, dass er jenem Emanzipationsideal den Weg verstellt. Aus dieser Sicht schrumpft nun aber der Unterschied zum Begriff der Ideologie, mit der sich die Kritik im Falle der Frankfurter Schule konfrontiert und die Adorno prägnant als „gesellschaftlich notwendigen Schein" definiert, bis auf ein Kleines zusammen.

Aus Sicht solcher Überlegungen setzt sich der vorliegende Aufsatz das Ziel, die Kompatibilität zwischen dem Kritikbegriff der Phänomenologie und jenem der Kritischen Theorie weiter zu unterbauen. Dies soll mittels einer Erörterung der entscheidenden Rolle geschehen, die beiderseits dem Konzept der Naivität zukommt. Anhand einer eingehenden Auslegung dieses Terminus soll so gezeigt werden, dass die dialektischen Komplikationen, die dieser sowohl bei Husserl, wie auch bei Adorno erfährt, in der Tat auf eine Parallelität im entsprechenden Begriff der Kritik hindeuten.

2. Kritik des Dahinlebens

Freilich lässt sich der Begriff „Naivität" mit Fink als ein operativer Begriff Husserls bestimmen. Sein Gebrauch wird keinesfalls durch eine eingehende Thematisierung seiner Bedeutung geregelt. Während der Terminus so in vielfältigen Kontexten oft auch rein umgangssprachlich und unterminologisch benutzt wird, kann seine prägnanteste Bedeutungsrichtung dennoch leicht isoliert werden. Sie ist im Zusammenhang der Überlegungen zur phänomenologischen Reduktion verortet. Hier findet sich wohl auch die artikulierteste Form seiner Gegenüberstellung zum phänomenologischen Begriff der Kritik.

In diesem Zusammenhang ist nun Naivität bekanntlich ein Wesensmerkmal der „natürlichen Einstellung", auf deren Hintergrund Husserl die phänomenologische Grundhaltung errichtet. In der natürlichen Einstellung ist das Subjekt unmittelbar anschaulich auf eine vorfindliche Welt von Dingen, aber auch Lebewesen und anderen Subjekten gerichtet. Diese Welt ist freilich, so Husserl, nicht bloß eine Welt rein feststellbarer, vorhandener Tatsachen, sondern darauf gehen von Anbeginn in gleicher Unmittelbarkeit auch Akte des Fühlens und Wollens samt den dazugehörigen praktischen Gegenständlichkeiten. Allen diesen Akten eignet indessen laut Husserl grundsätzlich die Vollzugsweise des bloßen „Dahinlebens". Darin liegt etliches mitbeschlossen. Erstens freilich der schlichte *Seinsglaube* der sogenannten „Generalthesis" als ursprüngliches Bewusstsein der Gegebenheit von Welt, die sich allen möglichen einzelnen Modalisierungen gegenüber durchhält. Die Welt als unmittelbar seiende erhält sich so für uns bei aller möglichen Erfahrung von Zweifel oder Enttäuschung als ihr unbezweifelbarer Boden. Zweitens weist aber das „Dahinleben" auch auf eine *unreflektierte Unmittelbarkeit* hin, d.h. ein Vollzugsmodus der schlicht auf dessen gegebene Gegenstände sich richtet ohne das intentional leistende Leben, das sich an ihrer Konstitution beteiligt, mit zu beachten. Weltliche Erfahrungsgegenstände sind so schlichtweg hingenommen, wie sie sich geben, ohne bezüglich ihrer Subjektrelativität hinterfragt zu werden. Drittens liegt aber darin zugleich auch noch eine gewisse *Passivität* im Aktvollzug, d.h. die Zwangsläufigkeit dessen, dem sich sein Erfahrungsfluss gleichsam von selbst, ohne freies Zutun und ohne Selbstverantwortung abspielt. Alle drei Bedeutungsrichtungen spielen in Husserls Deskription der natürlichen Einstellung und in ihrer Bezeichnung als „naive" Erfahrung ineinander über. Naivität bedeutet demnach in diesem Zusammenhang soviel wie unreflektierte und verantwortungslose Erfahrung in schlichter und „dogmatischer" Seinsgeltung. Eben dem setzt sich nun das Verfahren der phänomenologischen Reduktion dezidiert entgegen, indem es Unmittelbarkeit mit Reflexion, Seinsglauben mit Neutralität, und bloßes Dahinleben mit einem Leben in reiner Selbstverantwortung ersetzt.

Freilich geschieht dieser Umschlag nun aber nicht mit einem Mal, sondern zwischen dem Zerrbild schlichter Naivität, das Husserl etwa noch in den *Ideen I* als Grundmerkmal der natürlichen Einstellung entwirft und dem Wunschbild der transzendentalen Einstellung, das er ihr entgegensetzt, schaltet sich von Anbeginn eine Vielfalt von Zwischenstufen ein. So dämmert es Husserl beispielsweise schon in den zwanziger Jahren, dass das Menschsein eigentlich vom Haus aus ein Leben in der Reflexion ist, das sich als solches von der „tierischen Naivität“[3] abhebt. Dies kommt in der phänomenologischen Behandlung der Wissenschaft umso deutlicher zum Ausdruck. Denn wissenschaftliche Aufklärung ist zum einen freilich ein Stück Reflexion und somit ein Schritt zur Bewältigung und Überwindung des bloß natürlichen Dahinlebens. Indessen liegt die gesamte Pointe der Husserlschen Abhebung der Phänomenologie von der Wissenschaft im üblichen Wortsinn gerade darin, dass die Wissenschaften noch weiterhin verkappt an der Naivität des bloßen Weltlebens teilhaben. Als Erfahrungswissenschaften sind alle positiven Wissenschaften in Husserls Sicht grundsätzlich „Wissenschaften der transzendentalen Naivität“.[4]

Allerdings ist dies nicht die einzige Spielform, in der Naivität hier in Frage kommt. So spricht Husserl etwa schon in den *Logischen Untersuchungen* von den „in einem guten Sinne“[5] naiven Wissenschaften, die in ihrem Forschungsvollzug erkenntnistheoretische Bedenken auf sich beruhen lassen und einfach ihrem Erkenntnisprojekt nachgehen ohne zunächst noch die Möglichkeit einer solchen Erkenntnis nachdrücklich bewiesen zu haben. Darüber hinaus lässt sich bei Husserl in der Tat eine gewisse Stufenfolge in der wissenschaftlichen Überwindung der Naivität nachweisen. So wird bisweilen von der herrschenden Naivität der naturalistischen Interpretation der Geisteswissenschaften gesprochen[6], die schon mit ihrer bewusst geisteswissenschaftlichen Auslegung verwunden ist. Indem sich so die Wissenschaft von den Selbstverständlichkeiten des unmittelbaren Dahinlebens in gestufter Reflexion und Kritik absetzt, enthebt sie sich zugleich auch der entsprechenden Naivität.

Nur bleibt, laut Husserl, sowohl in den Geisteswissenschaften, wie auch in den Naturwissenschaften, soweit diese weiterhin im Rahmen der natürliche Einstellung bleiben und den Seinsglauben der Generalthesis in Geltung belassen, dennoch ein grundsätzlicher Restbestand an Naivität bestehen. So vermag es in seiner Sicht erst die Phänomenologie mit ihrer transzendentalen Reduktion das gesamte Erfahrungsleben

[3] Edmund Husserl, *Aufsätze und Vorträge. 1922-1937,* Den Haag: Kluwer (zitiert als Hua XXVII), 1988, 34.

[4] Edmund Husserl, *Phänomenologische Psychologie. Vorlesungen Sommersemester. 1925.* Den Haag: Nijhoff (zitiert als Hua IX), 1968, 250.

[5] Edmund Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen,* Zweiter Teil. Untersuchungen zur Phänomenologie und Theorie der Erkenntnis, Bd.1, Den Haag: Nijhoff (zitiert als Hua XIX/1), 1984, 28.

[6] Hua IX, 3 f.

als ein „patentes" Flächenleben aufzudecken, dem sich nun sein „latentes" Tiefenleben der transzendentalen Konstitution aufschließt.[7] Diese Stufenfolge der Zwischenstellungen zwischen der reinen Phänomenologie einerseits und dem grundsätzlich naiven Dahinleben andererseits gilt freilich nicht bloß in theoretischer Hinsicht. Ihr entspricht auch in praktischer Hinsicht eine ähnliche Stufenfolge, die von der vollständigen Naivität durch Kritik zur Selbstreflexion führt, wie Husserl dies etwa in seinen *Kaizo*-Aufsätzen eingehend ausführt. So setzt er hier, am Leitfaden einer überlieferten Klassifizierung der Bewusstseinsakte, der bloß doxischen Reflexion eine axiologische und willentliche Reflexion entgegen, die er auch als Selbstbewertung und Selbstbestimmung bezeichnet. Ähnlich wie im Falle der doxischen Reflexion errichten Letztere sich ebenfalls aufgrund von Kritik im Gegensatz zur unreflektierten „Selbstvergessenheit" der Naivität. Wenn das Subjekt so mittels der doxischen Reflexion seines konstitutiven Bewusstseinslebens innewird, so wird er aufgrund der Selbstbewertung zu Stellungnahmen gegenüber seinen Akten bewegt und kommt schließlich zur willentlichen Selbstbestimmung.[8] Wenn nun aber für Husserl eindeutig feststeht, dass diese Modi der Reflexivität sowohl im Hinblick auf Einzelfälle, wie auch in reiner Allgemeinheit vollziehbar sind, indem ich etwa nicht nur auf meine momentane Einzelsituation, sondern auch auf mein gesamtes weiteres Leben Bezug nehmen kann[9], so führt dies sogleich zu einer weiteren Differenzierung im gegenseitigen Verhältnis von Naivität und Kritik, indem etwa ein individueller Akt der Kritik dennoch in allgemeiner Hinsicht selbstvergessen und naiv bleibt.

Die Konsequenz, die Husserl bekanntlich daraus zieht, ist ein gewiss anfechtbarer ethischer „Panmethodismus", der auf eine rational-reflektierte Lebensgestaltung hinzielt: ein Leben in reiner Selbstverantwortung.[10] Doch darüber hinaus lassen sich in Husserls Aufzeichnungen gewiss auch andere Perspektiven für einen praktisch relevanten und nicht nur theoretisch gerichteten Gebrauch der Kritik festmachen.

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[7] Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie*. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie, Den Haag: Nijhoff (zitiert als Hua VI), 1976, 120 f.

[8] Siehe z.B. Hua XXVII, 24: „[Der Mensch] hat die Fähigkeit, sein passives Tun (bewußt getrieben werden) und die es passiv motivierenden Voraussetzungen (Neigungen, Meinungen) in ihrer Auswirkung zu 'hemmen', sie in Frage zu stellen, entsprechende Erwägungen zu vollziehen und erst auf Grund der resultierenden Erkenntnis der bestehenden Sachlage, der in ihr überhaupt realisierbaren Möglichkeiten und ihrer relativen Werte eine Willensentscheidung zu treffen."

[9] Siehe Hua XXVII, 24 f.: „Die kritischen Erwägungen können singulare und allgemeine sein. Denn zum Wesen des Menschen gehört es, daß er nicht ein singuläres Vorstellen, Denken, Werten und Wollen üben, sondern die solchen Akte auch in den Formen des Überhaupt vollziehen kann, in denen der ‚partikulären' oder ‚universalen' Allgemeinheit."

[10] Hua XXVII, 38 f.

So sieht Husserl etwa in einer Überlegung aus 1933 die Bedeutung eines kritischen Unterfangens letztlich darin, dass dieses eben mit seiner Intention auf Universalität der Erkenntnis, vom Haus aus die „Normalitäten" des natürlichen Dahinlebens in ihrer Relativität in Frage stellt, was gewiss auch einer sozialkritischen Anwendung des Normalitätsbegriffs wenigstens das Tor öffnet.[11] Wie dem aber auch sei, Tatsache bleibt, dass in all ihren vorhin angeführten Spielformen die Polarität von Naivität und Kritik eine entscheidende Rolle spielt.

3. Naive Phänomenologie

Wenn sich so aber im Rahmen des natürliches Weltlebens laut Husserl zwischen Naivität und Kritik letztendlich bloß relative Unterschiede aufstellen lassen, so bringt die phänomenologische Reduktion ihrerseits kaum einen radikalen Bruch zwischen den beiden ins Spiel. Zwar läßt sich aus Sicht der transzendentalen Einstellung in der Tat das gesamte Erfahrungsleben der natürlichen Einstellung samt ihren entsprechenden Wissenschaften ingesamt als Naivität bezeichnen, indem Husserl so der „natürlichen Naivität" als Gegenbegriff der Reflexionsformen des natürlichen Lebens nun den Begriff der „transzendentalen Naivität" als Charakteristik der natürlichen Einstellung überhaupt einführt. Doch die Phänomenologie kann sich ihrerseits nicht gänzlich von der Naivität erlöst halten.

Dies ist schon deshalb nicht der Fall, weil sich die phänomenologische Einstellung überhaupt nur als eine berufsmäßige Sondereinstellung zeitweilig von der natürlichen Einstellung absondern kann. In seinen Aufzeichnungen kommt Husserl oft darauf zurück, dass die transzendentale Einstellung nach Abschluß der philosophischen Arbeitszeit stets wieder notwendig der natürlichen Einstellung und ihrer Naivität anheimfällt. So heißt es etwa 1926: „Bin ich Transzendentalphilosoph von Beruf, so ist all mein natürliches Leben *eo ipso* berufsmäßig nach seiner transzendentalen Reinheit und der darin vollzogenen Leistung mit zu meinem Thema gehörig. Außer der Berufsarbeit brauche ich daran nicht zu denken, kann ganz ‚naiv' dahinleben".[12] Allerdings fügt Husserl dem gleich hinzu, dass sich das natürliche Leben seinerseits doch nicht ganz von der transzendentalen Einsicht

[11] Siehe z.B. Edmund Husserl, *Zur phänomenologischen Reduktion. Texte aus dem Nachlass (1926-1935),* Den Haag: Kluwer (zitiert als Hua XXXIV), 2002, 424: „Im natürlichen Dahinleben stehen wir praktisch auf dem Boden unserer Normalwelt. Wir leben in der Normalität, als personale Subjekte unseren Normalinteressen nachgehend. So sind wir Menschen in der natürlichen Historizität. Sowie wir auf universale Welterkenntnis ausgehen, schon inne geworden der Relativität aller Normalität, stehen wir in der Unendlichkeit, der zunächst durchaus subjektiven Unendlichkeit unserer wirklichen und offenmöglichen Welterfahrung und Welterkenntnis als einer Unendlichkeit von Relativitäten."

[12] Hua XXXIV, 16.

abkoppeln kann, indem sie einfach zu ihrer ursprünglichen Naivität zurückkehrt, da Letztere „im Verborgenen“[13] noch im natürlichen Leben nachwirkt – in der *Krisis* wird zur Bezeichnung dessen der Begriff des „Einströmens“ eingeführt. Desungeachtet steht dennoch fest, dass die Naivität des natürlichen Lebensvollzugs auch noch der transzendentalen Erfahrung grundsätzlich ihren Rahmen setzt. Jedenfalls ist klar, indem die phänomenologische Reflexion ungleich des naiven Dahinlebens niemals zur absoluten Vollzeitbeschäftigung werden kann.

Dazu kommt aber noch ein Weiteres. Denn sobald die Phänomenologie damit beginnt, die mittels der Reduktion erschlossene Sphäre des transzendentalen Bewusstseins analytisch zu durchmessen, fällt sie in diesem Unternehmen ihren eigenen Formen der Naivität anheim. Einige dieser Naivitäten verschulden sich einfach der Tatsache, dass die Phänomenologie trotz Reduktion sich doch genötigt sieht, Habitualitäten des natürlichen Erfahrungslebens in ihrer Arbeit zu übernehmen. Dies ist, wie Husserl des Öfteren zugibt, ein unvermeidlicher Mangel, der sich schon dadurch einstellt, dass die Phänomenologie ihre transzendental gereinigten Wesensbestände in sprachlichen Formulierungen festhalten muss, die eigentlich der empirischen Welt gelten. Diese Bedenken hat Eugen Fink in seiner *Sechsten Cartesianischen Meditation* ausführlich erörtert und auf die Spitze gebracht, indem er die naive Übernahme seitens des Phänomenologen nicht bloß der empirischen Sprache, deren weltlicher Ursprung offen zutage liegt, sondern auch der Modi des Theoretisierens überhaupt, die sich zunächst der wissenschaftlichen Erforschung der Welt verdanken, beklagt.[14]

So sind, seiner Ansicht nach, sowohl die Forschungspraxen des Phänomenologen, wie auch ihre theoretischen Instrumente eigentlich durchgehend latent von Sedimenten des natürlichen Erfahrungslebens geprägt – und in dieser Hinsicht bleiben sie eben im strengen Wortsinn „naiv“ – wobei es einer stets erneuten und immer weiter geführten Kritik und Reflexion bedarf, um sie von diesen Restbeständen der Naivität zu befreien. Dem sollte Finks Projekt einer transzendentalen Methodenlehre dienen, die er als eine Phänomenologie des Phänomenologisierens darstellt. Laut Fink laufen diese Überlegungen allerdings letzten Endes darauf hinaus, sogar die Vorstellung der eidetischen Wissenschaftlichkeit als einen bloß weltlichen Überrest in Frage zu stellen, indem sich die Phänomenologie damit ebenfalls graduell auch von ihrer eigenen naiven Ursprungsform – der „naiven Phänomenologie“[15] wie Husserl sie ausdrücklich bezeichnet – lossagt.

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[13] Hua XXXIV, 16.

[14] Eugen Fink, *Cartesianische Meditation,* Teil I: Die Idee einer transzendentalen Methodelehre, Den Haag: Kluwer (zitiert als Hua Dok II/1), 1988, 74 f.

[15] Edmund Husserl, *Erste Philosophie (1923/4),* Erster Teil: Kritische Ideengeschichte, Den Haag: Nijhoff (zitiert als Hua VII), 1956, 472.

Dieses Problem ist freilich an ein Strukturmerkmal der phänomenologischen Reflexion gebunden und daher an sich nie ganz zu überwinden. Denn indem die Reflexion einen Bewusstseinsakt als solchen zum Bewusstsein erhebt, indem sie sich ihm explizite zuwendet, wird der Reflexionsakt selbst nur unmittelbar und unreflektiert vollzogen. Damit kommt aber offensichtlich eine Naivität zweiter Stufe ins Spiel, die als Naivität des Phänomenologisierens selbst angesprochen werden sollte und die sich stets nur auf einer weiteren Stufe mittels erneuter Reflexion *ad infinitum* abschieben lässt. Zwar lässt sie sich dann auf jeder weiteren Stufe im Prinzip durch fortgehende Reflexion nachholen, doch Tatsache bleibt, dass sich die Phänomenologie deshalb eben niemals der Naivität ganz entziehen kann, sondern diese sozusagen als Schattenseite der Reflexion stets mit sich führt. Dazu kommt auch noch die weitere Feststellung, dass jede theoretische Leistung der Phänomenologie ihrerseits dem Gesetz der Habitualisierung untersteht, indem alle ihre ursprünglichen Aktivitäten stets nachträglich in den Status sekundärer Passivität zurücksinken.[16] Die Reflexion selbst wird durch Wiederholung gewohnheitsmäßig modifiziert und erhält so allmählich den Charakter eines selbstvergessenen, quasi-automatischen Vollzugs. Kritik wird so ihrerseits zur Naivität zweiten Grades, zur Routine – eine Entwicklung, die übrigens schon im Begriff der phänomenologischen Tätigkeit als „Berufseinstellung" mitimpliziert ist. Husserl selbst spricht so bisweilen von einer „habituellen Intention auf Kritik"[17], ohne explizite noch darauf hinzuweisen, dass damit Kritik als berufsmäßige Programmtätigkeit tendenziell zur Selbstverständlichkeit regrediert, während sie sich nun eben auch in dieser Hinsicht stets aktuell hinterfragen müsste um nicht wiederum der Naivität anheimzufallen.

4. Rehabilitierung der Doxa

Ernsthaftere Bedenken kommen indessen mit der Frage der Lebenswelt ins Spiel. Allerdings ist dies, wie schon Gadamer gegenüber der frühen Rezeption des Themas geltend gemacht hat[18], nicht so zu verstehen, als ob die Inangriffnahme der Lebenswelt einen radikalen Bruch in Husserls späten Phänomenologie mit sich bringe, die nun ihre transzendentalen Fundierungsansprüche aufgibt und in Richtung einer „mundanen" Phänomenologie umschwenkt. Im Gegenteil hält Husserl offensichtlich noch weiterhin an die phänomenologische Reduktion fest, die nun sogar als unverzichtbare Bedingung auch für die theoretische Ergründung der Lebenswelt angesehen wird.

[16] Edmund Husserl, *Erfahrung und Urteil*, Hamburg: Meiner (zitiert als EU), 1999, 336.
[17] Hua XXVII, S. 272.
[18] Hans Georg Gadamer, Zur Aktualität der Husserlschen Phänomenologie, in *Neuere Philosophie I. Hegel – Husserl – Heidegger*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987, 160-171.

Darüber hinaus pflichten seine Überlegungen seit der *Krisis* zur Lebenswelt in der Tat weitgehend seinen früheren Ausführungen zur Welt der natürlichen Einstellung, so wie diese schon seit den *Ideen I* vorgelegt wurden, insofern bei, als der späte Husserl seinerseits die Phänomenologie im Gegensatz sowohl zum natürlichen Alltagsleben, wie auch zu den üblichen Wissenschaften (seien diese Tatsachen- oder Wesenswissenschaften) versteht. Was sich dabei aber allerdings sichtbar ändert, ist das Verhältnis dieser beiden Bereiche zu einander und, damit der Stellenwert der „natürlichen Naivität".

Schuld daran ist zunächst eine tiefer greifende Auslegung der Wissenschaft überhaupt, die sich nicht mehr damit begnügt, diese einfach als eine höhere Reflexionsstufe gegenüber dem bloß alltäglichen Dahinleben zu interpretieren. In letzterer Auslegung mochte es bisweilen so scheinen, als ob die Wissenschaften der natürlichen Einstellung letzten Endes nur unvollständig wären und ihr Niveau an Kritik und Reflexion einfach von der radikaleren Leistung der phänomenologischen Reduktion zu überbieten sind. Demgegenüber zeigen die tieferen historischen Überlegungen der *Krisis* eindeutig, dass die Wissenschaften der natürlichen Einstellung eigentlich nicht nur einen Mangel an Reflexion beheben, sondern darüber hinaus eben auch den Blick auf die Lebenswelt gänzlich verstellen, indem sie dennoch an Letztere als an ihrem verborgenen Sinnesfundament gebunden bleiben. So kommt ein Paradoxon zustande: Die objektive Wissenschaft bedarf der Lebenswelt als Voraussetzung und bezieht von ihr fortwährend selbstverständliche Geltungszuflüsse, während sie zum anderen den gesamten Bereich lebensweltlicher Erfahrung der Anonymität anheimgibt und sich von Anbeginn die Aufgabe stellt, ihn als subjektiv-relativen hinter sich zu lassen. Einerseits bezieht sich die Wissenschaft also auf das „wahre Sein" und schaltet so die Welt der vorwissenschaftlichen, subjektiv-relativen Erfahrung aus oder überdeckt sie einfach mit der Vorstellung einer an sich wirklichen Natur, indem sie diese Abstraktion für die Erfahrungswelt schlechthin verkennt; andererseits führt sie aber die Bewährung ihrer eigenen Evidenzen stets auch auf die Lebenswelt zurück, der sie die Konstitution aller ihrer Aussagen und Evidenzen letztlich mitverdankt: „Das Wissen von der objektiv-wissenschaftlichen ‚gründet' in der Evidenz der Lebenswelt."[19] Eben deshalb kann aber die objektive Wissenschaft als solche ihrem eigenen Ideal letztbegründeter Wahrheit niemals voll genügen.

Dies schließt aber unter anderem auch einen radikalen Bruch mit den überlieferten Vorstellungen von Naivität und Kritik ein, den Husserl bekanntlich unter den Titeln „Doxa" und „Episteme" in der *Krisis* bespricht. Diese Begriffe bezeichnen ursprünglich, wie bekannt, den Gegensatz zwischen dem Ideal einer vernunftbegründeten, philosophischen oder wissenschaftlichen Wahrheit, die auf ein objektives Sein geht,

[19] Hua VI, 133.

zum einen, und dem alltäglichen Meinen, das bloß auf Selbstverständlichkeit beruht, zum anderen. Im Anschluss daran zeigen nun aber die historischen Überlegungen der *Krisis* nachdrücklich, dass der Doxa ihrerseits eigentlich die unverzichtbare Rolle eines Fundaments für die Episteme zukommt, indem die Phänomenologie der Lebenswelt sich nun ausdrücklich als eine „Wissenschaft von der Doxa“[20] entwirft. Damit hängt offensichtlich eine prinzipielle Aufwertung der Erkenntnisleistungen des naiven Alltagslebens zusammen. Zu diesen gehören etwa die „alltäglich-praktischen Situationswahrheiten“[21] und die entsprechenden Formen der „okkasionellen Aussage“[22], die uns freilich an den objektiven Aussagen der Wissenschaften oder an ihren Wahrheitsansprüchen gemessen als mangelhaft erscheinen, dabei aber nicht nur den Vorhaben des vorwissenschaftlichen Lebens gerade hiermit voll genügen, sondern darüber hinaus auch in den Bewährungsprozessen der Wissenschaften noch eine notwendige Rolle spielen, indem sich etwa Naturwissenschaftler niemals rein in wissenschaftlichen Aussagen verständigen könnten um so ihre wissenschaftlich stringenten Wahrheiten zu errichten. Demnach lässt sich aber die Naivität des Alltaglebens nicht länger einfach in Richtung Objektivität überwinden.

Andererseits will Husserl allerdings den phänomenologischen Ansatz zur Lebenswelt auch nicht ohne weiteres dem alltäglichen Umgang mit ihr angleichen, da er die Wahrheiten der Phänomenologie offensichtlich nicht als bloße Situationswahrheiten hinstellen möchte. Übrigens ist das naive Alltagleben ohnehin selbstgenügsam und benötigt keine zusätzliche philosophische oder wissenschaftliche Klärung. Zwischen diesen beiden divergenten Ansprüchen gilt es für die phänomenologische Erörterung der Lebenswelt sich zurechtzufinden. Diese Aufgabe will Husserl in der *Krisis* bekanntlich dadurch lösen, dass er eine Unterscheidung einführt. In seiner Sicht kann nämlich die Lebenswelt auf zweierlei Art thematisch gemacht werden: zum einen in der „naiv-natürlichen Geradehineinstellung“ und zum anderen in einer „konsequent reflexiven Einstellung“, die sich auf das „Wie der subjektiven Gegebenheitsweise der Lebenswelt“[23] richtet.

Erstere eignet in Husserls Sicht sowohl der vor- und außerwissenschaftlichen Lebenserfahrung, d.h. dem früher sogenannten „Dahinleben“, wie auch ihrer reflexiven, theoretischen Wendung in den empirischen Geisteswissenschaften, etwa in der Historie, die sich zwar in der „vorwissenschaftlich anschaulichen Welt“[24] bewegt und auch ihre subjektiven Relativitäten beachtet, dabei aber die Bodengeltung

[20] Hua VI, 158. Siehe dazu auch Bernhard Waldenfels, „The Despised Doxa Husserl and the Continuing Crisis of Western Reason“, *Research in Phenomenology*, vol. 12, 1982, 21-38.

[21] Hua VI, 135.

[22] Hua VI, 125.

[23] Hua VI, 146.

[24] Hua VI, 150.

der Lebenswelt einfach naiv hinnimmt und nicht mit zum Thema macht. Davon setzt sich die phänomenologische Behandlung der Lebenswelt eben dadurch ab, dass sie mittels der transzendentalen Reduktion eine „totale Änderung der natürlichen Lebenseinstellung“ [25] einleitet, die es erlaubt die Vorgegebenheit der Welt in ihrer Bodengeltung zu erschließen.

So hat sich scheinbar nichts an den Ausführungen der *Ideen* verändert, indem die Phänomenologie weiterhin einen radikalen Unterschied zwischen sich und sowohl der naiven Alltagserfahrung, wie auch der objektiven Wissenschaft (zu der letztlich auch noch die Historie gehört) setzt. Doch dieser Schein trügt aus wenigstens zwei Gründen.

Zum einen liegt dies daran, dass der Rückgang auf die Lebenswelt nun ausdrücklich als eine Vorbedingung der transzendentalen Reduktion gesehen wird. Letztere erfolgt laut der *Krisis* grundsätzlich in zwei Schritten, deren erster in der Ausschaltung der objektiven Wissenschaften und ihrer Erwerbe besteht. Erst dadurch wird die Lebenswelt als Erfahrungsboden der natürlichen Einstellung thematisch, ohne von den Unterstellungen der objektiven Wissenschaft und den von sie geprägten Denkgewohnheiten verstellt zu werden. „Offenbar ist allem voran erfordert die Epoché hinsichtlich aller objektiven Wissenschaften“ [26], so Husserl ausdrücklich in der *Krisis*. Dies Letztere war aber in den *Ideen* I noch keineswegs der Fall, indem hier die Abgrenzung der Phänomenologie von den Wissenschaften der natürlichen Einstellung erst als eine sekundäre Konsequenz der „cartesianischen“ Reduktion dargestellt wurde. Im Gegensatz dazu kann nun, laut der *Krisis*, die Reduktion erst dadurch zu ihrer vollen Tragweite gelangen, dass zunächst die Lebenswelt als konkreter und universaler Geltungshorizont erschlossen wird, was offensichtlich auch bedeutet, dass die Phänomenologie sich letztlich der vorwissenschaftlichen Naivität des natürlichen Lebens wenigstens um einen wesentlichen Schritt näher sieht als den angeblich schon weniger naiven nicht-phänomenologischen Wissenschaften.

Nun will Husserl allerdings die transzendentale Einstellung mittels der Reduktion durch einen tieferen Abgrund von der naiven Alltagswelt getrennt sehen als die objektive Wissenschaft, die den Boden der Letzteren noch teilt. Aber desungeachtet kommt es zweitens in Husserls Ausführungen doch oft dazu, dass die Phänomenologie sich eben ausdrücklich auf die Seite des vorwissenschaftlichen gesunden Menschenverstands entgegen ihrer wissenschaftlichen Berichtigung stellt. Bedeutendster Beleg hierfür wäre wohl Husserls bekanntes Manuskript von 1934, das sich aus phänomenologischer

[25] Hua VI, 151.
[26] Hua VI, 138.

Sicht mit dem kopernikanischen Weltbild auseinandersetzt.[27] Bekanntlich geht es Husserl hier darum zu zeigen, dass die ursprüngliche Erfahrung der Erde (die er auch als Ur-Erde bezeichnet) nicht zulässt festzustellen, ob diese sich bewegt oder nicht, indem sie vielmehr als absoluter Bezugspunkt für die Einschätzung von Bewegung und Ruhe gilt. Damit stellt sich aber Husserl offensichtlich auf der Seite der naiven Alltagserfahrung entgegen dem wissenschaftlichen Weltbild, indem er Ersterem implizite phänomenologische Ursprünglichkeit und eine Form von Apriorizität attestiert. Dies ließe sich leicht als eine generelle Tendenz der Phänomenologie sehen, wie man etwa am Beispiel Heideggers zeigen könnte.

So wird an etlichen Stellen von *Sein und Zeit* ausdrücklich behauptet, dass sich wissenschaftliche Erkenntnis erst aufgrund einer vorgängigen Alltagserkenntnis errichten kann, indem sie gewissermaßen bloß deren ausdrückliche „Auslegung" leistet.[28] Dies impliziert eine offensichtliche Aufwertung der vorwissenschaftlichen, subjektiven Erfahrung gegenüber der wissenschaftlichen Objektivität, die etwa auch in der Erörterung der Räumlichkeit bei Heidegger offen zutage tritt, indem er hier die triviale Alltagserfahrung der subjektiven Einschätzung von Entfernungen, die bekanntlich kürzer oder länger vorkommen mögen, als sie sind, der objektiven Messung entgegensetzt. Erstere wird dabei ausdrücklich der „ursprünglichen Räumlichkeit des In-Seins" [29] zugeschrieben, die auch der objektiven Messung erst ihr Phänomen beistellt.

Bei all dem wäre es indessen verkehrt zu schließen, dass die Phänomenologie hier ohne weiteres die Position des gesunden Menschenverstandes entgegen der strengen Wissenschaftlichkeit vertritt. Im Gegenteil will die Phänomenologie damit alles weniger als der kritischen Überwindung von Naivität mittels wissenschaftlicher Aufklärung Widerstand leisten. Ihr geht es somit nicht um einen bloßen Regress, eine Rückkehr zur Naivität, die vorwissenschaftliche Erfahrung einfach als Gegensatz zur objektiven Wissenschaft ausspielt, sondern sie nimmt vielmehr Naivität vom Haus aus in der reflexiven Absicht in Anspruch, mit ihr ein verborgenes Sinnesfundament bloßzustellen. Es geht mit anderen Worten hier grundsätzlich um eine Geste der Kritik, und eben in dieser komplexen Handhabung der Naivität nicht um willen der Naivität selbst sondern gerade um willen der Kritik, d.h. als kritisches Korrektiv einer falschen oder unvollziehbaren Überwindung der Naivität, liegt auch der bedeutendste Annäherungspunkt zur Kritischen Theorie Adornos.

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[27] Edmund Husserl, „Grundlegende Untersuchungen zum Phänomenologischen Ursprung der Räumlichkeit der Natur", in Farber, M. (Hg.), *Philosophical Essays in Memory of Edmund Husserl*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1940, 305–326.

[28] Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, Tübingen: Niemeyer (zitiert als SuZ), 2006, 393.

[29] SuZ, 106.

5. Reflexion der Reflexion

Dass die Kritische Theorie und besonders Adorno ihrerseits, gleich der Phänomenologie, dem Vortheoretischen einen hohen Stellenwert zuweisen, habe ich an anderer Stelle eingehend gezeigt.[30] Dies erhellt sich schon aus Horkheimers programmatischer Abgrenzung des Begriffs der Kritischen Theorie von der „traditionellen Theorie", insofern bloß Erstere die lebensweltliche Funktion der Erkenntnis mit zur Kenntnis nimmt und davon Rechenschaft gibt, „was Theorie in der menschlichen Existenz bedeutet."[31] Dies bezieht sich bei Adorno stets sowohl auf die gesellschaftlichen Faktoren, die den wissenschaftlichen Betrieb heteronom bedingen, wie auch auf die Möglichkeit, vorwissenschaftliche Alltagserfahrung als fruchtbare Quelle für die Sozialwissenschaften zu verwerten. Mit Letzterem geht es Adorno prinzipiell um eine Erweiterung der Erfahrungsbegriffs – im Sinne des bekannten Begriffs der „unreglementierter Erfahrung" – die er selbst im Zusammenhang mit der Phänomenologie, etwa jener Alfred Schütz' setzt[32] und in deren Zentrum sich das methodologische Instrument der "physiognomischen Analyse"[33] befindet.

Die Physiognomik sieht Adorno in etlichen seiner Schriften als ein unverzichtbares Verfahren für die kritische Gesellschaftstheorie, die darin besteht, Alltagserfahrungen und -beobachtungen – "Umgangsgespräche, Haltungen, Gesten und Physiognomien bis ins verschwindend Geringfügigste hinein"[34] – auf ihren latenten sozialen Wahrheitsgehalt hin zu befragen und zu entziffern. Dem spricht Adorno eine große methodologische Bedeutung für die Kritische Theorie zu, indem er schlichtweg behauptet: „[g]esellschaftliche Erkenntnis, die nicht mit dem physiognomischen Blick anhebt, verarmt unerträglich"[35]. Das Prozedere hat allerdings seine Eigenart, was sich in wenigstens drei Hinsichten im Kontrast zur klassischen Phänomenologie deutlich zeigen kann. Erstens will Adornos Physiognomik Einzelphänomene der Alltagserfahrung deuten, indem sie so auf die Verallgemeinerung ihrer Beobachtungen mittels induktiver Anhäufung empirischer Einzelfälle oder

[30] Christian Ferencz-Flatz, „Zur Funktion des Vortheoretischen bei Adorno. Der Erfahrungsbegriff der Kritischen Theorie und die Phänomenologie", *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, Band 67, Heft 6, 2019, 930-951.

[31] Max Horkheimer, „Traditionelle und kritische Theorie", in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Band 4: Schriften 1936-1941, Frankfurt a. Main: Fischer, 2009, 162-225, 171

[32] Vgl. Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno, *Einleitung in die Soziologie (1968)*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2017, 91 f.

[33] Siehe dazu auch Christian Ferencz-Flatz, „Eidetic intuition as physiognomics: rethinking Adorno's phenomenological heritage", *Continental Philosophy Review*, vol. 52, 2019, 361–380.

[34] Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno, *Soziologische Schriften*, Bd. 1. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp (zitiert als GS 8), 2003, 194.

[35] GS 8, 315.

auch der „Ideation“[36] verzichtet. Im Gegensatz dazu soll vielmehr gezeigt werden, dass der Einzelfall schon auf Allgemeinheit verweist, indem an ihm Aspekte der gesellschaftlichen Totalität aufleuchten. Zweitens weigert sich die Physiognomik Adornos die Befunde der vortheoretischen Erfahrung zu apriorisieren und gerade darin, dass sie ihre geschichtliche Relativität aufzeigt, besteht auch ihre eigentümliche kritische Funktion.[37] Drittens steht die Physiognomik auch jeder Form des subjektiven Sinnverstehens quer gegenüber, indem sie sich vielmehr eben vornimmt, über den Handlungssinn der Akteure und ihren psychologischen Triebfedern hinauszugehen um die darin verkappten gesellschaftlichen Motive zu entdecken.

Ungeachtet solcher offensichtlicher Unterschiede zur Phänomenologie aber und trotz der Tatsache, dass Adorno etwa in seiner *Metakritik der Erkenntnistheorie* Husserls Gebrauch des Naivitätsbegriffs vor allem in den *Logischen Untersuchungen* ausdrücklich verpönt, indem er dort eingehend zeigt, wie die Phänomenologie sich letztlich durch ihren „transzendentalen Idealismus“ derselben Naivität schuldig macht, die Husserl selbst am „naiven Realismus“ bezichtigt[38], lässt sich dennoch zeigen, dass Adorno seinerseits gegenüber der Naivität eine ähnlich komplexe Position bezieht. Er bringt sie genauer, wie Husserl, ebenfalls als eine *kritische Instanz* ins Spiel. Dies erhellt schon ohne weiteres aus einer Stelle seiner Vorlesung zur *Philosophischen Terminologie*, die mit einer Bezugnahme auf Husserl und Heidegger anhebt und sich dann folgenderweise der philosophischen Dignität der vorwissenschaftlichen Erfahrung widmet:

> Ich halte in einem gewissen Sinn diesen Begriff der ursprünglichen Erfahrung fest; ich glaube, daß angesichts des ungeheuren Übergewichts der verdinglichten Welt das Mittel, durch das wir uns dem Schein entziehen, den diese verhärtete, präfabrizierte Welt uns antut, tatsächlich darin besteht, daß wir zu solchen Erfahrungen überhaupt fähig sind, ich möchte fast sagen, daß wir uns einen Moment der Naivität erhalten. So ist denn überhaupt paradoxerweise die Philosophie, die zunächst doch die Forderung der Unnaivität gegenüber der Erscheinung ist, auf der anderen Seite auch die Forderung der Naivität in dem Sinn, daß man sich nicht dumm machen läßt, daß man nicht der Welt einfach das abkauft, was sie sagt, sondern daß man, ich möchte beinahe sagen, wie ein Kind auf dem beharrt, bei dem stehenbleibt, was man nun einmal gesehen hat.[39]

[36] Vgl. dazu Dieter Lohmar, „Die phänomenologische Methode der Wesensschau und ihre Präzisierung als eidetische Variation”, *Phänomenologische Forschungen*, 2005, 65-91.

[37] Adorno, *Einleitung in die Soziologie (1968)*, 245.

[38] Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno, *Zur Metakritik der Erkenntnistheorie*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp (zitiert als GS 5), 2003, 148 f.

[39] Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno, *Philosophische Terminologie*, Bd. 1. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1973, 85 f.

Freilich eignet sich eine solche Bekenntnis vortrefflich dazu, die Position der Kritischen Theorie aus Sicht seriöser Wissenschaftlichkeit unvertretbar, wenn nicht gerade lächerlich zu machen. Diesen Vorwurf macht sich in der Tat beispielsweise der Soziologe Hans Albert während des „Positivismusstreits" – der bekannten Auseinandersetzung zwischen den Vertretern der Frankfurter Schule und jenen des soziologischen Positivismus, die die deutsche Soziologie der sechziger Jahre geprägt hat – zu eigen. So wirft Albert sowohl Adorno wie auch Habermas mit sichtbarer Genugtuung vor, dass ihre Befürwortung der vorwissenschaftlichen Erfahrung im Gegensatz zur operationalisierten Wissenschaft, mit ihren bestimmten Prozeduren der Verifikation und Beweisführung, letztlich darauf hinausgeht, dem „gemeinen Menschenverstand" und das heisst den herrschenden Klischees und Vorurteilen das Wort zu führen. Damit stünde die Kritische Theorie aber bezeichnenderweise in Alberts Sicht eben nicht auf Seiten einer wirklich kritischen Erkenntnis, sondern unmittelbar auf jener der „natürlichen Naivität".[40]

Dieser Vorwurf trifft aber nicht sein Ziel. Zum einen macht sich nämlich Adorno keineswegs einer Hypostasierung der alltäglichen Naivität schuldig. Im Gegenteil werden in seinen Schriften die physiognomischen Beobachtungen fortwährend als bloßes Moment eingestuft, was unter anderem auch dadurch zum Ausdruck kommt, dass diese, anders als in der Phänomenologie, schon durch ihre Auswahl dem Standard wissenschaftlicher Plausibilität widerstreben. Adornos Alltagsbemerkungen zeichnen sich vor allem durch ihre Skurrilität aus. Dies ist schon in seinen frühen amerikanischen Schriften zum Radio ersichtlich, wo er bisweilen die Einstellung eines naiven Zuhörers einnimmt und auf Erfahrungen zurückgreift, wie der Glaube, man wäre vom Radio wie von einem belebten und mit einer Eigenstimme ausgestatteten Gegenstand angesprochen oder die Analogie eines laufenden Radio zur Wasserleitung.[41] Einige dieser Beispiele werden offen als Illusionen angesprochen, wobei es Adorno eben nicht darauf ankommt solchen naiven Eindrücken volle Geltung zuzusprechen, sondern vielmehr sie auf ihren Wahrheitsgehalt zu deuten, der ihnen trotz ihrer Skurrilität eignet und die der „gesunde Menschenverstand" selbst schon zu informiert ist zu vertreten.

Darin sind solche Erfahrungen offensichtlich jenen des Kindes ähnlich, die Adorno ebenfalls oft in seinen Überlegungen anführt. So vergleicht er etwa an einer bekannten Stelle der *Negativen Dialektik* die phänomenologie Frage nach dem Sein

[40] Hans Albert, Der Mythos der totalen Vernunft. Dialektische Ansprüche im Lichte undialektischer Kritik, in Th.W. Adorno u.a. (Hrsg), *Der Positivismusstreit in der deutschen Soziologie*, München: dtv, 1993, 193-234, 204 f.

[41] Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno, *Current of Music. Elements of a Radio Theory*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2008, 132 u.a.

mit dem kindlichen Fragen. Dies ist keineswegs abwertend gemeint, sondern dient bloß der Erläuterung dessen, dass schon hier der Anschein der Unmittelbarkeit eigentlich an sich gesellschaftlich vermittelt ist. Indem nämlich das „Warum?" des Kindes naiv Worte mit ihrem Wahrheitsgehalt identifizieren, sind diese Fragen von Anbeginn an einem gegebenen Sprachgebrauch orientiert. Das Beispiel bezeugt somit sowohl den Wert eigensinniger Alltagserfahrungen, wie auch die Notwendigkeit ihrer weiteren theoretischen Verarbeitung und Hinterfragung.[42] Kindliche Erfahrungen unterscheiden sich aber darüber hinaus vom gesunden Menschenverstand auch durch zwei weitere Merkmale. Zum einen bringen sie ein weit tieferes Verhältnis der Einzelerfahrung zum Allgemeinen ins Spiel. So zeigt Adorno etwa im Ausgang von Proust, wie gewisse Erfahrungen der Kindheit erst dadurch, dass sie schlichtweg Einmaligkeit und Individuiertheit beanspruchen, zugleich Aussicht auf eine konkretere Allgemeinheit eröffnen, als jene der bloßen Generalisierung, eine Allgemeinheit die jene der Sache selbst wäre. [43] Dies ist offensichtlich bei den Gehalten des gesunden Menschenverstands nicht der Fall, der bloß auf ein durchschnittliches Verständnis, gesellschaftlichen Klischees und abstrakten Rationalisierungen beruhen. Zum anderen bringt die kindliche Erfahrung aber darüber hinaus auch Einsichten einer ganz anderen Art als das sozial unproblematische und kulturell sanktionierte *common sense* ins Spiel. Dies erörtert Adorno in der *Negativen Dialektik* eindringlich am Beispiel der kindlichen Faszination für das Abscheuliche:

> Unbewußtes Wissen flüstert den Kindern zu, was davon der zivilisatorischen Erziehung verdrängt wird, darum ginge es: die armselige physische Existenz zündet ins oberste Interesse, das kaum weniger verdrängt wird, ins Was ist das und Wohin geht es. Wem gelänge, auf das sich zu besinnen, was ihn einmal aus den Worten Luderbach und Schweinstiege ansprang, wäre wohl näher am absoluten Wissen als das Hegelsche Kapitel, das es dem Leser verspricht, um es ihm überlegen zu versagen.[44]

Indem sich so die Kritische Theorie auf das Vorwissenschaftliche gleich wie auf die kindliche Erfahrung beruft will sie nicht einfach entgegen der Kultur auf eine infantile Position regredieren. Vielmehr sollen damit kritisch ihre Grundlagen im Vorkulturellen bloßgestellt werden. Demnach geht es für Adorno nicht darum, einfach Naivität der wissenschaftlichen Kritik und Reflexion vorzuziehen, sondern darum, in der Bezugnahme auf Naivität selbst jene Reflexion erneut zu reflektieren

[42] Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno, *Negative Dialektik*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp (zitiert als GS 6), 2003, 114f.
[43] GS 6, 364.
[44] GS 6, 357.

und die Kritik mittels einer Metakritik zu überbieten. Dies spricht Adorno selbst deutlich aus, indem er sein physiognomisches Verfahren auch als eine „Reflexion der Reflexion“[45], bzw. als einen „rationalen Revisionsprozess gegen den Rationalismus“[46] bezeichnet.

6. Epische Naivität

Solche Überlegungen klingen an etlichen Stellen in Adornos Werk an, am deutlichsten vermutlich in einem kurzen literarischen Essay, der 1943 im Zusammenhang der *Dialektik der Aufklärung* verfasst wurde und der Frage der „epischen Naivität“ nachhängt. Damit meint Adorno, im Ausgang von einem überdetaillierten Gleichnis aus Homers *Odyssee* eine Eigenart der epischen Erzählweise bezeichnen zu können. Diese hat in seiner Sicht ihren Ursprung zunächst darin, dass die epische Erzählung ihren Stoff dem Mythos entnimmt, den er so zwangsläufig nachahmt, dabei aber dieses Material eben auf den Stand des aufgeklärten Bewusstseins bringt. Darin liegt eine Ambivalenz, der sich der anachronische Anschein der Epik, ja eine gewisse Dummheit und Naivität der epischen Darstellung verschuldet. Diese findet ihren Ausdruck letztlich an einem gewissen Hang zum „Gegenständlichen“, d.h. zu einer inständigen Betrachtung des Einzelgegenstandes, die sich spröde macht gegenüber seiner begrifflichen, allgemeinen Durchleuchtung. Dieses charakteristische Spannungsverhältnis tritt in den Werken der Epik, so Adorno, an all jenen Stellen besonders deutlich hervor, an denen etwa ein Bild oder Gleichnis weit über ihren Sinn für die Darstellung der Handlung an Gewicht gewinnt bis dahin, dass sie letzteres fast gänzlich vergessen macht; ähnlich aber auch dort wo mittels bestimmter Verbindungspartikeln („oder“, „nämlich“ usw.) eine logische Form des Zusammenhangs vorgetäuscht wird, die eigentlich gar nicht besteht und sogleich in sich zusammenfällt. An solchen Stellen verselbständigt sich laut Adorno die Sprache der epischen Erzählung von der reflektierenden Vernunft, der sie eigentlich dient, um gleichsam „das Wirkliche rein, unverstellt von der Gewalt der Ordnungen hervortreten zu lassen.“[47]

In Adornos Sicht bezeichnet dies indessen nicht bloß eine literarische Eigenart, deren Spur er bei Homer, wie bei Goethe, Stifter oder Keller findet, sondern damit zugleich auch einen Zusammenhang von Begriff, Rationalität und Sache überhaupt,

[45] GS 6, 114.

[46] Adorno, *Philosophische Terminologie*, 87.

[47] Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno, „Über epische Naivität“, *Noten zur Literatur*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp (zitiert als GS 11), 2003, 34-40, 37.

der gleichfalls auch für die Theorie von Belang ist. So sieht Adorno noch im gleichen Aufsatz die undialektische Hypostasierung einer solchen naiven Erzählweise als artgleich mit der Pseudo-Konkretion der „philosophischen Anthropologie von heutzutage“[48], sprich Heidegger, die ihrerseits seiner Ansicht nach ähnlich Naivität schlichtweg gegen das kritische Bewusstsein ausspielt. Wenn nun aber die epische Naivität nicht bloß in ihr Falsches, als Lüge, um „die allgemeine Besinnung von der blinden Anschauung des Besonderen fernzuhalten“ [49], anzusehen ist, sondern darüber hinaus mit all ihrer Beschränktheit doch auch als ein legitimer Einspruch gedeutet werden kann, gegen die „Beschränktheit, die jeden Gedanken ereilt, indem er den einen Gegenstand kraft dessen begrifflicher Operation vergisst, ihn überspinnt, anstatt ihn eigentlich zu erkennen“[50], dann entspricht ihr eigentlich auch im Bereich der Theorie zugleich eine andere Verfahrensweise.

Es ist dies, so Adorno im selben Aufsatz, eine Theorie, „die noch den Verlust von Erfahrung aus der Erfahrung der Gesellschaft bestimmt“[51], und deren „Utopie der Erkenntnis“ es wäre, „das Begriffslose mit Begriffen aufzutun, ohne es ihnen gleichzumachen“.[52] Dass diese Theorie, die sich der Naivität unnaiv als „Korrektiv“ und „Kritik der bürgerlichen Vernunft“ bedient, eben seine eigene Kritische Theorie bezeichnet, steht außer Zweifel. Dass diese Beschreibung aber zugleich auch bedeutende Tendenzen der Phänomenologie trifft – die sich ihrerseits reflexiv auf Naivität beruft und einen ähnlichen Begriff der Naivität als metakritisches Instrument entwickelt – sollte der vorliegende Aufsatz skizzenhaft nahelegen.

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[48] GS 11, 35.
[49] GS 11, 36.
[50] GS 11, 36.
[51] GS 11, 37.
[52] GS 6, 19.

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STUDIA UBB. PHILOSOPHIA, Vol. 66 (2021), 1, pp. 67-98
(RECOMMENDED CITATION)
DOI:10.24193/subbphil.2021.1.04

PHENOMENOLOGICAL VARIATION AND INTERCULTURAL TRANSFORMATION: MERLEAU-PONTY'S PHENOMENOLOGY AND ABU-LUGHOD'S ETHNOGRAPHY IN DIALOGUE

LAURA McMAHON*

ABSTRACT. This paper develops phenomenological resources for understanding the nature of intercultural understanding, drawing on the work of Merleau-Ponty in dialogue with feminist anthropologist Abu-Lughod. Part One criticizes Western framings of non-Western violence against women that render the experience of non-Western Others inaccessible. Part Two discusses how certain strains in Western feminism reinforce some of these problematic framings. Part Three offers a phenomenological account of our experience of other persons, and Part Four argues that intercultural understanding takes the form of a "variation" between one's own and the other's experience. Part Five explores the implications of this phenomenology of cross-cultural understanding for interpreting dynamic cultural transformations, and the politics of violence against women, in an interconnected and unequal world.

***Keywords**: Maurice Merleau-Ponty; Lila Abu-Lughod; critical phenomenology; feminist anthropology; multiculturalism*

This paper develops phenomenological resources for thinking about the nature and demands of intercultural understanding in a world shaped by the legacy of Western colonialism and imperialism, drawing on Maurice Merleau-Ponty's lectures and essays on phenomenology and the social sciences from 1960 and 1961 in dialogue with Lila Abu-Lughod's ethnographic study of a particular Bedouin community in Egypt in the late 1970s. The motivation for this paper is twofold. First, it aims to criticize framings in Western popular consciousness, and also in certain academic discourses in the West, of what are seen as abhorrent "non-Western"

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(and often "Islamic") practices, particular with regard to the treatment of women. Second, it aims to phenomenologically describe the lived experience of cross-cultural understanding in an increasingly interconnected world deeply shaped, in Alia Al-Saji's words, by "colonial durations," and in so doing to begin to transform our possibilities for seeing and encountering one another in more honest and just ways.[1]

I begin, in Part One, with an account of a so-called 'honor' killing that took place in Berlin in 2005, and explore the manner in which 'honor killings' have become potent symbols in the Western cultural imagination and in human rights discourses of Islam's violent oppression of women, despite having no basis or justification in Islamic religion. Part Two engages with Merleau-Ponty alongside postcolonial feminist scholars in order to critically assess how political and academic debates between "universalism" and "cultural relativism" have shaped understanding of the oppression of women in non-Western cultures in both epistemologically and politically problematic ways. I argue that phenomenology offers us a better route into making sense of the lived experience of intercultural understanding that does justice to the genuine insights of both universalism and cultural relativism while avoiding the "pitfalls" of each. In Part Three, I offer a phenomenological account of our experience of other persons, drawing on examples from Abu-Lughod's ethnography of a Bedouin "honor" society in the Western desert of Egypt.

Part Four—the principal focus of the paper—argues that intercultural understanding takes the form of a phenomenological "variation" of the other's experience in light of one's own and one's own experience in light of the other—a practice that simultaneously enables the other to appear in her complex humanity rather than as an exotified stereotype, and the self to transform its conception of its own self and cultural world. In Part Five, I explore the implications of this phenomenology of cross-cultural understanding for interpreting the nature of dynamic cultural transformation in a deeply interconnected and unequal contemporary world—dynamic cultural

[1] Alia Al-Saji, "SPEP Co-Director's Address: Hesitation as Philosophical Method—Travel Bans, Colonial Durations, and the Affective Weight of the Past," *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 32, no. 3, 2018, 331-59. For arguments concerning the transformative nature of phenomenological description, see Gayle Salamon, "What's Critical About Critical Phenomenology?" *Puncta: Journal of Critical Phenomenology*, 1, 2018, 8-17; Laura McMahon, "Phenomenology as First-Order Perception: Speech, Vision, and Reflection in Merleau-Ponty," in Kirsten Jacobson and John Russon (eds.), *Perception and Its Development in Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 308-37; and John Russon, "Phenomenological Description and Artistic Expression," in Peter Costello and Licia Carlson (eds.), *Phenomenology and the Arts* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016), 3-24.

transformation at the heart of recent "honor" crimes. I conclude with some suggestions regarding not only the contributions that phenomenology can offer intercultural understanding in the contemporary world, but also the imperative for phenomenological research to engage with social scientific research into the diversity of human experience in a multicultural world.

1. An "honor" killing in Berlin

On February 7, 2005, 23-year-old Hatun "Aynur" Sürücü was shot by her 18-year-old brother Ayhan Sürücü at a bus stop near the Berlin apartment where she lived with her six-year-old son, Can. The nine Sürücü siblings were born and raised in Berlin to ethnically-Kurdish parents from Turkey. At the age of sixteen, Aynur was married to a cousin in Turkey (a not uncommon practice among the Turkish community in Germany), before fleeing the latter's abuse and returning, pregnant, to her parental home.[2] When living with her infant son in the Sürücü's crowded apartment became untenable—in large part due to the verbal abuse suffered by three of her brothers, and the likely sexual abuse suffered by one of them—Aynur availed herself of German social services to move into a home for young mothers and eventually into her own apartment, and to enroll in college to become an electrician. During these years, Aynur participated in modern German youth culture, making close friends, dating young men and developing a significant romantic relationship with one of them, and going to dance clubs and parties. She also stopped wearing the *hijab* customary for girls and women in her Turkish Muslim community. Despite her three brothers' ongoing abuse and threats, she worked to maintain a relationship with her family of origin, who doted upon her son Can. After an argument one evening about her new lifestyle between Aynur and her brother Ayhun, Ayhun shot and killed his older sister in an attack that was evidently pre-meditated.

Thanks in large part to the murder being labeled an "honor" killing, this story became a national sensation in Germany in the following weeks after Ayhun was arrested for the murder, along with brothers Alparslan and Mutlu as accomplices (Ayhun, a minor who confessed to the murder, was imprisoned for ten years; the older brothers were acquitted due to lack of evidence first in Berlin and

[2] For a discussion of the historical and socio-economic situation of Turkish immigrants to Germany in general, and of the practice of arranged marriages between daughters and relatives back in Turkey in particular, see Katherine Pratt Ewing, *Stolen Honor: Stigmatizing Muslim Men in Berlin* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2008), 15-19 and *passim.*

later in Istanbul).[3] "Honor" killing names the phenomenon of a member of a woman's family of origin—in many cases a brother—murdering the woman for bringing dishonor upon the family through real or perceived sexual impropriety according to strict norms of marriage and patriliny. Though they have historically occurred among communities from non-Muslim regions of the world, "honor" killings are most often associated in popular reporting and human rights discourses with Muslim communities originating in the Middle East, Northern Africa, and Central and Southeast Asia.[4]

It has often been observed that the veil worn by many Muslim women has come in the popular Western imagination to symbolize both the "backwardness" of the Islamic world and its perceived oppression of Muslim women.[5] Something similar can be said of "honor" killings. Though "honor" killings in fact have nothing to do with the religion of Islam but rather arise (and rarely) from certain mores within Arabian patrilineal communities that predate Islam, the "honor" killing has become in the popular Western imagination a potent symbol for the barbarity of Islamic "cultural traditions," a barbarity that is seen as particularly detrimental to Muslim women.[6] Indeed, German-American anthropologist Katherine Ewing notes the manner in which headlines in German newspapers interchangeably attributed the motive for Aynur Sürücü murder to her removal of her headscarf and to her supposedly sexually licentious lifestyle, rhetorically reinforcing stereotypical links between violence against Muslim women—seen in its extreme in the "honor" crime—and Islamic religious traditions, symbolically encapsulated in the veiling of women.[7] Such stereotypical links between the oppression of women and Islamic religious traditions are not merely confined to tabloid media representations and

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[3] Patrick Kingsley, "Turkey Acquits 2 Men in Berlin 'Honor Killing' of Their Sister," *The New York Times,* May 30, 2017. https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/30/world/europe/turkey-germany-honor-killing.html. Accessed January 17, 2021. See also Ewing, *Stolen Honor*, 189.

[4] For example, "honor" killings have taken place in Hindu regions of rural India. See Diane E. King, *Kurdistan on the Global Stage: Kinship, Land, and Community in Iraq* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2014), 134 and Ewing, *Stolen Honor*, 166.

[5] See, for example, Lila Abu-Lughod, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* (Harvard: Harvard UP, 2013), 35-46 and Alia Al-Saji, "The Racialization of Muslim Veils: A Philosophical Analysis," *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 36.8, 2010, 875-902. See also Frantz Fanon, "Algeria Unveiled," *A Dying Colonialism*, transl. Haakon Chevalier (New York: Grove Press, 1965), 35-68. I have explored this issue in the context of how Algerian women revolutionaries deployed "traditional" and modern clothing in their resistance to French occupation in "Religion, Multiculturalism, and Phenomenology as a Critical Practice: Lessons from the Algerian War of Independence," *Puncta*, 3.1, 2020, 1-26.

[6] Diane King, "The Personal is Patrilineal: *Namus* as Sovereignty," in Diane King (ed.), *Middle Eastern Belongings* (London: Routledge, 2010).

[7] Ewing, 156.

the Western popular imagination. They also inform reports by human rights organizations. For example, Amnesty International's 2012 "Culture of Discrimination: A Fact Sheet on 'Honor' Killings," though it does not explicitly call honor killing an Islamic phenomenon, uses exclusively examples from Islamic contexts while claiming that "[s]o-called honor killings are based on the deeply rooted belief that women are objects and commodities, not human beings entitled to dignity and rights equal to those of men. Women are considered the property of male relatives and are seen to embody the honor of the men to whom they 'belong.'"[8]

Framing the murder of Aynur Sürücü as a barbaric "Islamic" crime is problematic in two, complementary manners. First, and most importantly, it renders the singular, complex reality of a young woman invisible, burying this lived experience under exotified stereotypes.[9] Ambiguously entitled *A Regular Woman*, even a recent cinematic treatment of Sürücü's story that seeks to humanize the young woman in her concrete experiences, interests, and relationships, casts the murder and the events surrounding it as a violent clash between a recalcitrant, traditional religious culture stuck in a barbaric past, and a flexible, modern world on a path of equality and progress.[10] "Good" Muslims in the film are ones who have assimilated to majority Western culture in their dress, speech, gender relations, and employment, a choice presented as open to all and happily embraced by Sürücü, but refused by the "bad" Muslims exemplified by Sürücü's family of origin and the fundamentalist Imam presented as guiding her brothers violently sexist views and actions. As one online review (uncritically) puts it, *A Regular Woman* "doesn't leave much doubt that Islam and Muslim cultures, in particular, have some serious civilizing to do if they want to wholly join the 21st century."[11] Despite the film's humanizing ambitions, then, the cultural personal and complexity of Sürücü's own lived experience as a women of Turkish heritage living in Germany at the turn of the 21st century is, once again, obscured by stereotypes—stereotypes that, as we shall see further shortly, have deep roots in the history of colonialism. The second, complementary problem with the framing of Sürücü's murder as a barbaric

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[8] "Culture of Discrimination: A Fact Sheet on 'Honor' Killings," *Amnesty International*, 2012. Retrieved 17 January, 2021. See also Abu-Lughod, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?*, 116.

[9] On the manner in which cultural imperialism simultaneously stereotypes and renders invisible, see Iris Marion Young, "The Five Faces of Oppression," in *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1995), 39-65, 58-61. See also Al-Saji, "The Racialization of Muslim Veils," 881-82.

[10] *A Regular Woman*, dir. Sherry Hormann (Vincent TV, 2019).

[11] Roger Moore, "'A Regular Woman' Narrates the Horrors of her 'Honor Killing,'" *Movie Nation*, June 22, 2020. https://rogersmovienation.com/2020/06/22/movie-review-a-regular-woman-narrates-the-horrors-of-her-honor-killing/.

"Islamic" crime is that, in dehumanizing the "Other," the "Westerner" is enabled to remain complacent and self-satisfied in her own modern, secular "normality," such that she can fail to critically interrogate both abiding problems at play in modern "Western" cultures like Germany and the United States, and the deep historical connections between European colonialism and American imperialism, on the one side, and "breakdowns" in traditional cultures thanks to modern colonialism and its legacies, on the other side. In what follows, we shall see a prominent manner in which these dual problems are at play in some contemporary discourses of Western feminism, and introduce Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological method as a route out of some of these difficulties.

2. Universalism, cultural relativism, and the promise of phenomenology

Framed as results of "a culture of discrimination," in the words of Amnesty International, or as a "clash of civilizations," in Samuel Huntington's infamous words, the status of phenomena such as "honor" killings is often debated in Western contexts along the competing lines of "universalism" and "cultural relativism."[12] Broadly speaking, universalism is the view that, as feminist philosopher Shannon Hoff critically characterizes it, "there are universal or transcultural values that are indifferent to the particularities of context and can simply be transferred to other sociocultural worlds."[13] For example, "universal human rights" are understood to belong to all human individuals, regardless of historical or cultural circumstance. Epistemologically, universalism is an example of what Merleau-Ponty calls "logicism" in his lecture "Phenomenology and the Sciences of Man" (1961): it takes scientific and moral thinking to take place in a "special sphere, the place of thought in the strict sense of the term, where the philosopher may get in touch with an intrinsic truth."[14] In feminist philosophy, we find prominent examples of universalism in Susan Moller Okin's "Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?" (1999) and Martha Nussbaum's "Women and Cultural Universals" (1999), which argue for

[12] See Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1993) (https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/1993-06-01/clash-civilizations), and Edward Said's critical response, "The Clash of Ignorance," *The Nation*, October 4, 2001. (https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/clash-ignorance/).

[13] Shannon Hoff, "Hegel and the Possibility of Intercultural Criticism," in Susan Dodd and Neil G. Robertson (eds.), *Hegel and Canada: Unity of Opposites?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 342-67, 342.

[14] "Phenomenology and the Sciences of Man," transl. John Wild, in James M. Edie (ed.), *The Primacy of Perception and Other Essays* (Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1964), 43-95, 48. Hereafter cited as PSM. See also Merleau-Ponty's sustained criticism of rationalism or "intellectualism" throughout *Phenomenology of Perception*, transl. Donald A. Landes (New York: Routledge, 2012). Hereafter cited as PP.

universal standards—Kantian rights and Aristotelian capabilities, respectively—according to which we can morally criticize the oppressive practices of any given culture.[15] From a universalist perspective, oppressive "cultural practices" such as honor killings must be unequivocally condemned—and certainly never politically protected under claims to cultural "group rights"—on pains of being guilty of ethnocentrism; as Okin argues, "[w]hen a woman from a more patriarchal culture comes to the United States (or some other Western, basically liberal state), why should she be less protected from male violence than other women are?"[16]

Cultural relativism, by contrast, is the view that so-called "universal" values in fact arise in specific historical and cultural contexts. Universal human rights can (at least in their formulation in Western contexts and international bodies in a Western-centric world) be traced back to principles articulated in the European Enlightenment, which holds tacitly individualistic and rationalistic premises concerning the nature and dignity of the human being.[17] Epistemologically, cultural relativism is an example of what Merleau-Ponty calls "sociologism" (and interchangeably "psychologism" and "historicism") in "Phenomenology and the Sciences of Man," which is the position that all human thought and values is "conditioned by physiological, psychological, sociological, and historical causes," and thus cannot proclaim any access to universal truth.[18] The political consequences of such a view are that Western values masquerading as universal standards of judgment should not be used to morally assess the practices of non-Western cultures; rather, cultural practices must be assessed on their own internal terms. Now, cultural relativism has a rich history in twentieth-century anthropology, which did an enormous amount to challenge the Western-centrism at play in both the history of European colonialism and the history of anthropology itself.[19] But in its vicious form in

[15] Susan Moller Okin, "Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?" in Joshua Cohen, Matthew Howard, and Martha Nussbaum (eds.), *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1999), 7-26; Martha Nussbaum, "Women and Cultural Universals," *Sex and Social Justice* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999), 29-54. For a helpful criticism of the position of universalism in feminist philosophy, see Alison M. Jaggar, "'Saving Amina': Global Justice for Women and Intercultural Dialogue," *Ethics and International Affairs*, 19.3, 2005, 55-75, 57-59.

[16] "Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?," 20.

[17] On the Western and Christian roots of "universal human rights," see John Russon, *Sites of Exposure: Art, Politics, and the Nature of Experience* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2017), 81-86, 88-89, 91-92. For a criticism of the individualistic nature of modern rights, see Shannon Hoff, "Rights and Worlds: On the Political Significance of Belonging," *Philosophical Forum*, 45.4, 2014, 355-73.

[18] PSM 48. Compare to Merleau-Ponty's sustained criticism of empiricism throughout PP.

[19] For a defense of cultural relativism against common misunderstandings and criticisms, see Clifford Geertz, "Anti Anti-Relativism," *American Anthropologist*, 86.2, 1984, 263-78. For an appreciation of the contributions of cultural relativism that also considers some of the inherent contradictions of its own universal claims, see Elvin Hatch, "The Good Side of Relativism," *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 53, 1997, 371-81.

political and academic debates concerning how to respond to the oppression of women in non-Western cultures, it can take the form of a moral relativism that holds that understanding and criticism across cultural lines is impossible—a position that seems simply to abandon women to their terrible fates.[20]

Exemplars of both universalists and cultural relativists have demonstrated deeply impoverished visions of culture in their arguments. When a universalist like Okin accuses non-Western cultures of being "bad for women"—elaborating on often sensationalist examples to illustrate her point—she displays an attitude of what feminist philosopher Uma Narayan calls "death by culture": she assumes that "culture" can be named as a sufficient explanation for the oppression and violent deaths of women in non-Western contexts.[21] Ascribing to (non-Western) "culture" such explanatory power offers a vision of (non-Western) cultures as monolithic and ahistorical, while at the same time tacitly presuming that the Western cultures of the universalist authors are in fact a-cultural, dynamic, and historically emancipated (at least in comparison to their non-Western counterparts).[22] Such impoverished visions of non-Western cultures coupled with a "West is best" attitude has deep roots in the history of colonialism, and has been more recently used to justify recent American military interventions in the Middle East, such as the invasion of Afghanistan following the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.[23]

Despite its roots in a rich appreciation for the complexities of non-Western cultures on the part of anthropologists, vicious forms of cultural relativism can also hold visions of non-Western cultures as simple, homogeneous, and static. As Nussbaum argues, in their calls to preserve certain non-Western cultural "traditions" from Western judgment and influence, (vicious) cultural relativists often oversimplify the culture in question (speaking, for example, about "Indian culture"), ignoring the vast diversity *within* cultures as well as competing internal interpretations of its

[20] See Nussbaum, "Women and Cultural Universals," 35-36.

[21] Uma Narayan, *Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions, and Third-World Feminisms* (New York: Routledge, 1997), Chapter Three. For related arguments, see Abu-Lughod, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?*, 30-34, 41, 127; Abu-Lughod, "Writing Against Culture," *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present* (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1986), 137-62; and Leti Volpp, "Blaming Culture for Bad Behavior," *Yale Journal of Law and the Humanities*, 12.1, 2000, 89-116. Nussbaum, the other feminist philosopher offered as an example of a universalist above, cannot be said to be guilty of this charge; see "Women and Cultural Universals," 36-37 and "A Plea for Difficulty," in Joshua Cohen, Matthew Howard, and Martha Nussbaum (eds.), *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1999), 105-14.

[22] Narayan, 50.

[23] Such justifications were used both by Republican politicians and mainstream American feminists. See Abu-Lughod, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?*, Chapter One and Janine Rich, "'Saving' Muslim Women: Feminism, U.S. Policy and the War on Terror," *International Affairs* Review, Fall 2014.

"traditions" across individuals and social groups and throughout history.[24] Furthermore, as Abu-Lughod argues, while "[c]ultural relativism is certainly an improvement on ethnocentrism and the racism, cultural imperialism, and imperiousness that underlie it; the problem is that it is too late not to interfere."[25]

I would like to suggest that the philosophical method of phenomenology offers a third route that is more epistemologically- and politically-sound than are either the extremes of universalism or cultural relativism when it comes to accounting for our lived experience of critically understanding others across cultural lines, and for attending to the richness and complexity of cultural existence. By inquiring into what our lived experience of understanding across cultural lines is actually like, phenomenological description articulates both the manners in which we are deeply shaped by our cultural and historical circumstances (as the relativist would have it), and the ways in which such shaping is lived not as a prison but as the source of our insight and agency (as the universalist would have it).[26] It is precisely *through* rather than *apart from* the resources afforded us by our cultural and historical circumstances—our languages, educations, religions, and so forth—that we are able to develop perspectives that can *go beyond* these cultural and historical circumstances.[27] Merleau-Ponty writes in "The Philosopher and Sociology":

> Since we are all hemmed in by history, it is up to us to understand that whatever truth we may have is to be gotten not in spite of but through our historical inherence. Superficially considered, our inherence destroys all truth; considered radically, it founds a new idea of truth.[28]

Accessing truth "through our historical inherence" requires that, in a lived phenomenological *epochē*, we be capable of suspending our ordinary naïve absorption in the world of our concerns so as to let unfamiliar kinds of truths show themselves. But to so suspend our ordinary absorption is, in Merleau-Ponty's words again, not "to deny the link which binds us to the physical, social, and cultural world…[but] on the contrary to *see* this link, to become conscious of it."[29] In what follows, I will argue that it is precisely through our encounter with others from the

[24] "Women and Cultural Universals," 35-37.

[25] *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?*, 40.

[26] See PP 93 on how my situated perspective is "a necessity I can use, but also one that does not imprison me."

[27] I have explored in detail the ways in which agency is always shaped by cultural circumstances in McMahon, "Religion, Multiculturalism, and Phenomenology as a Critical Practice."

[28] Merleau-Ponty, "The Philosopher and Sociology," *Signs*, transl. Richard C. McLeary (Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1964), 98-113, 109. Hereafter cited as PS. See also PSM 82.

[29] PSM 49.

place of *their* lived experience that we are able to effect this kind of *epochē*.[30] Encounters with others—others who, as we shall see further, are at once deeply kin to us and insurmountably different from us—expand our understanding of human being-in-the-world beyond what we can learn from our own first-personal or familiar cultural experiences, in a manner that changes how we are able to understand ourselves. As Thomas Busch argues, "[s]elf-understanding and self-criticism depend upon an encounter with alterity."[31] At stake in this stance of self-criticism in dialogue with alterity is a de-centering and de-normalizing of one's own perspective; for the "Westerner," it is the holding open of space a kind of "philosophical hesitation," as Al-Saji says, or "ethnographic reserve," as Abu-Lughod says—a hesitation or reserve that might interrupt dominant discourses and make room for other, non-Western-centric historical experiences to show themselves, other voices to be heard.[32]

3. Phenomenology of intersubjectivity: The revelation of the other and the opacity of the self

What is the nature of our experience of other people? Moderns deeply influenced by the legacy of René Descartes are plagued with the specter of solipsism, in which the self is associated with the interior, thinking mind, and in which other selves in *their* interiority are rendered only dubiously accessible to me in mine. In *Phenomenology of Perception*, and especially in the chapters "The Body as Expression, and Speech" and "Others and the Human World," Merleau-Ponty systematically challenges Cartesian solipsism by describing the manner in which others reveal themselves both in their embodied behaviors and speech, and in the objects of the shared cultural landscape itself. Let us see how this embodied revelation of others takes place in concrete experience.

In his Second Meditation, Descartes analyses what he takes to be going on in the commonplace experience of looking out of his window and observing other human beings walking in the square below. He writes:

> [W]ere I perchance to look out my window and observe men crossing the square, I would ordinarily say I see the men themselves…But what do I see aside from hats and clothes, which could conceal automata? Yet I judge

[30] Yuichi Sato makes a similar claim in "The Way of the Reduction via Anthropology: Husserl and Lévy-Bruhl, Merleau-Ponty and Lévi-Strauss," *Bulletin d'analyse phénoménologique*, X 1, 2014, 1-18.

[31] Thomas W. Busch, "Merleau-Ponty and the Circulation of Being," *Symposium*, 8.2, 2004, 313-24, 316.

[32] Al-Saji, "SPEP Co-Director's Address," especially 346-48; Abu-Lughod, "Ethnography's Values: An Afterward," *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016), 294.

> them to be men. Thus what I thought I had seen with my eyes, I actually grasped solely with the faculty of judgment, which is in my mind.[33]

This interpretation bears little resemblance to what our perceptual experience of others is typically like in lived experience. Merleau-Ponty argues that to look at others in such an alienated way requires that we "establish an inhuman gaze," observing the actions of the other human being like the "actions of an insect."[34] To argue that the other's body in fact appears to perception no differently than an automaton is to describe a mode of looking we *can* adopt, but a mode of looking that is very strange indeed—Merleau-Ponty calls it "surreal."[35] Typically, our lived experience of other persons is a perceptual encounter with beings who are themselves meaningfully alive to the world in intelligible ways. The other's body is not given as a mere object but rather as a power of perception and movement, her consciousness not simply a private interiority but incarnated in her bodily activity itself. Merleau-Ponty's concept of *behavior* captures the manner in which the body is "a third genre of being between the pure subject and the object."[36] Our experience of others persons is the experience of meaningful behaviors—meaningful ways of being oriented towards the world that incarnate and reveal the subjectivity of the other in her movements, gestures, and speech.[37] There is, however, a central ambiguity at play in our experience of other persons: in Merleau-Ponty's words, we experience others as simultaneously "communications" and "solitudes."[38] On the one hand, the other's behaviors appear in our world as "miraculous extensions" of our own intentions: others' behaviors are legible to us as incarnating bodily possibilities of our own, and often call forth our own embodied participation, as when we follow with our eyes the other's extended finger as she points out something interesting in the landscape.[39] On the other hand, the embodied behavior of others presents a certain *opacity* that cannot be transcended: the other's experience gives itself *as* first-personal, and thus *as* an

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[33] René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy,* transl. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998), 68.

[34] PP 378.

[35] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Structure of Behavior*, transl. Alden Fisher (Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 1963), 167. Hereafter cited as SB.

[36] PP 366.

[37] I have explored the bodily and gestural basis of language and thought in more detail in McMahon, "Phenomenology as First-Order Perception."

[38] PP 376. I have explored this ambiguity in greater detail in "'Thinking According to Others': Expression, Intimacy, and the Passage of Time in Merleau-Ponty and Woolf," in Peter Costello and Licia Carlson (eds.), *Phenomenology and the Arts* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016), 193-218.

[39] PP 370. For an illuminating phenomenological study of pointing, see Eva-Maria Simms, "Egocentric Language and the Upheaval of Speech: A Merleau-Ponty Inspired Study of Language Acquisition," *Chiasmi International*, 12 2010, 287-309, 296-99. For a study of Merleau-Ponty's conception of "intercorporeality," see Scott L. Marratto, *The Intercorporeal Self: Merleau-Ponty on Subjectivity* (Albany: SUNY, 2012).

experience that I definitively cannot live for myself, and that I can interpret incorrectly, incompletely, or in a decontextualized manner.[40]

Consider the following description from Abu-Lughod's ethnography *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society* (1986). Here, Abu-Lughod describes the behavior of Mabrūka, a middle-aged woman of the Awlad 'Ali Bedouin tribe estranged from her husband, who had recently married a second wife. First, Mabrūka displayed attitudes of anger toward her husband and those associated with his second marriage in a number of ways. Abu-Lughod writes:

> Mabrūka's immediate response was to blame her brother-in-law for the decision, suspecting him of having encouraged his brother to take a second wife so the lineage could have more children. Although she had been close to his wife for fifteen years, she stopped visiting her household… When presented with the customary wedding gifts due the first wife, she threw them on the ground and refused to accept them until her sister-in-law begged her to do so… She justified her anger by the blame she placed on her brother-in-law, some material injustices, and violations of conventions in handling the second marriage. For example, she refused to accept the wedding gifts because they were not identical to those given the bride… She refused to attend the wedding because the new bride was not going to be brought into her household but would be set up in a house with her husband's brother—not customary procedure, as she pointed out to everyone. When I asked how she felt about the wedding, she remarked on these injustices and claimed that she was only angry because things were not being done correctly.[41]

Mabrūka's sentiments were not locked in the privacy of her own mind, but were expressed—were quite literally brought to life for all to see—in her gestures and words; as Merleau-Ponty writes, "I do not perceive the anger…as a psychological fact hidden behind the gesture, I read the anger in the gesture. The gesture does not make me *think* of anger, it is the anger itself."[42] As intended, Mabrūka's vocal criticisms of improper protocols regarding the wedding and living arrangements of the second wife, as well as her conspicuous absence at the wedding, brought her righteous indignation to life as a palpable presence in the community.

However, Mabrūka's indignant behaviors alone did not tell the whole story of her experience *vis-à-vis* her husband and his second marriage. The ongoing presence of contemporary and past others is anonymously embodied in the things of the

[40] See PP 374 on "a lived truth of solipsism that cannot be transcended."
[41] Abu-Lughod, *Veiled Sentiments*, 190-91.
[42] PP 190.

cultural world itself: the customary wedding gifts signifying due status; the tents housing patrilineal lines according to deep-seated convention; the number of nights men customarily spend with their new brides before returning to the beds of their first wives.[43] Like the behaviors and gestures of others, the familiar things of the world—the sedimentation of the behaviors of innumerable past others into a shared *habitus*—call forth our behaviors in familiar and obvious ways, affording us routes for our activities that are meaningful for both ourselves and those with whom we share our world.[44] Contexts of meaning that are given as simply obvious to the insider can be unapparent to the outsider, rendering the latter's understanding of the meaning of a certain behavior fragmentary or off-base. One area of Awlad 'Ali cultural life that proved to be of central importance to the interpretation of Mabrūka's lived experience proved to be the institution of traditional poetry, and in particular the *ghinnāwas* or "little songs," which Abu-Lughod describes as "like Japanese haiku in form but more like the American blues in content and emotional tone."[45] Though at the beginning of her fieldwork Abu-Lughod did not single these poems out as a special object for ethnographic research—"[a]t first I ignored them, since I had no interest in poetry"—her participation in the Awlad 'Ali women's world itself gradually came to reveal their significance.[46]

Ghinnāwas recited by Mabrūka among close female relatives and friends revealed other dimensions of Mabrūka's emotional situation than anger and than an indignant insistence on her rights as first wife. Abu-Lughod quotes a sample of these poems:

> *Held fast by despair and rage*
> *the vastness of my soul is cramped…*
>
> *I took upon myself your love*
> *kindly make me a place to rest…*
>
> *They left me to suffer,*
> *wise ones, they had but withheld the cure…*[47]

[43] PP 363; Abu-Lughod, 190-91, 230. On the significance of anonymity in cultural and interpersonal experience, see Whitney Howell, "Necessary but Insufficient: Merleau-Ponty and the Ethics of Anonymity in Interpersonal Life," *Symposium*, 24.2, 2020, 168-90.

[44] On the cultural world as *habitus*, see PP 139. I explore Merleau-Ponty's discussion of habit and *habitus* in dialogue with the work of Pierre Bourdieu in "'The Great Phantom': *Habitus*, Freedom, and Political Transformation in Merleau-Ponty," in Jérôme Melançon (ed.), *Politics and Merleau-Ponty: Thinking Beyond the State* (Rowman & Littlefield, forthcoming).

[45] *Veiled Sentiments,* 27.

[46] *Veiled Sentiments*, 25.

[47] *Veiled Sentiments,* 192-93.

These poems, as Abu-Lughod observes, "expressed not so much the anger and blame…as misery and vulnerability."[48] Furthermore, Mabrūka recited *ghinnāwas* that commented precisely on the discrepancy between the pain she felt in her heart and the anger she expressed publicly, as in the following:

> *Better they had calmed me*
> *but since they opposed me I opposed them…*[49]

As revealed in its different aspects in differing contexts, Mabrūka's emotional experience is not simply transparent in each of her behaviors; indeed, the layered complexity of it might well remain obscure to the hasty outside observer. But it can be "read" by the compassionate interlocutor attentive to different spheres of cultural life, as they reveal themselves in individuals' embodied behaviors, for the ways in which its seemingly discrepant expressions in fact work together within the context of a single personal existence struggling to come to terms with complex and contradictory emotions.

If the experience of the other is not simply transparent to the outside observer but rather demands to be interpreted across its different incarnations in different contexts of meaning, likewise is it the case that, *contra* Descartes, our own experience is in crucial respects constitutively opaque to itself.[50] Our own cultural links to the world are ordinarily taken for granted rather than made visible, structuring what seems obvious to us in ways of which we are typically unaware. And our personal experience is not simply spread out in front of our gaze as so many mental "contents," but is the very "form" in which things in the world appear to us in meaningful ways: when we are angry, things in the world themselves appear hateful; when we are in despair "the vastness of [our] soul is cramped" (in Mabrūka's poetic expression).[51] We do not always—indeed we frequently do not—understand the contributions our own moods, habits, personal and collective histories, and cultural belonging make to the disclosure of reality in our experience. Our own constitutive ignorance of ourselves in conjunction with the constitutive obscurity of the full sense of how others' experience is lived by them, makes it the case that

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[48] *Veiled Sentiments*, 193.

[49] *Veiled Sentiments*, 193.

[50] Cf. PP 368: "Others can be evident because I am not transparent to myself, and because my subjectivity draws my body along behind itself.

[51] See Heidegger's discussion of the "mooded" character of intentional existence in *Being and Time*, transl. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 172-182. See also John Russon, *Human Experience: Philosophy, Neurosis, and the Elements of Everday Life* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2003), 43-46.

we are not simply the arbiters of the meanings of our own behaviors in interpersonal space.

The following anecdote from Abu-Lughod illustrates this point. During a 2015 visit to her Awlad 'Ali "family," Abu-Lughod brought along a copy of the Arab translation of *Veiled Sentiments* at the request of one of her "sisters." On a Skype call following the visit with a woman of the family who had read the book, Abu-Lughod was concerned to learn that members of the family had taken offence to some of her portrayals of them. As well as being concerned to learn that the family was recognizable to others despite standard practices of name changing ("Everyone knows this is our family," the young woman said), Abu-Lughod sought to address another concern that had plagued her in her reflections on the nature and value of ethnography in the decades following her first study of the Awlad 'Ali as a graduate student: "I had always felt uncomfortable about the stories about marital disputes or the recordings of folktales that I had used to analyze gender relations. I quickly tried to defend myself, lamely pointing out that I had shown in the book how much they valued honor and how beautiful their poetry was."[52] Abu-Lughod's concerns drastically missed the mark; it turns out the young woman "was referring only to my complaints about the physical discomfort of living with them":

> She was worried about how the younger generation, who live much more comfortable lives now, in apartments or villas with washing machines, televisions, and carpeting, and who work as teachers, engineers, and pharmacists…would react to what I had described from the 70s. I had embarrassed her family, a family with a reputation.[53]

What to Abu-Lughod were relatively peripheral descriptions of her living conditions during fieldwork, meant only to "bring to life this distant world" for Western readers, was for her Awlad 'Ali "relatives" brought into a different context of family honor, deeply tied to wealth and prestige in the community. What was background for Abu-Lughod as a Palestinian-American anthropologist who had grown up in the United States was a matter of foregrounded significance for the Awlad 'Ali in Egypt; in Abu-Lughod's own analysis, her descriptions of the conditions of fieldwork were "now being taken out of context…[o]r rather, put back into context—the context of this particular family."[54] These divergent meanings were not mutually obvious, but took trust, respect, and careful communication to discover.

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[52] "Ethnography's Values," 296-97.

[53] "Ethnography's Values," 297.

[54] "Ethnography's Values," 297. On the relationship between foreground and background in perceptual experience, see PP *passim,* but especially 4, 103, 113-14, 192 and Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects,* Others (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), Chapter 1, especially 38.

Learning about others' lived experience as it is meaningful to them is not a matter of "reading their minds" or living their first-personal experience for ourselves, the impossibility at the heart of Cartesian solipsism and the anxiety of "the problem of other minds." But this impossibility need not trouble us, for neither is first-personal transparency the manner in which we are able to know ourselves. Rather, this impossibility should inspire in us the commitment of patience, effort, and care in the projects both of understanding the other and of better understanding ourselves—projects that can never be completed once and for all. Furthermore, as we shall discuss in Part Four, these projects of understanding the other and understanding oneself cannot in truth be separated: we learn to understand others in *their* own context, different from our own, by drawing on our own experiential behavioral resources, and we come to better understand ourselves—in manners that do not leave our categories of understanding and by extension our own identities intact—in light of the experiences of others.

4. Phenomenological variation and intercultural understanding

As we have begun to see, discovering the meaning of others' (and our own) behavior is always a matter of interpreting the behavior in question within the larger context(s) in which it is meaningful. Each of an individual's behaviors—sometimes harmonious with one another, other times discordant—demands to be interpreted in terms of its place in her larger unfolding life; in turn, the unfolding of his life takes place nowhere but in the multitude of his behaviors in relation to others within the context of a larger cultural world. As Merleau-Ponty writes in "The Philosopher and Sociology," "we are in a sort of circuit with the socio-historical world."[55]

Mabrūka's seemingly discordant behavioral and poetic expressions in response to her husband's second marriage were simultaneously unique to her singular situation and typical of Awlad 'Ali society. Abu-Lughod's interpretation of these and related behaviors on the part of many other Awlad 'Ali women and men paint a much more human picture of family ties and honor, and a much richer picture of the complex experiences of women, than those at play in stereotypes about Muslim cultures criticized in the Introduction. These more sensitive and full understandings—made possible by careful ethnography rather than polemic, in Abu-Lughod's words—do not preserve the Westerner's superior sense of self but, rather, require its critical transformation.[56]

[55] PS 123.

[56] Abu-Lughod, "The Active Social Life of 'Muslim Women's Rights': A Plea for Ethnography, Not Polemic, With Cases from Egypt and Palestine," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, 6.1, 2010, 1-45.

In her ethnography of the Awlad 'Ali Bedouin society, Abu-Lughod draws on extensive observations of and conversations with members of the family and larger community with whom she lived from fall 1978 until spring 1980, in order to discern the central place of honor [*sharaf*] in the community's norms for the proper behavior [*agl*] of both men and women. Bedouins have long regarded themselves—and long been regarded—as a fiercely tough, proud, and self-reliant people, with many of its leading members still in the early 1980s committed to political self-determination in the face of the modern Egyptian state.[57] For men of the Awlad 'Ali, honor is understood in terms of the virtues of self-control and courage, as well as those of "generosity, honesty, sincerity, loyalty to friends, and keeping one's word."[58] Self-reliant efficacy in the world as well as stoic toughness in the face of physical and emotional pain—such as death of beloved relatives or heartache in love—qualify a man for responsibility and social standing [*gīma*] within the community, as do his material wealth and the respect shown him by his dependents (women, children, and clients).[59]

While women are considered inferior to men with regard to their capacities to embody the Bedouin ideals of self-reliant individuality, their honor and proper behavior are seen to reside in approximating these ideals as much as possible within the "natural" and social limits of their situation; in insisting on their rights and resisting abuses of those upon whom they depend; and in behaving with modesty, shame, or propriety [*hasham*] in the face of the more powerful or the unknown (generally their fathers, husbands, older men in the community, and guests and strangers). It is worth pausing on the point about resistance to abuse: wives can return to their families of origin in anger if their husbands are abusive; divorce is common and divorced women are frequently remarried. Women are by no means seen as the mere property of fathers and husbands—as stated in the Amnesty Fact sheet cited in Part One—but have means to resist arranged marriages that they do not desire and to be protected against abuse and disrespect by their patrilineal line. They are

[57] *Veiled Sentiments*, Chapter 3. For a classical statement on the independence and toughness of the nomadic Bedouins, see Ibn Khaldûn, *The Muqaddimah*, transl. Franz Rosenthal (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1967), 33-44. For a more nuanced discussion of the attitudes of the Awlad 'Ali towards the Egyptian state in the late 1970s and the early 1980s—one that provides another example of potential misunderstanding and unintentional offense given on the part of the ethnographer, and that also provides an example of the internal dissensions at play in any culture discussed below—see Abu-Lughod's discussion of a relative of her Awlad 'Ali's family who worked as a civil servant and took objection to her portrayal in "Writing Against Culture," 159-60.

[58] *Veiled Sentiments,* 87. Though it goes unnoted, the resonances between Abu-Lughod's account of the values of character of the Awlad 'Ali and Aristotle's account of the virtues in *Nicomachean Ethics* is striking.

[59] *Veiled Sentiments*, 90-92, 99.

not isolated in the privacy of nuclear families, but have resources and supports within the larger tribe that cares for their rights and wellbeing.

An important aspect of *hasham* is sexual modesty: women (like men) are expected not to display any evidence of sexuality in general or romantic attachment to specific individuals, including, while in the presence of others, their own husbands.[60] Mabrūka's public gestures of emotional indifference towards her husband must be interpreted in light of these complex social expectations for women's correct behavior or *agl*: she was careful to display no sense of romantic attachment or loss but only anger at the violation of her rights as a dependent.

Crucially, the modesty qua honor and the proper behavior of Awlad 'Ali women is not merely the passive docility of dependents who are owed no interpersonal or social respect. On the contrary: Abu-Lughod observes that "[a]s with other dependents—for instance, young men—women's submission is personally demeaning and worthless to their superiors unless perceived as freely given."[61] From the women's own perspectives, their honor was deeply personally meaningful—intertwined as it was with their deep attachments to family, community, and social reputation—and definitively a site for personal agency. A sign of independence within dependence and initiative within a deeply circumscribed situation—though, it is worth noting, one in important respects as circumscribed for men as it was for women, *albeit* in different ways—a woman's gesture of *hasham* was, in Abu-Lughod's words, "not compliance, but a form of self-control."[62] Requiring understanding, interpretation, and, at times, creativity, *sharaf* by way of *hasham* was a way for a women to distinguish themselves within the shared norms of the community.

It is on the point of self-control that Abu-Lughod finds a central aspect of the significance of the Awlad 'Ali's ritualistic use of poetry on the part of both women and men. *Ghinnāwas* use socially-known and accepted poetic symbols and tropes to express deep emotional vulnerability and romantic attachments—contrary qualities to the norms of honor and propriety publicly valued by Bedouin society—and are often very moving to the friends or lovers who hear them.[63] In Abu-Lughod's analysis, the recitation of these poems in appropriate contexts not only provides an outlet for the expression of feelings that do not have a place in adult public life—feelings of dependency, exposure, and weakness rather than independence, stoical self-reliance, and strength—but also a more complex expression of the reciter's ultimate self-control: she or he is able to manage when and how she or he

[60] *Veiled Sentiments,* 152-58.
[61] *Veiled Sentiments,* 105.
[62] *Veiled Sentiments*, 117.
[63] *Veiled Sentiments*, 174, 177, 242.

shares these experiences, and—much as in Mabrūka's poem commenting on the discrepancy between her private despair and her public anger—she or he reveals honorable behavior in public *as* an exercise in self-conscious honor that does not simply come automatically but has been earned through effort and habituation over time. As Abu-Lughod writes, *agl* is a phenomenon of maturity.[64] Awlad 'Ali norms of honor and rituals of poetry reveal themselves to be neither isolated nor contradictory affairs, but resonant tensions within the larger structure of the Bedouin society.

"Structure" names the total, but complex and open-ended, organization of all of the interconnected systems at play in a given society. Merleau-Ponty uses the figure of a melody to illustrate the concept of structure: there is no melody without the notes that make it up, but, at the same time, each of the notes are what they are by virtue of belonging to the greater unfolding whole—the "same" note would, quite literally, sound differently in the context of a different melody.[65] The concept of structure in anthropology is, in Merleau-Ponty's account, the idea that

> [s]ociety itself is a structure of structures: how could there be absolutely no relationship between the linguistic system, the economic system, and the kinship system it employs? But this relationship is subtle and variable. Sometimes it is homology. At other times (as in the case of myth and ritual) one structure is the counterpart and antagonist of the other. Society as a structure remains a many-faceted reality amenable to more than one interpretation.[66]

Anthropological interpretation does not work by subsuming particular behaviors or systems under an overarching "essence"—for example, subsuming the culture's linguistic system under some universal form of language accessible to thought in isolation from the facts, or its kinship structure under some universal table of kinship relationships "comparable to Mendeleev's periodic table of elements."[67] As Merleau-Ponty writes, "[a]s a matter of principle, structure is no Platonic idea."[68] Rather, anthropological interpretation of a culture works by "installing ourselves" within the institution in question, seeking to understand the "style" of the linguistic or kinship system *as* it is meaningfully lived by the cultural

[64] *Veiled Sentiments*, 91.
[65] SB 137 and PP 107, 255, 437, and 469. See also Russon, *Human Experience*, 12.
[66] Merleau-Ponty, "From Mauss to Lévi-Strauss," *Signs*, transl. Richard C. McLeary (Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1964), 114-25, 118. Hereafter cited as FMLS.
[67] PMS 79; FMLS 118.
[68] FMLS 117.

subjects in question.[69] As Busch writes, "[c]ategories earn their 'rationality' by their power to explicate, to make sense of, experience."[70] Much like the psychotherapeutic interpretation of an individual, this kind of understanding is not a straightforward perception that occurs in a moment, but rather takes the form of a *Gestalt* shift in which seemingly disparate behaviors are seen to belong to the same largely "unconscious" individual or cultural structure.[71] Merleau-Ponty writes of the kind of knowledge possible through ethnographic research: "the underlying dynamics of the social whole is certainly not *given* within our narrow experience of living among others, yet it is only by throwing this experience in and out of focus that we succeed in representing it to ourselves."[72]

What is this practice of "throwing this experience in and out of focus" like for the ethnographer? Merleau-Ponty argues that this practice is an existential embodiment of Edmund Husserl's method of "eidetic variation," in which the phenomenologist, within the *epochē*, "imaginatively varies" with the manner in which a given phenomenon appears so as to discover what is essential to the phenomenon in question.[73] The phenomenologist achieves an eidetic intuition [*Wesensschau*] when, through her imaginative variations, she hits upon alterations to the phenomenon that cannot be made without the phenomenon ceasing to be the phenomenon that it is. For example, we can imaginatively vary the color red until it ceases to be red—thus getting into clearer view the "redness" of the red—or we can vary with the phenomenon of color itself, changing red into green into yellow, but finding that color ceases to be color when we attempt to change it into sound.[74] Merleau-Ponty argues that towards the end of his career, Husserl came to realize the limits of the method of a purely imaginative variation, thanks to the latter's encounter with the anthropological work of Lucien Lévy-Bruhl.[75]

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[69] PS 100. "Style" in Merleau-Ponty's philosophy can be understood as a dynamization of essence, which can only be encountered in the flesh and through a kind of mimicry or participation; for more on this see PP 342-45 and Linda Singer, "Merleau-Ponty on the Concept of Style," in Galen A. Johnson and Michael B. Smith (eds.), *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader: Philosophy and Painting* (Evanston: Northwestern UP. 1993), 233-44.

[70] Busch, 316.

[71] FMLS 118.

[72] PS 100.

[73] PSM 53-54, 69-72, 90 and PS 108. Cf. Husserl, *Experience and Judgment*, transl. James S. Churchill and Karl Ameriks (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), §§86-93; and *Phenomenological Psychology*, transl. John Scanlon (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977), 57-65. See also Douglas Low, "Merleau-Ponty on Race, Gender, and Anti-Semitism," *International Philosophical Quarterly*, 59.3, 2019, 257-75, 261 on Merleau-Ponty's "existentializing" of Husserl's more rationalist eidetic method.

[74] Husserl, *Experience and Judgment*, 115-16, 351.

[75] PSM 90; PS 107-08. Lévy-Bruhl's "masterpiece of armchair ethnography," in Abu-Lughod's words ("Ethnography's Values," 287), has been criticized as racist in a manner that contaminates later

There are variations to human experience that the imaginative work of first-personal experience cannot conjure up on its own. As phenomenologist Shaun Gallagher has more recently argued, empirical encounters with work in psychology enables the phenomenologist to engage in not merely imaginative but also "factual variation"; for example, the experience of synaesthesia reveals to the phenomenologist that in some cases color can, indeed, turn into sound, causing us to expand our understanding of the nature of sensory experience.[76] Merleau-Ponty argues that this kind of factual variation on the part of phenomenologists in engagement with empirical sciences is what is already going on in scientific and social scientific work, even if it is not explicitly thematized as such.[77] The ethnographer achieves her insights through a "reading of the essential structures of a multiplicity of cases," finding meaningful resonances between aspects of her own experience and those observable in the other culture in a manner that enables a genuine understanding of the other while altering her sense of herself and her own culture, perhaps profoundly.[78] Abu-Lughod's description of her experience with Awlad 'Ali mourning customs illustrates the anthropological process of "factual variation." As Abu-Lughod describes these customs, "[a]t the news of a death, Awlad 'Ali women begin a stylized, high-pitched, wordless wailing (*'ayāt*). Then they 'cry.' 'Crying' involves much more than weeping; it is a chanted lament in which the bereaved women and those who have come to console them express their grief."[79] While this stylized cultural expression of grief might at first seem alien to the outsider, it can be understood when we view it not as the meaningless "actions of an insect," as in the Cartesian problem of other minds, but as a meaningful behavior that resonates with our own experience of loss and grief. Abu-Lughod undergoes such an experience when she accompanies the women of her adoptive Bedouin family to the funeral of one of their relatives. She writes:

> I found the whole scene very moving, with the wailing and "crying." When I squatted before the old woman to embrace her and give her my sympathies, I found myself crying…With each new arrival the ritualized

phenomenological engagements with it; see Robert Bernasconi, "Lévy-Bruhl among the Phenomenologists: Exoticism and the Logic of 'the Primitive,'" *Social Identities*, 11.3, 2005, 229-45. I prefer to find in these phenomenological engagements, along with Merleau-Ponty, their potential for anti-racist engagements with others and for self-criticism—potential I believe we see in fact embodied in the ethnographic work of anthropologists like Abu-Lughod.

[76] Shaun Gallagher, "Taking Stock of Phenomenology Futures," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 50.2, 2012, 304-18, 308.

[77] Cf. PSM 68-73; FMLS 120.

[78] PSM 70.

[79] *Veiled Sentiments,* 198.

> mourning laments would begin again, and I could not hold back my tears. This funeral had awakened my own grief over the death of my grandmother and a cousin, neither of whom I had mourned properly.[80]

In this participatory experience, Abu-Lughod is able to connect with the grief of her Bedouin "family" through drawing on her own reservoirs of grief, so as to see the former as "variations" on the latter; as Merleau-Ponty writes, "[o]ur situation is for us the source of our curiosity, our investigations, and our interest in…other situations as variants of our own."[81] This empathetic experience is not one of reducing the "other" to the "same," but of discovering an identity—a certain kind of "essence"—across difference. Indeed, Abu-Lughod learns that this kind of empathizing is self-consciously what goes on between individuals and families within the Awlad 'Ali community itself: "Women speak of going to 'cry with' somebody, suggesting that they perceive it as sharing an experience. What they share is grief, not just by sympathizing, but also by actually reexperiencing, in the company of the person currently grieving, their own grief over the death of a loved one."[82]

As well as seeing other situations as variations of her own, Merleau-Ponty argues that the anthropologist in turn comes to see her own life "as a variant of…the lives of others," such that, in a sense, "[w]e also become the ethnologists of our own society if we set ourselves at a distance from it."[83] In Abu-Lughod's recognition that she had never "mourned properly" the deaths of her own grandmother and cousin, she calls into question not only her first-personal experience of grieving (or lack thereof) but Western customs of mourning more generally—many of which, we can well imagine, would from a Bedouin perspective appear stiff, cold, and individualistic. Rather than funeral practices in the Western and largely Christian world appearing as the norm against which non-Western funeral practices appear exotic, Western practices are "thrown out of focus" and newly seen *as* cultural practices, and as cultural practices that might warrant criticism and transformation. As Merleau-Ponty writes, ethnography "consists in learning to see what is ours as alien and what was alien as our own."[84]

Such "factual variations" between our own and the other's cultural experiences allow us to discover certain kinds of "essences"—certain human experiences of

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[80] *Veiled Sentiments,* 21.

[81] PS 110. See also Abu-Lughod's argument (against Bourdieu's claim regarding the imperious perspective of the ethnographer) for the significant personal vulnerability of the invested ethnographer, as well as the "devotion to others that fieldwork entails" ("Ethnography's Values," 275-77).

[82] *Veiled Sentiments,* 69.

[83] PS 110; FMLS 120.

[84] FMLS 120.

honor, of grief, of family—manifesting themselves across difference. These are not the hierarchical universals of the logicist or universalist, which seek to categorize everything they might encounter in advance. Neither is cultural experience simply closed in upon itself, as with sociologism or cultural relativism. Rather, what emerges through this kind of anthropological work is what Merleau-Ponty calls "lateral universals," discoverable in ethnological experience "through an incessant testing of the self through the other person and the other person through the self."[85] As Douglas Low explains, this mutual variation between our own and others' cultural experiences enables us to "see both as a variation of the human being's being-in-the-world."[86] What we discover through such research is what Husserl calls "morphological essences"—essential realities of experience that can in principle never be precisely fixed in the manner of arithmetic or geometry.[87] Rather—in Low's words again—"there are *patterns* and *regularities* in human behavior, but they are not fixed essences, for they are lived through not conceived, and as lived through they open upon a field of imprecise relations that are open to change."[88]

We have seen that cultures are "structures," not in the sense that all of their systems and behaviors can be subsumed under a static framework, but rather in the sense that, as in a melody, their different "notes" are related to one another in some meaningful way or another (be it a relationship of harmony or discord). To understand the experience of individuals in other cultures we must attend to the meaning of their behaviors within their larger, complex cultural context. We must also transpose our own experience into theirs and theirs into our own, in a manner that leaves the meaning of neither unchanged. In the remainder of this paper, we shall see further the manner in which it is the very nature of cultural experience to change with history and in interaction with others, and explore the demands of cross-cultural understanding in the context of an increasingly globalizing world.

5. Intercultural transformation in a globalizing world

If what is "essential" to human experience—if its unique style across innumerable dramatic and subtle variations—is in principle imprecise and open to change, then cultures too are in principle not discrete, bounded, homogeneous "essences but 'structural' sites of interconnection, fluidity, and heterogeneous

[85] FMLS 120.

[86] Douglas Low, "Merleau-Ponty and the Foundations of Multiculturalism," *Journal of Philosophical Research*, 21, 1996, 377-90, 380.

[87] Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, transl. F. Kersten (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1983), §74; PSM 67.

[88] Low, "Merleau-Ponty on Race, Gender, and Anti-Semitism," 267.

contestation. This has been the case throughout human history. Thanks to their interactions with others through war, economic migration, religious crusades, and colonization, cultures are, in phenomenologist John Russon's words, never "pure" but "always *palimpsests*, always texts written on top of earlier writing."[89] However, as modern economic, technological, and political developments in an increasingly interconnected world inevitably alter the intimate and social lives of individuals everywhere, it is more and more impossible to adequately conceive of cultures as bounded essences.

Abu-Lughod gives as an example of the inextricable influence of contemporary globalization on non-Western cultures an anecdote from her Awlad 'Ali "family" in the mid-1980s, about a young man who had been beaten by his father on account of having been accused of drinking alcohol at a wedding, forbidden to Muslims. The young man

> sells his cassette player to a neighbor to raise cash and then disappears. His grandmother cries over him, his aunts discuss it. His father says nothing. It is days before a distant in-law comes to reassure his grandmother that the young man is fine and to indicate that they know his whereabouts (he is working at a construction site 100 kilometers away). No one knows what the consequences of this event will be. Will he return? What will his father do? Family honor is at stake, reputations for piety, paternal authority. When the young man returns several weeks later, accompanied by a maternal uncle from 50 kilometers west who intervenes to forestall any future punishments, his grandmother weeps in relief. It could easily have turned out differently.[90]

Phenomenologically varying with this story, one can surely find in it generally human experiences that resonate with experiences of one's own—youthful rebellion, the worry of grandmothers, the need or desire for material self-sufficiency, the stoical standoffs of fathers and sons, the complex politics of familial alliances and interventions in problems. At the same time, one should not simply assimilate these experiences to one's own, but be attentive to the specific manners in which these events are meaningful within the context of Bedouin society: "family honor is at stake, reputations for piety, paternal authority." What we see when we do this is not a homogeneous culture, but individuals shirking or insisting upon its norms, relatives who wish to soften the blows of retribution for indiscretions, young people

[89] John Russon, *Sites of Exposure: Art, Politics, and the Nature of Experience* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2017), 72-73.

[90] Abu-Lughod, "Writing Against Culture," 156.

wanting to make their own way and having to navigate their relationship between home and the larger world in contexts different than those of their parents' youth. Modernization is in each detail of this story, from "growing opportunities for wage labor, the commercialization of Bedouin weddings, and the influx of goods from the cities," in Abu-Lughod's words.[91] What we are witnessing is not simply the autochthonous development of a culture, but complex and uncertain changes in contact with the (post-)colonial victory of the "West."

Interactions between "Western" and "non-Western" cultures have not been simply benign lateral interactions across difference, but hierarchical interactions between the economically- and politically-dominant nations of Western Europe and the United States and non-Western societies in Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, the latter of which have to greater or lesser degrees been torn apart by colonialism, imperialism, and wars waged by or between superpowers.[92] It is in light of this contemporary reality that we should seek to understand what is at play in crimes such as Ayhan Sürücü's murder of his sister Aynur in Berlin in 2005. In her ethnography of the construction of Muslim masculinities in contemporary Germany, Ewing analyzes the heterogeneous effects of anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim sentiment on the population of Turkish "guest workers", predominantly from rural Anatolia rather than cosmopolitan cities—that began to arrive in Germany in the 1960s during the country's post-war economic boom, supposedly on a temporary basis, but then were allowed to stay and bring their families during the economic downturn in the 1970s.[93] By 2005, a whole generation of young people had grown up in Muslim Turkish families in Berlin, facing dual pressures to assimilate (from the German side) and to maintain their Muslim religion and traditions (from the Turkish side). The tension was exacerbated by widespread Islamophobia that vilified the very population marginalized by racist discrimination, casting Muslim men as "backwards" brutes who sought honor through domination and violence. Ewing describes a growth among some Turkish-German youth—especially among the poorer and more socially marginalized—of gang-membership that draws on symbols of Turkish culture and Islam, as well as on inspirations of machismo from Hollywood Mafia movies and boxing, to assert a positive self-identity in the face of anti-Islamic German racism and the United States's "War on Terror"—a war which many Muslims interpreted as a war on Islam.[94] Ironically and tragically, it is these youth gangs that are likely to glorify violence against their Muslim sisters—sisters

[91] "Writing Against Culture," 156.
[92] See Jaggar, "'Saving Amina,'" 62-75 and Abu-Lughod, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?*, 31-32.
[93] Ewing, 15.
[94] Ewing, 167, 172-73.

grappling with similar tensions to the gang members themselves—as symbols of Islam and masculinity, and not the elders whom one might imagine to be the representatives of "tradition."[95] Furthermore, many of the larger structures of support and recourse for abused women that have historically been in place in many rural Islamic communities were absent in the nuclear family organizations of cities like Berlin, isolating many girls and women in their fate where they would "traditionally" have had significant social protections.[96]

To call such violent acts as the murder of Aynur Sürücü "traditional" or "Islamic" is very much to miss the point and obscure the lived reality of the situation. For one thing, calling such murders "traditional" or "Islamic" ignores the fact that such acts are in fact quite rare.[97] Despite media claims to an increase in honor killings in Berlin in 2005, Sürücü's murder was the only one that in fact fit the "classic" bill: the others were murders of wives by husbands—hardly, a uniquely Islamic or non-Western phenomenon. For another thing, framing such events as "traditional" or "Islamic" elects for a simplistic, exotifying vision of "death by culture" that defies human comprehension or empathy, rather than for a difficult grappling with the complex, but ultimately mundane and comprehensible impact of postcolonial global politics on individuals' and families' lived experiences of their cultural identities. Once again, it makes unrecognizable Sürücü's experience *as* first-personal, human experience, with all of the subtleties and conflicts of the latter. One powerful route into such complex political grappling is precisely the kind of ethnographic research we have been discussing from a phenomenological perspective, with an eye turned explicitly to the challenges of multiculturalism in a deeply unequal modernizing world. Abu-Lughod does this with a particular Bedouin community in Egypt, in a manner that allows us to see how

> others live as we perceive ourselves as living, not as robots programmed with "cultural" rules, but as people going through life agonizing over decisions, making mistakes, trying to make themselves look good, enduring tragedies and personal losses, enjoying others, and finding moments of happiness.[98]

[95] Ewing, 172.

[96] Marnia Lazreg discusses this phenomenon of the disintegration of extended kindship structures in the context of modernization and colonial property laws in Algeria, and women's increased vulnerability to abuse (rather than liberation) in *The Eloquence of Silence: Algerian Women in Question* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 99-101

[97] On the rarity of honor killings, and also on the difficulties of obtaining reliable statistics on honor killings thanks to how murders are classified by police and media, see Ewing, *Stolen Honor*, 152-53 and Abu-Lughod, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?*, 128-30.

[98] Writing Against Culture," 158.

Ewing carries out such ethnographic work not only through her study of Turkish immigrant communities in Germany, but of German majority culture's own complex historical and cultural Othering of their Turkish neighbors. In Merleau-Ponty's words, Ewing is an "ethnologist of [her] own society," opening space, through her "variations" with aspects of the lived experience of the Turkish immigrant community, for critical assessment of "Western" practices as themselves cultural and unequal rather than neutral and emancipated, and as themselves deeply implicated in the oppression of, and crimes committed by, immigrants burdened by a long history of colonialism, loss of rich and dynamic cultural traditions, and compulsory modernization on a "Western" timeline.

Such ethnographies of particular Western and non-Western cultures furthermore enable us to see more clearly the manners in which feminist resistance to oppression and creative approaches to emancipatory change in fact arise in lived experience. Against the standards of universalism that are meant to apply to all women in all historical and cultural circumstances, and against a vicious cultural relativism that regards non-Western cultures as frozen in tradition and history, such an ethnographic eye attends to how feminist change in fact occurs in the lived experience of real women and their communities, in manners that often cannot be predicted in advance and that come about through women's (and men's) creative improvisation within a confluence of material, social, and political intercultural forces. Indeed, dominant. For example, Narayan describes her own feminist awakening in India happening at the conjunction of: the kitchen table, where her mother complained to her friends about the constraints of her traditional marriage and relationship to her mother-in-law; the changing marriage customs that allowed girls of her generation to marry later than their mothers (who had already married later than their grandmothers); and the educational opportunities newly afforded girls of her class and generation that had not been available to her mother and aunts.[99] As another example, Abu-Lughod describes arguments to which she was privy between some of the young women of her Awlad 'Ali "family" and their father about wanting to attend university in Cairo—arguments that were, not without some irony, buttressed by the young women's prideful claims regarding their own honor and trustworthiness as traditional Bedouins and pious Muslims.[100] Feminist transformation does not always follow Western models, and does not come about through external imposition: it arises within the heterogeneous, discordant, and changing cultural situations of non-Western women themselves.

[99] Narayan, 7, 23.
[100] Abu-Lughod, "Ethnography's Values," 265.

Ayhan Sürücü's murder of his sister Aynur was represented in the news media and popular films as a clash of "Western" and "non-Western" values, of modernity and tradition, of feminist liberation and patriarchal oppression, and of secularism and religion. Ethnographic research into both the German culture in which this tragic event took place, and into the place of honor in particular societies in the Middle East and Northern Africa, make such dichotomous interpretations impossible. The phenomenological variations at their methodological heart lead us, on the contrary, to recognize the richness, value, and always dynamic and interpretive nature of cultural practices—including practices of "honor"—for the women and men who live them in different ways in a diversity of human contexts. Such recognition, in turn, leads us not to confuse, as Abu-Lughod urges, the 'pathological breakdowns' of some of these rich cultural realities in the face of immigration, the pressures of modernization, postcolonial inequality, racism, and violence for the cultural system itself—a point tragically lost in much of the discourse about Islam and the oppression of Muslim women in the past twenty years.[101]

Conclusion: Phenomenological anthropology and anthropological phenomenology

In this paper, I have put Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological account of anthropology into critical dialogue with Abu-Lughod's ethnographic study of a particular Bedouin community in Egypt, with the hopes of demonstrating that, in distinction from political and academic debates between universalism and relativism, a phenomenologically-grounded ethnography provides a rich route into grasping how human experience is always locally- and culturally-shaped, but also capable of creative self-interpretation and improvisation in dialogue with others. I have argued that such intercultural engagements offer a critical antidote to Western stereotypes of non-Western and especially Muslim cultures, and also offer concrete insights into the particular challenges of such cultures in the face of modernization in an increasingly interconnected, and deeply unequal, world. In conclusion, I would like to emphasize the other direction of this relationship, for phenomenologists in particular. I hope to have shown, at least implicitly, that it is not only phenomenology that has interpretive tools to offer our understanding of other cultures the work of feminist anthropologists like Abu-Lughod has much to offer phenomenologists in return.

Far from being merely the rigorous description of first-personal experience, as common misconceptions often have it, phenomenology can only be accountable to the essential features of human experience if it commits itself to attending to the rich expressions of the latter's variability in dialogue with a diversity of sources. As

[101] "Ethnography's Values," 281.

Russon writes, the responsible phenomenologist "does not simply rely on the stream of her or his own personal experience but also turns to the vast array of biographical, psychological, and historical research to learn what the terms are in which people in general 'live' their experience."[102] Engaging with the efforts of feminist anthropologists to understand other cultures on their own terms and in all of their 'structural' complexity, with a keen eye to the global power dynamics that make such work challenging, helps to hold phenomenologists accountable to their own claims about the essential nature of human being-in-the-world. Especially for those in the relatively privilege of Western academia, it is crucial to hold in reserve confidence in the centrality and normality of one's own experience. Decentering one's own experience by reading, citing, and learning from that of others, with their own perspectives and alternative histories, enables marginalized voices to come to the fore and challenges Western prejudices concerning the 'normal' and 'enlightened' parameters of human experience. I hope to have made some progress in demonstrating here the importance of such multicultural engagements for the culturally- and politically-critical phenomenological researcher.

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STUDIA UBB. PHILOSOPHIA, Vol. 66 (2021), 1, pp. 99-115
(RECOMMENDED CITATION)
DOI:10.24193/subbphil.2021.1.05

THE RHYTHM OF REORGANIZING THE WORLD. MALDINEY AND THE THEORY OF CRISIS

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ABSTRACT. This article examines the work of French phenomenologist Henri Maldiney (1912-2013), a philosopher who shed light on the phenomenon of interrogation by a world that has lost its pre-existing coordinates. While Maldiney himself referred to paintings and mental illness, we try to read his theory as an analysis of social situation and action. His theory helps us understand end-of-life situations in which caregivers encounter scenes where it is difficult to break out of a stalemate. It is a theory of practice based on an innovative understanding of the concept of rhythm.

Keywords: *transpassibility, rhythm, form, chaos, psychopathology*

Introduction

If a phenomenologist conducts research in the medical field, particularly in end-of-life situations, she or he will encounter scenes in which it is difficult to break out of a stalemate; or if she or he is lucky enough, where such a stalemate begins to change rapidly in the presence of the nurses[1]. Such situations are accompanied by some kind of crisis in practice[2]. At the same time, phenomenology begins to enter into the theory of social practice while analyzing the structure of these scenes. Phenomenology is a methodology of describing the movement of an individual event from within. If it can present a social critique, it would take the form of an analysis of micro-events in society rather than as a critique from a macro perspective. In this respect, we are influenced by both Rita Charon's narrative medicine and the

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1 Since 2003, the author has conducted a phenomenological qualitative study in medical practice. Since 2010, he has been working on analyzing caregivers' interviews (cf. Yasuhiko Murakami, "Phenomenological analysis of a Japanese professional caregiver specialized in patients with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis," *Neuroethics*, 13 (181), 2020, 181-191.

2 The Japanese version of this article was published in Yasuhiko Murakami, *Rhythms that do not intersect. - The Phenomenology of Encounters and Discommunication* (Tokyo: Seidosha, 2021).

ethnomethodology influenced by Alfred Schutz. Nevertheless, we would like to attempt a more theoretical argument in this article. The following analysis aims to analyze the transformation of situations in practice from a micro perspective. Henri Maldiney's (1912-2013) phenomenology guides our argument.

When something unpredictable comes to me, the world has a double manifestation. On the one hand, it is cognitively segmented and I know exactly what is in front of me. There are streets, cars on the road, people walking on the pavement, and so on. On the other hand, there are times when I think I know, but I do not seem to know what to do. The unknowable aspect forces me to ask questions, to respond, when I know the things I know, but do not know how to act. How do I stand in a world that has lost its coordinates, or what kind of experience is it to receive the world without cultural coordinates?

I refer to the work of French phenomenologist Henri Maldiney, as a philosopher who shed light on the phenomenon of interrogation by a world that has lost its pre-existing coordinates. Whereas Maldiney referred to paintings and mental illness, I try to read his theory as an analysis of social situation and action. His theory helps understand the production of social actions within a critical situation. I consider Maldiney a phenomenologist describing a scene of crisis where existing social norms have been invalidated.

The phase in which the world and action now stand anew is what Maldiney mysteriously called "rhythm." In the first place, it becomes clear that rhythm is the experience of man's rise against the world as his encounter with the world. The human being encounters the world as a rhythm and soars in the present. In the medical field where I am currently engaged in research, this theory can be applied to describe the practice of confronting situations involving great difficulty.

Maldiney was an aesthete and collector of contemporary art and a psychopathologist who studied psychiatric hospitals. He taught for a long time at the University of Lyon and is best known by Deleuze's reference to him, and has been read by Marc Richir's group and Jean Oury's group at La Borde Hospital. Painting is a means of expressing the eventfulness of an event, and psychosis is a failure to encounter the event. I refer to two aspects of Maldiney's argument here: the function of giving birth to Form in the encounter with a Formless where the world has lost its coordinates, and the function of transpassibility, which makes the encounter with the unpredictable possible.

While this reflection is not directly concerned with social justice, it does consider how the clinical practice is structured when it tries to change a situation of crisis. In other words, this is an elucidation of the social relations at the micro-level.

1. **Descending into chaos**

#Starting from Chaos: Vertigo as a starting point for action

Getting "lost"[3] is the starting point of human experience. Lost in the streets is a state in which, even though one can perceive the houses and the road in front of one's eyes, one does not know where one is or which way to go. The world loses its coordinates and one feels dizzy. This uninhabitable world is what Maldiney called chaos.

When lost in the desert, there is only a horizon that stretches forever around "here" ("We do not move through it [the landscape], but we walk in it from here to here, enveloped by the horizon which, as the "here," continuously transforms in itself."[4]). When "there" is lost, "here" is also lost. This is chaos. This state of affairs is the starting point of the relationship between man and the world, as Maldiney put it.

This is the human activity of creating self and Form (the order of the world) out of a state of being caught up in chaos and losing both coordinates and self.[5] Such chaos is a crisis of loss of self, yet true creativity can only be produced from the trials of such chaos. There is no creativity in the routine work that we can see ourselves doing in a world that is already in a fixed order.

Form and Rhythm oppose chaos. Form is produced to make chaos habitable.[6] According to Maldiney, the time structure of different Forms is rhythm. An artist creates a relationship between the world and the body in a way other than the externally given coordinates, thus creating order in the world and the body from within.

> Between this muddled beam of aberrant lines where the gaze is without hold, through which Paul Klee illustrates chaos and the radiance of space from an origin established in a leap, there is nothing but Rhythm. It is through it that the transition from chaos to order takes place.[7]

In other words, for Maldiney, rhythm is the movement by which a habitable world is generated in the first place or the movement that determines the "here"

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[3] Henri Maldiney, *Regard, parole, espace* (Lausanne: L'Âge d'Homme, 1973), 149. All quotes from Maldiney are my translation.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] *Ibid.*, 150.

[6] *Ibid.*, 148.

[7] *Ibid.*, 151.

in which I inhabit the world and the "there" from which events arise. He proposed a very radical point of view as rhythm is usually taken as something that flows with a melody in an already existing world. However, he did not see rhythm as a horizontal movement within the timeline of the melody, but rather as a vertical movement generated as an emergence of the world in the first place.

If it were not possible to produce a Form (i.e., the order of the world) and live in an ordered space, the expanse of space would become a bottomless abyss where one would have to stand in vertigo.[8] If all the order of space is absent, it is an uninhabitable world, it is uninhabitable chaos. This is, at the same time, inability to distance oneself from the situation.[9]

 # Winnicott's Formlessness and Maldiney's Form

I graft the argument of English pediatrician and psychoanalyst Winnicott to Maldiney's theory of Form. The Formless state is the starting point of creativity, as Winnicott described. When caregivers can create a holding that supports the child and allows them to accept existence as "Formlessness" or "unintegration," the child can play, free of anxiety, and the adult patient with strong inhibitions, can talk. Winnicott discovered that creativity is based on holding.[10] Conversely, when Formlessness is not supported by holding, it breaks down, and the invasive chaos where a sense of self is not established is experienced as disintegration.[11] This is a destructive and unspeakable trauma. In nightmares, panic, and severe depression, such scenes are expressed empirically. There needs to be a holding in the background to produce the Form as the global order of the world. This is a point that Maldiney does not make: we need a holding in the background to produce a "here" and a "there" in the world through rhythm. We distinguish between Formlessness as protected and destructive chaos without holding. Maldiney did not explain why one may fall into the breakdown and ignored the intersubjective basis behind the emergence of the Form and the Rhythm.

 # "Here" and "there" as the first order of the world

In the chaos, my "here" is lost and dissolved, and my "there" crumbles and is cut away from under my feet.[12] This movement from chaos to a space that creates

[8] Cf. *Ibid.*, 150-151.
[9] Cf. *Ibid.*, 150.
[10] D. W. Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (London: Routledge, 1971), 34-35.
[11] D. W. Winnicott, *Psycho-analytic Explorations* (London: Karnac, 1989), chs. 18 and 21.
[12] Henri Maldiney, *Regard, parole, espace*, 150.

an order in the world is "rhythm."[13] Rhythm is the movement of the primordial self or "here," and the primordial rhythm is the birth of the primordial "I am." Some situations we cannot understand leave us at a loss, and it is in these situations that creative practice beyond the routine use of technology begins. To take it a step further, in Maldiney's view, rhythm is the essential way in which humans emerge in the world. It is how we begin to relate to the world: "Rhythm is the truth of this first communication with the world [...]."[14] One can call this "primordial rhythm."

In Maldiney's example, in Northern Flemish painter Jan van Goyen's "Polder Landscape," the disparate rhythms of water, horizon, and sky meet on the tidal flats of Polder, and the world emerges as a unifying rhythm, and the viewer stands there. Maldiney called this movement, in which phenomena that should not be incompatible with each other are reconciled in a (primordial) rhythm.

What is the primordial rhythm as our essential relationship to the world? Or what is the primordial rhythm as our first appearance in the world? Or what is primordial rhythm as first appearing in the world? It is the opening up of the world through which the body can live and move in the world through rhythm. Rhythm is the way in which the world is revealed as a habitable openness. The sphere of the rhythm is a place where we can dance, it is the openness of the space in which we can play creatively. This is our relationship with the world at its core.

In serious cases that appear during my interviews with nurses, they are often at a loss for words and are not confident about the outcome of their practice. However, it is the loss of practice in such situations that creates actions that go beyond the manual. A tiny clue in such a situation can help us grasp and reassess our relationship with the situation and create order in the world for the first time.

2. "Form" making

 # Making a "Form" out of chaos

Maldiney called the creation of the relationship between the body and the world from within the production of Form. For Maldiney, Form was not an image (or figure) of an individual object. The production of Form is the disclosure of the whole world and the emergence of the world's entire order. In the production of Form (= the production of the entire world order), each object image is an element, a part of the production of Form in the world as a whole. In other words, while an

[13] *Ibid*., 151.
[14] *Ibid*., 153.

abstract painting may not use an image of an object, as "Form" is the structuring of the entire surface (the world), the "Form" arises in the same way in both abstract and figurative paintings (and requires a perspective that views a figurative painting as if it were an abstract one). For Maldiney, Form was more important than image. Art is an attempt to initiate and transForm Form, that is, the composition of the entire world. Whereas the image of the object is enclosed and closed with contour lines, the creation of the world order of Form is an expanding movement of space-time and openness.[15] The lines that create Form open up a path in the world. The individual image takes on meaning by having a place in the "Form" as the transformation of the whole world.

If we put it in the context of our research on caregivers, it means that the breaking out of a situation that is difficult to accept and judge happens as a reorganization of the whole situation. In other words, practice is about the reorganization of Form (= world order). Change takes place by involving the entire situation. The practice is the transformation of a situation, a movement that transforms the situation as a whole (rather than the manipulation or treatment of individual tools or objects – these are equivalents of images in the paintings). Even if the individual events in the field (instruments, disease sites, staff movements, etc.) are clear, there will be many situations where it is not obvious what to do about them. The nurse transForms the situation into something habitable and communicative.

In one of my interviews with visiting nurses, the situation changed at the point when a young mother with cancer died. Her daughters had not been able to communicate with her, as they had not accepted her approaching death.

> Ms. E.: In the end, when she died, I got a phone call from her father saying "Ms. E., I think she is not breathing," and by the time I got there, she was already dead. The junior high school kids were in another room, and I told them, "Your mother's body will get cold very quickly, so let her touch you." When she died, I said, "Mum's body is going to be cold," and put their hands on her belly like this, I said, "Mum is still warm." As they touched them, I could see the two sisters crying, and I thought to myself, "Oh, maybe they were finally able to cry, maybe they were able to get their emotions out and it would have been easier for them."

A mother, who was in the final stages of cancer and her daughters could not communicate with each other. In the last weeks of her life, the patient and her daughters did not speak to each other. In other words, from the perspective of communication, the situation was a stalemate with a loss of articulation. Immediately

[15] Cf. Henri Maldiney, *L'art, l'éclair de l'être* (Paris: Cerf, [1993] 2012), 154.

after her death, at that point when the daughters' hands were placed on the body of their mother, the entire situation became organized. There was no change in any object in the room, but when the children began to cry, the entire situation changed.

The relationship between the children and the dead mother was generated from the point of contact between the hands and the body. In practical terms, the nurse could not encourage reconciliation between the mother and the children when she was alive. In the above quotation, the movement of the nurse became a medium for the work of mourning. The generation of an entire world Form out of chaos is what Maldiney called "rhythm."

Here, the difference between Maldiney's and our own perspectives also becomes clear. The transformation of the world is at stake, but for us, the elements of the world's transformation are not sensory objects (as in the case of the painting) but actions. For Maldiney, the world is an order (or disorder) of sensibility, but for us, it is a situation constituted from our daily experience, death, or social relations. We see Form as being in the foreground of the cultural and social order. I now shift Maldiney's argument a bit in this area of social practice. The social situation produces destructive chaos (i.e., social problems such as difficulties in life, discrimination, and violence), and it is the possibility of reconstituting the whole social situation that is questioned in action. In practice, this is exclusively the question. In other words, while undertaking Maldiney's argument on the creativity of Form, our argument puts the dimensions of social situation and action into perspective. It asks to reconfigure the entire situation through action.

 # Rhythm as the temporality of "Form"

The platform that underpins the transformation from chaos to Form is what Maldiney called "rhythm." Maldiney began with Benveniste's search for etymology and confirmed that rhythm is not a flow, but an indication of Form. It is not a static schema, but rather a Form as a trace of dynamic movement, such as, for example, a rippling pattern. The rhythm is a "pattern of a fluid element."[16] In Benveniste's words, it is "a form born of improvisation, instantaneous and modifiable."[17]

These are convenient terms for us to use as we aim to capture the "Form" of something in motion when we describe the practices of care. What our research tries to grasp is the transformation of the entire situation through practice in a situation in flux, which is difficult to put into words and has no fixed Form. Internal

[16] Henri Maldiney, *Regard, parole, espace*, 157.
[17] Émile Benveniste, *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, I. (Paris : Gallimard, [1966] 2014), 333.

consistency is an important element in the practice of medicine and welfare. If we can talk about "style" concerning practice, it is because the movement to reconcile the diverse social contexts and forces is coherent.

Practices in a given situation have their own and often multi-layered rhythms. They are not only polyphonic[18] but also polyrhythmic. Maldiney believed that rhythms are harmonic movements that unite opposing forces. In the medical field, action emerges as a response to various contradictory and conflicting social forces, but also as a response to reconcile them. The different rhythms of the different movements conflict with each other. Behind the holistic, primordial rhythm that pervades the entire situation in medical and welfare settings, there are various rhythms of individual layers that constitute polyrhythms.

Rhythm is invisible to the eye. Fortunately, this rhythm of action is expressed in interviews through various mimetic and syntactic rhythms (Japanese makes heavy use of mimetic words). The actions and narratives with their rhythms (temporal structures) are distinct, but two sides of the same coin and the structure of the actions are reflected in the grammatical structures of the narrative. For example, in the following quote from a nurse, the experience of a cancer patient is described:

> [Showing the interviewer a plastic bottle in her hand] A patient was starting to feel this weight. The weight of his legs is also there, but this weight of the bottle is the first thing that wins. Then he gradually [*dandan*] became unable to go out and buy it himself. The person who starts talking to you about this is the person you want to talk to about death. Yes, that's right. If you listen carefully and carefully [*jikkuri jikkuri*]. I mean, as you experience that you can't do those things, and every day you become a little bit gradually [*dandan*] unable to do them, you are getting closer and closer [*dondon*] to death, you know, to yourself...That's why you are afraid of it. There is the fear of not being able to do what you can't do yourself, but at the same time, there is the fear of death coming closer and closer [*dondon*], and people talk about death while talking about how everything they can do is being taken away from them, being taken away from them....

In this scene, the patient feels the decline of his body "gradually [*dandan*]" and that death is approaching "closer and closer [*dondon*]." This decline and the approach of death are captured in the listener's attitude of "carefully and carefully [*jikkuri jikkuri*]." With "dandan," we hear the slow but unpredictable rhythm of decay, which is felt from within the body, and the rapid rhythm of death comes in

[18] Jaakko Seikkula & Tom Arnkil, *Open dialogues and anticipations: Respecting otherness in the present moment* (Helsinki: National Institute for Health and Welfare, 2014).

from somewhere outside (but where does death come from?). In this scene, the rhythms of the patient's decline and the nurse's "carefulness" are simultaneously folded together. That is, even this small scene is made of several different rhythms – polyrhythms – that are folded together.

The two rhythms oppose each other and the rhythm of the practice of "listening carefully and attentively" is established. These three disparate partial rhythms, "gradually [dandan]," "more and more [dondon]," and "slow and deliberate [jikkuri jikkuri]," are intertwined to create a scene, namely a primordial rhythm of practice.[19] There is an appropriate speed and timing for the action to take place.

3. "There" as a starting point for the production of Form

 # Maldiney as an implicit reader of Kant

For reasons unknown, Maldiney rarely mentioned Kant, despite making frequent references to Fichte, Hegel, and Schelling. It is an odd silence, given that his main focus was on aesthetics. Perhaps it was a nod to his teacher, Pierre Lachièze-Rey (1885-1957):[20] "Form" in Maldiney is, as he described it, a dynamic movement in which Form is created. Maldiney, for example, stressed on Klee's dynamic implication of *Gestaltung*. Thus, the concept of Form has an affinity with Kant's concept of imagination (*Einbildungskraft* translates to mean "power to create Form") because both of them constitute the power to find a pre-linguistic order of the world. In light of this, Maldiney's aesthetics serve as an interesting re-reading of Kant's Critique of Judgment.

Maldiney's discussion on the transformation of chaos into Form set up a genetic theory starting from the mathematical sublime[21] to aesthetic judgment (Kant had no such idea). Besides, Kant set up a level of lethal chaos in front of the mathematical sublime, from which we can read the emergence of the dynamic sublime from chaos (the level of lethal chaos has a faint trace in Kant as a break in the imagination, but it is masked by reason's immediate overcoming of it as the sublime).

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[19] Maldiney presumably did not recognize partial rhythms, but Benveniste defined rhythm as "the arrangement of parts in a whole." Émile Benveniste, *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, I. (Paris : Gallimard, [1966] 2014), 330.

[20] Cf. Henri Maldiney, *Philosophie, art et existence* (Paris : éditions du Cerf, 2007), 182.

[21] Mathematical sublime is the experience of discovering the power of reason (i.e., mathematical real infinity) to exceed it in the experience of immensity beyond the power of conception (cf. Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, [1790] 1990), 84-84.

Maldiney's description is convoluted. However, bearing Kant in mind, another important stage between chaos and Form becomes clearer. He spoke of the transition from chaos to Form, referring to Cézanne, as follows:

> This perdition was the first moment of art, no one said it better than Cézanne: "At that moment I became one with my painting. (= not the painting painted, but the world to be painted.) We are an iridescent chaos. I come before my motif, I get lost in it... We [Cézanne and the world] germinate. It seems to me, when the night comes down, that I will paint and that I have never painted"[22]
> There is no distance between the world and man, between this cosmic rain where Cézanne "breathes the virginity of the world" and "this dawn of ourselves above nothingness" that the "wandering hands of nature" cannot gather. But in a second phase, Cézanne finds himself, thanks to drawing, in the "stubborn geometry," the "measure of the earth."
> "Slowly the geological foundations appear to me... everything falls into place... I begin to separate myself from the landscape, to see it"[23,24]

First, there is a state of being buried in aesthetic chaos ("[in the sublime] the forces of life are for once momentarily blocked."[25] Then a distance is created between chaos and the painter, and chaos is experienced as the sublime (the "safe place" is the condition for the experience of the dynamic sublime[26]). In the quote presented above, this distance from chaos (i.e., the foundations of the world) is expressed in terms of "compulsive geometry" and "the measure of the earth." Cézanne could produce Forms (works of art) from the safe zone of "geometry" and "scale." The dozens of slightly different paintings on Mont Sainte-Victoire were not only a repetition of the free play of imagination and concept (aesthetic judgment) but also a sublime way of raising the world out of chaos each time.

 # From the mathematical to the dynamic sublime

I make use of Maldiney's argument as a theory of action. I treat his ontogeny of aesthetic experience as the genesis of the mathematical sublime and transfer his theory to the dynamic sublime. It is this distinction that concerns the faint difference

[22] Joachim Gasquet, *Cézanne* (Paris : Éd. Encre marine, 2012), 245-246
[23] Ibid., 246
[24] Henri Maldiney, *Regard, parole, espace*, 150.
[25] Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 75.
[26] Dynamic sublime is the experience of discovering the power of practical reason beyond that of conception in the violence that exceeds the power of conception (the amount of containment = the excess of intensity).

between aesthetics and psychopathology that Maldiney himself did not clearly distinguish. I would like to move away from psychopathology and open up further to the practice of care.

In the mathematical sublime, the mental basis for the acceptance of the sense of a huge object was the quantitative infinite (the maximum of the external extension) as a mathematical idea. If we replace this with a theory of action, it becomes the dynamic sublime. In such cases, the foundation for overcoming nature's powerful force that overwhelms a person is, in Kant's case, the moral law and the Infinite (God) as the Ideal that supports the law (this idea of God makes it possible for a person to be in a "safe place"). In the modern context, the terms "moral law" and "God" are difficult to use. We live in an age in which no single foundation such as God can function. The foundations on which events can be received and actions (world transformation) produced must be rediscovered in our social context. I would like to think of Maldiney's phenomenology as a theory of phenomenological description of situations that critique and recombine existing social structures.

 # The gaze that captures the Form

Maldiney quoted Cézanne's phrase, that is "be separated from the landscape [= chaos]."[27] Alternatively, the movement of Form was described as "The moment of appearance [of the Form] does not depend on the object but the gaze."[28] A gaze that places some distance between us and the world is necessary for the creation of Form.[29] In capturing an image, the perception of an object and its perception is automatic. However, to acquire the overall Form of the world, a singular perspective is necessary. The gaze that captures Form is neither the "sense" nor the "perception" treated in Husserl and/or in cognitive science. It is a special kind of gaze that transcends the individual things and acquires the articulation of the whole situation. Maldiney's gaze can be compared to Kant's *Einbildungskraft*, which is the power of grasping the image, whereas it is the gaze that grasps the Form (= the composition of the entire situation). Similarly, what he called "sensation" is not the five senses, but the "opening" of the field of Form.[30] The senses are therefore associated with Aristotle's fantasy.[31]

In nursing practice, we can see the perspective of viewing the situation from a distance. For example, there are cases such as Ms. G in the pediatric oncology ward

[27] Henri Maldiney, *Regard, parole, espace*, 150.
[28] *Ibid*., 155.
[29] *Ibid*., Footnote.
[30] *Ibid*., 152.
[31] Cf. Henri Maldiney, *Aîtres de la langue et de la pensée*, 225.

where she is aware of the fact that she is "dry" (she used herself the word "dry" in English) and has a bird's-eye view of a child dying, and there are cases such as Ms. E's earlier comment, "What am I going to do?" I have also encountered a nurse who expressed reflection by using the personal pronoun "I" when she was involved in a situation and used "myself" while looking at it from a distance. With this distanced gaze, the nurse always assesses the situation by synthesizing observations of the whole, and at the same time, observes minute details. It is not simply a matter of looking at things in detail, but of looking at the power lines of the various contexts to draw the overall "shape" of the complex situation. To capture the "shape" of the world as a whole, one needs a gaze that does not perceive individual objects but looks around from a distance.

Just as Kant considered the aesthetic experience "disinterested", apart from interests, Maldiney applied the term "witness"[32] because he believed that the painter is no longer caught up in the chaos at the time of creation. However, while considering the rhythm in medical practice, the status changes because people continue to be caught up in the distance while it is happening. While the practitioner is unavoidably involved in the situation, another perspective simultaneously employs distance in the situation and produces action. The duality of this perspective of distance amid involvement is another difference between our theory of action as a critical philosophy and Maldiney's aesthetics. The creation of art becomes possible as a play in a space protected from society, and is constructed differently in this respect from action in society.

 # "There" as the base point of the world

The perspective is paired with finding a distanced reference point of "there" in the world. In his later work, Maldiney tried to rethink the movement of producing Form out of chaos and of transforming an incomprehensible world into an intelligible one, with the new concepts of "transpassibility" and "transpossibility."

When one takes on the whole of existence, if one is unable to determine the coordinates and create order, it becomes chaos and is swallowed up. This is the same argument as that in the past. Maldiney invented a new concept of "transpassibility" as a moment of the genesis of this world transformation. Transpassibility emphasizes the unpredictability of the world suffering an unexpected transformation. It is the arrival of the unforeseen transformation that is the transpossibility beyond the possible. In other words, the production of Form and transpossibility are at the same level.

[32] Henri Maldiney, *Regard, parole, espace*, 155.

Even later, Maldiney repeatedly used the scene of a lost man calling out to the void to describe the transpassibility.

> The most extreme of the appeal, that of the lost being, is what illuminates it best. A lost person who appeals to the empty space calls for a presence from which, there, a new space opens up and gives him a site. He/she calls for the transformation of the world into another where his/her lost being and with him/her his/her "here."[33]

At this time, one calls for the transformation of the world not from here, but from there as a starting point for the arrival of that which does not yet exist. By piercing the desert with a call to that "there" which does not yet exist, the whole world may be transformed into something meaningful and habitable from that "there" as a starting point. The call is a call to the "coming chasm" that transforms chaos into significance (or the primal articulation of the world). It is the starting point of the first opening of the world or the transformation of the whole world.

> True screaming never fills the space between us. As we all know, when the scream catches me, the scream creates a void all around me. Because the scream which calls for the Absolute is lost in the world. How can it call out to the distance? The scream is first and foremost a call to the possibility of nearness and remoteness. The voice calls to the "there" where someone can be. [...] The voice calls towards the void and calls for the void to arrange the place-site [...]."[34]

The "there" is not just a scene of the expanding perceptual world that the painter faces. Let me present an example. One year, during a very hot summer, I accompanied two visiting psychiatric nurses to see a woman with severe schizophrenia. In a room with a malfunctioning air conditioner, she sat with cardboard piled up to form a wall around her. She suffered from the persecution delusion and auditory hallucination. The two nurses asked her, "Ms. X, how are you feeling? Isn't it too hot?" They quietly called out the patient's name and approached her. They were, of course, calling out to the patient in front of them, but it was not clear whether she heard what they said. The patient continued to hurl at the delusional figure. The nurses, however, were speaking to the (supposedly "sane") patient somewhere. Calling the patient's name tries to open the "there," the window through which the

[33] Henri Maldiney, *Penser l'homme et la folie* (Grenoble : Jérome Millon, 1991), 405; Cf. Henri Maldiney, *L'art, l'éclair de l'être*, 98, 282.

[34] Henri Maldiney, *L'art, l'éclair de l'être*, 70.

world can become another world where they can communicate with each other. What is glimpsed as the world to come is a world where the patient can contact the people around him or her and open up a space for encounters. Maldiney called this kind of meeting place "transpassibility." In such situations, "the place from which the other comes" and "the horizon of the world that you and I share" become radicalized as questions.

Maldiney defined schizophrenia as a loss of transpassibility. However, the question of how to create transpassibility with people with schizophrenia becomes important. In our perspective, psychopathology, which is dedicated to objectifying and labeling the sick by diagnosis, needs to be transformed into a theory of helping techniques that transforms the entire social relationship, which is integral to the helping person.

Maldiney often featured scenes where the sudden appearance of a deer on an Alpine peak changes the landscape:

> One day on a mountain path, a farmer from the Vallouise, an old chamois hunter, was trying to tell [...] the striking moment when the animal appears on the ridge. And these were the words: "I didn't see it coming, all of a sudden it's there, like a breath, like nothing, like a dream." The emotion felt exceeds the expectation and the sense of the quest. The appearance of the chamois is not part of a preliminary configuration which, on the contrary, it cancels. It is the bursting point of a field of incidence and reception, the point of origin of space-time, or rather of the moment-place where the sky and the earth and the interval appear in the open, of which it is the there.[35]

The challenge is to transform the relationship between the patient and the whole world in which they live by calling them "out there" where they are likely to be heard. Therefore, contrary to what the old textbooks of psychiatry forbid, frontline caregivers (nurses and social workers) are willing to enter the world of schizophrenic delusion. This may be self-evident now where the Open Dialogue is commonplace, but nursing and social work practitioners have been working with severely mentally ill patients this way for a long time.

The gaze that distances itself from chaos is paired with the "there" that is the reference point of the world, but "here" and "there" are not opposed to each other. One sees from a perspective of "there."[36] That is where the painter's perspective is located. That is, the birth of a point of view "here" and the birth of a point "there"

[35] Henri Maldiney *Penser l'homme et la folie*, 406.
[36] Henri Maldiney, *L'art, l'éclair de l'être*, 285.

are the same thing. The emergence of the "there" is the possibility of making the position possible, which is before the emergence of three-dimensional space. Opening that "there" and seeing from there opens up a new world.

It is from this "there" where the perspective is placed that the call is established and the world is transformed. Or, perhaps more precisely, the world (I dwell there) becomes possible when such a "there" becomes possible. That is the phenomenological origin of the world.[37] "But in the openness [*l'Ouvert*], something appears in a way that I am the "there" of it. For there to be meaninglessness and meaning, being and non-being, there has to be a 'there' (the 'y' in '*il y a*' is this 'there')."[38] (Maldiney 1985, 210) Returning to the topic of nursing, the situation the nurse faces is not that of the painter. It involves life and death, social relations, and action. If we consider the example of Mrs. E, in the scene where the daughter puts her hand on the corpse of her mother, the world is transformed from the point of contact between the corpse and the hand.

The "there" that is opened up by touching the corpse is the starting point of the transformation of the world. It is through "there" that an encounter with the dead mother becomes possible. It is there, where the child's hands touch the corpse of her mother, that the World is opened up. There is the timing of the meeting of the rhythms. This meeting and the singularity of space-time called "there" constitute the arena where the entire situation is reassembled.

Conclusion

When multiple rhythms meet change, the situation recombines. From the perspective of the timing of the encounter, the rhythm is the rise and reorganization of the relationship with the world. The world (a social situation, interpersonal relationships) is (re)organized through rhythm.

[37] From the temporal perspective, it is the "present" (Henri Maldiney, *Regard, parole, espace*, 161) and the "moment of crisis" (Henri Maldiney, *Regard, parole, espace*, 167). This is the making of the present as a reference point. Maldiney explained the temporal aspect of rhythm from French linguist Gustave Guillaume's divisions of contained time (*le temps impliqué*) and outward spreading time (*le temps expliqué*). When the reference point of the present arises in the direct method (Henri Maldiney, *Regard, parole, espace*, 161), the verb is segmented in terms of internalized (phase or state) and outwardly extending (past, present, and future) time. In the interviews, various grammatical elements separate the internal and external time of the narrator and the characters, but the reference point of the present is so self-evident that it may be difficult to see. However, this reference point is rendered visible at a critical point in time when the entire world is being transformed. The moment of the generation of Forms or actions that unite the contradictory forces hovering in chaos into one tense Form is this critical moment, and this is the localization of the present.

[38] Henri Maldiney, *Art et existence* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1985), 210.

This paper may not be a social critique because it does not discuss social institutions. What is important in practice, however, is to be free from institutions and norms and to respond to the needs of patients (or people in need). If the goal of medical or social support is to achieve survival and livability for people in difficulty, then this paper, which discusses the reorganization of the situation through rhythm theory, is one of the attempts to depict the micro core of social intervention.

Everyone, not just the mentally ill, stumbles into different rhythms from those around them, or the various layers of their experience interfere with those of each other in confusing ways. We always have blind spots that we cannot solve, both about others' and our own situations.

In the course of my research in the field of healthcare and welfare, I have come to understand that many of the situations called "care" comprise the work of adjusting such polyrhythms. Even if the margins and blind spots never disappear, care implies holding back from being swallowed up by them and securing a world where encounters with people are possible (of course, this is only a small aspect of care practice). Family care is often a process of regulating polyrhythms among family members, and nurses provide support through end-of-life care to rectify the disruptions and stoppages in polyrhythms that individuals may have. A supporter as a catalyst for change is a witness to the recombination of polyrhythms.

Such a recombination involves the discovery of "there," which is a window that opens a "world with a new polyrhythm," and the occurrence of a singularity in time and space, the "timing" at which such change occurs. The "there" that opens up at a certain "timing" is the starting point from where interpersonal relationships and relationships with one's past can be re-organized.

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STUDIA UBB. PHILOSOPHIA, Vol. 66 (2021), 1, pp. 117-138
(RECOMMENDED CITATION)
DOI:10.24193/subbphil.2021.1.06

THE MENDING OF A FRACTURED SELF. ON THE SELF AS A PRODUCED AND SUSTAINED ENTITY

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ABSTRACT. Experientially, we often have a sense of self which is relatively constant across moments in one's personal timeline. There are instances where this sense of self fractures, though, and self-identity becomes difficult to sustain. This essay argues that such fracturing is the result of an interruption in a process of self-narrativization—an interruption which can be mended, at least partially, through creative and communal practices which allow for the possibility of recreating narratives at the site of their failure—and explores the meaning of this fracturing and mending process in terms of colonial violence as an example of a fracturing situation.

Keywords: *critical phenomenology, the self, Levinas, anticolonialism, politics.*

1. Introduction

We often take ourselves for granted. Or rather, we take the fact that we can form a 'self' for granted. The fact that I am currently my*self*, that I am the same *self* that I was ten minutes ago, or last week, or even a decade ago seems to be an uncomplicated affair. If I look at a photo of myself from the past, I can recognize myself, even if I may not want to—from embarrassment over poor fashion choices, for example. Further, that I am a self seems uncontroversial: caught in a pre-critical or pre-phenomenological orientation, my existence is a given and what matters is what happens to my self, not its ontological status.

In this essay, I hope to trouble these ideas. First, I will argue that one's self is not something passively given but is instead something that is *produced*. Work and labor go into creating and sustaining a self, even if this labor is sometimes so light and subterranean that it is barely noticeable. Second, and similarly, I will argue that the continuity of selfhood over time is a complicated affair. Reproducing one's

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self—making it so that one can actually recognize one's image in a photo across vast gaps in time—is a similarly laborious process. Such continuity is not guaranteed: one can fail to sustain one's self.[1] There can be gaps in experience where one looks at an image of the past and fails to *fully* recognize themselves in the image: instead, there is a sense of loss, of disjunction, of anxiety in not being able to dwell within one's self. Similarly, one can avoid producing themselves: they can stay in bed all day, can freeze up from various troubles, and can dissolve themselves in the ether of continuous experience.[2] That is, one can fail to separate themselves from the world, which amounts to the erasure of a self, however temporary that erasure may be. In arguing that the self is an unstable entity across time, my intention is to provide a more accurate picture of what is involved in selfhood. It is a picture which may strain simple binary accounts of selfhood, but which is hopefully closer to the actual experience of being (and failing to be) a self. Thus, this essay aims to be more descriptive than prescriptive: the goal is to show how to make sense of a *produced* selfhood, not to say how one should go about producing a self or what that self

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[1] This isn't to say that one is a *failure* if one *fails* to produce and reproduce a self. It only means that a certain end wasn't achieved. That it wasn't achieved is neither a judgement on the incomplete action nor a prohibition on trying again. This is an *ontological* claim about a certain mode of existence that a self can occupy, not a normative judgement about what a self should be. This is worth clarifying now since in later sections of this essay I will discuss such 'failures' in terms of colonial existence. By calling these 'failures,' I only mean that something which may seem uncontroversial and wholly given over to experience (the presence and persistence of a self) may become troubled and complicated through various experiences: the process of creating/sustaining a self may not succeed. The loop of self (re-)production may short-circuit. The reason for this lack of success is often beyond the scope of one's control and agency. Thus, this is the failure of a *process*—a process that is beyond the agency of any single individual and thus this failure can't be attributed to any single person, let alone the 'self' which fails.

[2] These more quotidian forms of resisting the production of a self don't dissolve the intelligibility of *my* self as a continuous self, though. Spending a lazy Sunday morning in bed is a form of rejecting self-production in the moment but it doesn't constitute a *loss* of one's self in terms of the ability to form narrative continuity across moments in time (a kind of continuity this paper will explore in more depth in Section 3), though repeated 'lazy mornings' that stem from a prolonged state of depression form such a loss. That such narrative continuity can be fractured or ruptured is important to keep in mind, especially in relation to the specificity of colonial fracture discussed below. This is what helps specify the difference between Emmanuel Levinas' theory of ipseity through dwelling and An Yountae's theory of selfhood achieved through the work of passing through what he calls 'the abyss': the latter is a means of working through a failure in the production of a self in the specific context of colonial violence and where any process of forming one's self through separation (as is the case in Levinas' theory) is mediated by one's situatedness in relation to colonization. Other 'failures' are possible that don't necessitate a similar theory of the abyss, but all of which rely on some kind of problem occurring that interrupts the labor of self-production. In this essay we only explore how this can occur in the context of colonization, though.

should look like. This is crucial to keep in mind for later parts of the essay in relation to a discussion of the production of a self through experiences of colonial violence. The self that is produced out of this situation may be a reactionary one that embraces the colonial situation as necessary and even *desirable*. Such outcomes don't contest the argument presented here that a self is produced; such reactionary forms of self-production would need to be analyzed and critiqued separately.

It's important to note that this process of self-production is actually a *process*—that is, it's a continual act of both production and *re*production, one that is mediated both by the social forms of existence that are put at arm's length in the creation of a self and the plenitude of the world that is similarly held in suspension in creating and re-creating a self. Thus Levinas is correct to highlight how selfhood is generated through acts of turning inwards, of creating a split in the world that allows for a self/other distinction—a process that is realized through 'dwelling', as we will explore in more depth shortly. Thus, for Levinas, this 'dwelling' is always mediated by the presence of others, even if it's a process of recoiling from otherness in its entirety. Selfhood is produced though acts such as cooking and eating, giving oneself over to the comforts of sleep, and washing/mending clothes so that one is able to go back into the world the next day—actions that are performed or made possible through the various forms of domestic labor that disproportionately fall on the shoulders of women. This relationship, where a self is made possible through domestic labor that makes dwelling possible, is recognized by Levinas but only in a sexist inversion which essentializes the 'feminine' side of this gendered division of labor.[3]

In highlighting the re/productive aspects of self-production mediated through the presence and labor of various others, Levinas' account of the production of a self—and by extension, the account provided in this essay—links up with various theoretical fields outside of phenomenology which are similarly concerned with the self as a produced entity. Though this essay is largely silent about these connections beyond this paragraph, I hope that it exists as a participant in this ongoing dialogue that is able to show what phenomenology (especially a 'critical phenomenology') is able to contribute. Thus, I see the account of selfhood presented here as a preliminary attempt to create theoretical structures that would allow for connections to be forged between genetic phenomenological accounts of a produced self and non-phenomenological (though not anti-phenomenological) critical theories of self that are currently being developed—for example, the wealth of work that has been done

[3] See Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, transl. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 157, where he says that the hospitality of a home is created through the work of "the welcoming one par excellence, welcome in itself—the feminine being."

recently on 'gestational labor'[4] or recent work in Social Reproduction Theory which emphasizes how contemporary self-production is structured by imperialist forms of extraction[5] and capitalist models of reproduction that produce "the chaotic, multiethnic, multigendered, differently abled subject that is the global working class."[6] Here these various connections are only latent, though they form the backdrop and impetus behind attempting to think through this account of self-production and the mending of a fractured self

To help flesh out an account of selfhood which emphasizes the productive element of selfhood—a production process which is always (though not often) subject to failure—this essay will proceed in the following way. Section 2 will examine the ways that a self is *produced* across time and will trouble the idea that a self is simply a given within experience by examining Emmanuel Levinas' theory of the self as a 'hypostasis.' The goal of that section is not to show that one's sense of self is an 'illusion' or that the produced self is a rarity: a self is something structured but also something real and persisting because of this construction. Against a prevailing tendency that sees any presence of discontinuity in selfhood as indicating the illusory nature of a self, this account is one that attempts to capture the seeming stability of one's experience of selfhood as a *stable* self across time while emphasizing how this stability is something *achieved* through various self-constituting actions—just as a building is stable partially because of all the labor put into keeping it stable (by putting in better insulation, for example), one's self is also *made stable* through various actions.[7] Section 3 will begin to look at the difficulties that come into play

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[4] See Sophie Lewis' wonderful, *Full Surrogacy Now: Feminism Against Family* (New York: Verso, 2019), along with her "Cyborg uterine geography: Complicating 'Care' and Social Reproduction," *Dialogues in Human Geography* 8(3), 2018, 300–316, and "A Comradely Politics of Gestational Work," *Dialogues in Human Geography* 8(3), 2018, 333–339. Along the same lines, both Myra J Hird, "The Corporeal Generosity of Maternity," *Body & Society,* 13(1), 2007, 1–20, and Susan Elizabeth Kelly, "The Maternal-Foetal Interface and Gestational Chimerism: The Emerging Importance of Chimeric Bodies," *Science as Culture,* 21(2), 2012, 37–41, have highlighted how gestational labor is a creative process that features significant interchange between a gestator and a developing fetus—an interchange marked, at least on the purely physical level, not just by an exchange of nutrients, but even by an exchange of genetic material.

[5] See Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation* (New York: Autonomedia, 2014).

[6] Tithi Bhattacharya, "How Not to Skip Class: Social Reproduction of Labor and the Global Working Class," in Tithi Bhattacharya (ed.), *Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentering Oppression* (London: Pluto Press, 2017), 74.

[7] This account of selfhood shares a lot in common with and is sympathetic to the account provided by Mariana Ortega in *In-Between: Latina Feminist Phenomenology, Multiplicity, and the Self*, SUNY Press, 2016. See especially 63-84 where her account of a 'multiplicitous self' is developed. Building off of

when trying to *sustain* one's self, difficulties which are most apparent when the means of self-production have been stolen. Accordingly, it will examine the consequences of failing to sustain a self over time in the context of the existential experience of colonialism. The point at which one loses a concrete sense of continuity is a point of crisis. In fracturing, a self is unable to make sense of its cohesion over time, and gaps emerge: a self becomes multiple. After briefly discussing how a self can sustain itself across time through narrative practices (by appealing to Dan Zahavi's idea of a 'narrative self'), this section will focus on experiences of colonialism in An Yountae's work in order to draw out such consequences.

In working through all this, my goal is to produce the beginnings of a theory of the self which recognizes that a self isn't simply a given aspect of experience (instead, its existence is a necessary condition for experience), which is attentive to the troubles that can come about in attempting to produce and reproduce a self, and which takes seriously the fact that we can feel a disunity with our past self/selves by focusing on a situation where this disunity flares up in an intensified form. In some sense, we persist as the same 'object' through time, but phenomenologically we can feel a fracturing or rupture with our previous mode(s) of existence when the process of producing a self is interrupted. In putting these various thinkers and orientations together, this essay can serve as a fecund source for further reflections about the emergence of selfhood, its maintenance and persistence, and the possibility of recomposing a sense of self and identity even in situations of extraordinary violence and trauma—a necessary though by no means sufficient condition for working towards the abolition of such situations.

2. The Phenomenological Production of the Self

One of the most interesting and innovative aspects of Levinas' philosophy is his conviction that selfhood and subjectivity are *events*. The self isn't simply given but is achieved. Labor is needed for selfhood to emerge in a world. Although the overwhelming majority of commentary on Levinas has focused on the transcendental

Lugones' work on selfhood, Ortega argues that she goes too far in saying that one is an entirely *different* self when one "world-travels": there's something poetically useful in talking about existing as a different self when moving between worlds, but Ortega shows that this account is hard to sustain in a literal manner. Ortega's theory of selfhood would be a useful complement to the theory of self presented in this essay, especially given its connections to decolonial theory, but it is not explored simply for considerations of space—doing justice to the subtlety of her account in relation to Lugones, Anzaldúa, and Heidegger would take us far afield.

and ethical dimensions of his theory, much can be gained by turning that focus towards neglected aspects of his work such as his theory of the self and his ontology grounded in the *il y a* (or what he later refers to as 'the elemental').[8] Whereas Levinas' ethical theory has a number of difficult, if not intractable problems (such as the fact that the 'face' which holds us hostage has no positive characteristics and that Levinas considers ethics to be 'first philosophy'),[9] his rich ontological theory holds the potential for developing a phenomenology which resists the sometimes conservative and idealistic character of the field—something which should be important for any attempt to try and create a 'critical phenomenology.' Towards this end, in this section I will develop Levinas' account of selfhood (as a 'hypostasis') and show how hypostasis is achieved through a process of division within and recoiling from existence that creates the space necessary for a self to emerge.

2.1 Hypostasis: The Cleaving of Anonymous Being

Levinas' ontology begins in the *il y a*, the "anonymous rustling of existence."[10] It is anonymous because it lacks unity: to give a proper name to the field of dispersion and multiplicity which objects organize themselves out of is to run the danger of reifying that which precedes reification.[11] For Levinas, before there is some*thing*,

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[8] Levinas first uses '*il y a*' as a technical term on page 20 of *Existence and Existents* (interestingly, he associates it with a feeling of 'horror' at the excessive presence of being). The term is taken up in *Totality and Infinity*, specifically in his chapter on enjoyment as the medium through which objects are encountered. See Emmanuel Levinas, *Existence and Existents*, transl. Alphonso Lingis, Duquesne University Press, 2001 and *Totality and Infinity*, 122–142. Further, this turn towards the ontological aspects of Levinas' work has come out in some recent scholarship, such as Tom Sparrow, *Levinas Unhinged* (Zer0 Books, 2013), though his focus on 'aesthetics as first philosophy' in Levinas' work is very different from my own focus.

[9] The former problem is normally bypassed—at least in attempts to productively use Levinas' work—in order to speak about *specific* groups towards which we have an ethical obligation (such as 'the victimized' or 'the oppressed'). As an example of this, see Enrique Dussel, "'Sensibility' and 'Otherness' in Emmanuel Levinas," *Philosophy Today* 43(2), 1999, 126–134. For the second problem, this is the source of the critique that critical theory makes about phenomenology generally: it grounds itself in a specific element of reality without attending to the mediation of that element. For a contemporary critique along these lines that specifically looks at how Levinas' focus on "ethics as first philosophy" potentially fails to allow for authentic ethical action (in contrast with my sympathetic reading of Levinas in this essay), see Elizabeth Portella, "Mediation and Its Shadow," *Philosophy Today* 63(2), 2019, 427–445.

[10] Levinas, *Existence and Existents*, 65.

[11] There is thus a difficulty in using *il y a* as a technical term, since it performs this very move: indiscriminate multiplicity is made into *a* thing. This is difficult to avoid—Levinas' use of 'elemental' in his later work

there is simply *some*. This formlessness is uncomfortable and escapes our attention in many everyday moods which have direct (or even indirect) concern for individual objects.[12] The *il y a* only ever appears—but in an appearance that avoids appearing *as* something—in those forms of experience (in moods or affective dispositions) in which we are disjoint with the world: indolence,[13] fatigue,[14] and insomnia.[15]

The latter affective disposition is especially important for Levinas, since it is a way of being in the world prior to 'worldhood' that stands between total immersion in the formlessness of the *il y a* and the radical separation marked by 'hypostasis.' Within insomnia there is 'vigilance,' which is a minimum form of awareness that doesn't collect the 'night' of being into discernible objects (in fact, it is subject to and terrorized by this night): things are hazy in the darkness, especially when we are overcome with an exhaustion that won't yield to rest, to sleep. Objects lack their discrete boundaries. Thus, vigilance is "devoid of objects." It is "an experience of nothingness…as anonymous as the night itself."[16] Put even more startlingly,

> [T]he vigilance of insomnia which keeps our eyes open has no subject. It is the very return of presence into the void left by absence—not the return of

falls into this problem even more directly. Speakers of English could potentially say *there is* (as Lingis' translation does), which both has the advantage that it doesn't artificially inflate the importance of the term (as using a foreign word can sometimes do) and the advantage that, through the italics, it is able to avoid potentially awkward grammatical constructions which crop up from using 'there is' separately from an object. This very italicizing produces the problem at hand though: it makes the *il y a* seem like a singular *thing* rather than a name marking the excess of existence of existents. For a longer meditation on how to get out of a very similar situation (if not the exact same), see Badiou's remarks about the difficulty of designating a 'proper name of being' in Alain Badiou, *Being and Event*, transl. Oliver Feltham (London: Continuum, 2005), 52–59.

[12] That is, the *il y a* exists prior to and makes possible the whole interplay of *Vorhandenheit* and *Zuhandenheit* which makes up the core of Heidegger's theory of worldhood and experience in a world. See §§15–18 of Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, transl. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 95–123.

[13] Levinas, *Existence and Existents*, 28. Levinas describes indolence as what "makes one prostrate," and "afflicts us with boredom." But he also describes it as the "impossibility of beginning," an important description given his theory of time (which is to say that indolence resists hypostasis, the curling inward that creates subjectivity and thus marks the "pure beginning" of the present (79)). Interestingly, on this same page indolence is also described as "the pleasure of spending the morning in bed," a description which is in tension with Levinas' characterization of enjoyment as the foundation of ipseity in *Totality and Infinity*. See pages 147–151 on "Enjoyment as Separation." Though important, Levinas' account of time is not explored in-depth in this essay.

[14] Ibid., 29–36.

[15] Ibid., 65–67.

[16] Ibid., 65.

> *some thing*, but of a presence; it is the reawakening of the *there is* in the heart of negation. It is an indefectibility of being, where the work of being never lets up; it is its insomnia.[17]

During insomnia our eyes are open, but don't see any *thing*: it gestures towards a genetic zone which precedes and conditions intentional consciousness. But even saying 'our' eyes is saying too much: there is no 'I' in insomnia, just the oppressive weight that creeps up on us when we are unable to tear ourselves away from multiplicity. In our sleepless state, frayed from our fatigue, there is only an experience of existence as a continuous process void of contents. In the absence of existents, existence asserts itself fully. Hence why, at the peak of our inability to sleep, existence itself "reawakens," but reawakens in the formless folds of darkness, far away from the light of intentional consciousness, of Enlightenment, and of the sovereign subject who masters and dominates all objects. Being is always present, even if it fades from our awareness. Insomnia reminds us of this: thus, in vigilance we are reminded of the 'indefectibility' of consciousness, since we can't fully 'defect' from being (or existence): we can't fully depart from being or form a place for ourselves outside of being. In the midst of insomnia, we have no means of separating ourselves. There is no peace (that is, nothing pacific[18]) in insomnia—we are simply immersed in endless oceans of multiplicity.

If we can't depart from being, though, we can pause within it. We can show hesitance or reticence before existence.[19] If the *il y a* "lacks rhythm"[20] (and thus is void of *logos*), by introducing a beat, a separation between sound and silence, a voice which can speak and name (and thus categorize, organize, separate, incorporate, etc.), i.e. a self can be produced. The self comes about through a cleaving of indiscriminate being: it makes a distinction within the formless. This is the process that Levinas calls 'hypostasis.' This process, which is the "advent of a subject"[21] (but also, as a consequence, objects), is like the biological process of invagination, where an embryonic blastula (here standing in as a metaphor for some kind of germ or seed which holds the potential of forming the formless *il y a*) folds inwards and creates the stomach and esophagus, the very organs which stand at the boundary of inside and outside and which take in nutrients in experiences of enjoyment and dwelling.

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[17] Ibid.

[18] See Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 171, where Levinas describes the relationship with the other (that is, the moment in which subjectivity is transcended and shattered) as "fundamentally pacific."

[19] Levinas, *Existence and Existents*, 67.

[20] Ibid., 66.

[21] Ibid., 67.

We live from "good soup," as Levinas says,[22] and through the enjoyment of eating we literally make food into ourselves: our flesh, our blood, our bones, and all the other elements which form the physical ground of the production of a self are generated through resisting the formlessness of the *il y a*, by giving order to chaos by discriminating between various existents within unbounded existence, and reducing differences to the logic of the same.

In this process of folding inwards, in contraction, the space for selfhood is created. A self, especially a self as a thinking being, is riveted to the place of its emergence. Solitary thought is thoroughly localized and spatialized. Levinas says that "Thought has a point of departure."[23] This point is formed by resisting the encroachment of the night, by "curling up in a corner to sleep" and therefore "abandoning ourselves to a place."[24] If the *il y a* is a name for that horrifying aspect of existence in which we are thoroughly lost without any place in order to understand ourselves, then "Sleep [as the activity which produces hypostasis by overcoming insomnia through positioning oneself] is like entering into contact with the protective forces of a place; to seek after sleep is to gropingly seek after that contact. When one wakes up one finds oneself shut up in one's immobility like an egg in its shell."[25] Sleep comes through submitting to fatigue, though. It comes about by forming a pocket of separation from the torrent of the *il y a* and allowing one's body to take refuge and heal. Place, as the grounding of hypostasis, "is what makes the body the very advent of consciousness…It [the body] is not posited; it is a position. It is not situated in a space given beforehand; it is the irruption in anonymous being of localization itself."[26] Accordingly, right after that quote, Levinas describes the body which is given over to location, to place, as an 'event'—that is, as a rupture within the indiscriminate flow of time which characterizes the *il y a* as a boundless field of existence without existents.

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[22] Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 110. Levinas says here that "We live from 'good soup,' air, light, spectacles, work, ideas, sleep [!], etc. … These are not objects of representations. We live from them…. [W]hereas the recourse to the instrument implies finality and indicates a dependence with regard to the other, living from…delineates independence itself, the independence of enjoyment and of its happiness, which is the original pattern of all independence." (The first and last ellipses in this quote are Levinas' own.) This idea that independence is created out of 'living from…' and thus that independence and selfhood are always-already relational should be kept in mind when discussing the fracturing of a self and decolonial theory in Section 3.

[23] Levinas, *Existence and Existents*, 68.

[24] Ibid., 70.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid., 71.

This process of cleaving the indiscriminate *il y a*, of forming a thinking being thoroughly attached to its body (and thus thoroughly localized), in which we seek refuge and curl inwards in order to protect (and even create) a self, is what Levinas terms hypostasis. He says that this term, 'hypostasis,' has been "taken up" in order to designate the "apparition of the substantive."[27] This term "signifies the suspension of the anonymous *there is*, the apparition of a private domain, of a noun. On the ground of the *there is* a being arises."[28] Here, selfhood isn't a phenomenon to be simply described or some kind of special object to be dissected and studied but is the result of a creative action. Levinas' theory of selfhood neither claims the death of the concept of the self, nor does it pretend that the self is always-already given: a self is something concretely produced. One can fail in the process of becoming a self—things can go wrong. Thus, producing a self is an achievement even if only a partial achievement, since the folding inwards which makes selfhood possible is predicated on the existence of an other and even if this is an end which is usually reached without a problem. A self is a fragile assemblage, a precarious gathering of dispersion in-itself, but because of the seeming immediacy of its production, it is also resilient, like Pele's tears. It is a wager, the result of an act of hope and of faith, and its persistence is therefore possible only through endurance, perseverance, and resilience. But such persistence is also only possible because of acts of care: of letting ourselves heal, sleep, and otherwise nourish our*selves*. A self founds itself, but only within a world to which it is completely given over. Selves are mediated by the surplus of the *il y a* which forms the material basis of self-production. A self is not the basis for 'first philosophy,' nor is it lacking in positive characteristics: a self is a process of fleeing, of evading, of seeking refuge—but refuge in *this* place, with *this* body, and incorporated into a certain sequence of time and history, into a political and social situation.

3. The Interruption of a Produced Self

If the self is something produced, it must have an origin, a moment in time which is indexed to its genesis. Thus, there must exist spans of time which are prior to its advent. And as something continuously remade, there is always the possibility that one's self may dissolve and fail to continue. Thus, Heidegger was correct to situate the existence of the self between its 'thrownness' (it's emergence out of a

[27] Ibid., 82.
[28] Ibid., 82–83.

time that precedes it) and its projective capacities, its irreducible futurity.[29] But as an event, the production of a self occurs within a present moment which is not reducible to either the past or the future and which exists as an irruption within the flow of time—this is one of the crucial things we gain from Levinas' account of the self.[30] Given the instantaneous character of the present, the continuity of the self is contingently given. If the previous section was concerned with the evental production of a self, this section will investigate what follows from the interruption of this production process. It will examine how a self can become fractured, perhaps even beyond the point of recognition. Various situated experiences can split a self into multiple temporal parts, especially those experiences marked by trauma. This possibility of fracturing makes a self a curious kind of existent: it can persist across time without being identical to itself, but also can marked by temporal discontinuity *despite* apparent identity (that is, I may be the same 'thing' at different points in time, but may not feel that I am the same *self,* while still recognizing those previous selves as *my* selves). In this section, I attempt to bring out the strangeness of the existence of a fractured self and how such a self can nevertheless persist across temporal disjunctions. Working out the full logic of such an existence is beyond the scope of this paper. Here I only aim to lay a foundation for future attempts to think through fracturing and self-reconstruction. A fuller account would demand an analysis of fracturing in more diverse situations and a genetic account of the production of fracturing—both of which would be useful in attempting to create a general logic of fracturing but which cannot be pursued here.

3.1 The Fracturing of the Self: Abyss Walking and Narrative Reconstruction

Earlier, I described the failure of self-production as a 'short-circuiting.'[31] This description makes sense when describing a self at the level of its production—where the self curls away from the *il y a* in an act of hypostasis—since the dissolution of a self here tends to be momentary. The gap fails to be closed or completed, one is

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[29] In *Being and Time*, the former is discussed in §38 (pages 219–224) and the latter is discussed in §53 (pages 304–311).

[30] Although I have attempted to highlight the evental character of the self—that is, both its quality of marking a surplus within the flow of time and its existence as a division between the past and the future which is irreducible to either—in my presentation of Levinas' theory of hypostasis, I haven't been able to dive directly into his account of the temporality of a self. For more on Levinas' account of the temporality, see *Existence and Existents*, 85–96 and Emmanuel Levinas, *Time and the Other*, transl. Richard A. Cohen (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1987).

[31] See note 1.

confronted with indeterminate existence in bouts of insomnia, and the subject/object distinction plays no phenomenological role. This can be a horrible experience, of course, but it is very different than the kind of experience that comes from the failure of sustaining a self across time: this kind of failure is not characterized by a momentary blurring of ontological boundaries, but by the inability to make sense of oneself experientially. That is, this failure is the result of an inability to make *narrative* sense out of one's self-continuity across time. More than a short-circuit, this narrative inability would be better described as a *fracturing* of a self.

There are at least two alternatives to this term 'fracturing,' both of which I find inadequate. The first is the language of a 'split' subject, which has a long history within theory and philosophy (from the theme of recognition that plays out in Hegel's famous chapter on 'Lordship and Bondage,' to the Lacanian emphasis on the barred subject created through its fantasy, and to the Maoist focus on dialectical reason as the tracing of a "one becoming two"). Although this term is very close to fracture, I prefer the latter since it gets closer to the phenomenological experience of the narrative failure I'm interested in, since a fracture can be either minor or severe. A 'hairline' fracture may cause serious problems in the future, but can go unnoticed in the present (for example, a narrative gap in experience may exist on the margins of one's awareness, but can be avoided for long periods of time—I can overwork, busy myself with small tasks, suddenly move to a new town, engage in various forms of risky but exciting behavior, etc. all to avoid being confronted with the need to coherently narrate oneself).

This brings us close to the second term: 'shattering.' While this term emphasizes the violence that may go into the failure of self-narration, to say that a self is 'shattered' indicates that it might not be possible to repair or reconstruct such a self or even create a new self. This leads to a kind of fatalism which I find neither useful nor accurate: even if it were true in some sense, it doesn't seem useful to attempt to live with the recognition of that truth. But it also doesn't seem true. People can tend to themselves in a manner that allows for the narrative process to overcome the violence of discontinuity. Although one could argue that this new narrative process is 'fictional' in a pejorative sense (that is, the 'narration' is just covering over the real fact of discontinuity), I think this argument would miss the lived content of this experience, where people *do* feel like they've recovered from (or at least learned to live with) prior events of violence and trauma. This nihilism about creating a self in the face of extreme violence and the erasure of memory is a kind of resignation when resilience is most needed. Speaking of a 'fracture,' on the other hand, indicates the potential for healing and repair (like the mending of a fractured, rather than shattered, bone) even if what is produced in the process of healing is different than what existed before the fracture.

To exist across time, a self needs to be able to sustain and reproduce itself. One needs to be able to present a coherent picture of themselves to help make sense of how they are the *same* self despite so many apparent differences. I can potentially make sense of myself as being the *same* self in the present as I was when I was a child by showing how there is a meaningful, expressible continuity between those two parts of myself.[32] Even if there are seemingly major changes to the status of one's self, as long as those changes can be made to cohere through common practices and forms of narration the self can successfully *endure* or successfully hold the immense void of the *il y a* at bay for long enough that these various temporal slices can be said to exist for the *same* self. Thus, even if there actually *are* gaps in my existence as a self (as may be the case if we take Levinas' account far enough, where every time one falls prey to bouts of insomnia and then curls inside themselves enough to finally fall asleep a *new self* is produced), phenomenologically these ruptures in continuity aren't enough for there to be a rupture in the experience of being a single self.[33] This 'smoothing' of experiential/temporal gaps could be likened to the way that visual representation similarly smooths over gaps in the perceptual field in order to present something coherent.[34]

The idea that a produced self can persist through the work of memory and self-narration is inspired by Dan Zahavi's account of continuity. He claims that for an account of the self as existing across time to be successful, it needs to be able to show how "successive phases of consciousness must somehow be united experientially" with the "decisive challenge" of "account[ing] for this temporal binding without giving

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[32] A good essay that links up this narrative element that is constitutive for the persistence of a self across time and Levinas' reflections on the ethical dimensions of 'the face' is John E. Drabinski, "Incarnate Historiography and the Politics of Our Faces," in S. West Gurley and Geoff Pfeifer (eds.), *Phenomenology and the Political* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 101–116.

[33] This may be part of the reason that Josh Parsons, "A Phenomenological Argument for Stage Theory," *Analysis* 75(2), April 2015, 237–242, argues that 'stage theory' (a theory of temporal continuity prevalent in analytic theories of time) somewhat naturally helps make sense of one's experience of existing across time. Though this argument isn't really phenomenological in the sense spoken of throughout this essay (it takes 'phenomenology' to be roughly equivalent to 'experiential') and is rather surface level (it relies on arguments premised on how some experience *feels* at some given present moment—thus, it's more about intuition than anything else), the article does give some basis for beginning to think through what a robust phenomenological account of the self and its temporal parts may be.

[34] Lots of research has emerged on the way that our visual and cognitive faculties 'omit' pieces of experiential data that prevent one from being able to picture the world in a coherent way. This biological process of omission is what helps explain many optical illusions. For one article explaining some of the relevant details of this phenomenon, see Chou P. Hung, Benjamin M. Ramsden, and Anna Wang Roe, "A Functional Circuitry for Edge-Induced Brightness Perception," *Nature Neuroscience,* 10, September 2007, 1185–1190.

rise to an infinite regress, that is, without having to posit yet another temporally extended consciousness whose task is to unify the first-order consciousness, and so forth ad infinitum."[35] To avoid such a regress, an account of the continuity of a self across time needs to be able to think about how this continuity is *generated* out of a self immanently, rather than being established and guaranteed by something existing outside of a self. Zahavi proposes that such a unity comes about through a common experience of time, in which unity is 'woven' rather than being pre-given.[36] Zahavi's theory of selfhood as an 'experiential self' is grounded in a conception of a self as "the very subjectivity of experience."[37] The self is that which is able to have a standpoint, that which is the condition of possibility for experience, but also that which ties together various experiences across assembled slices of time.

Zahavi's self, similarly to Levinas', isn't simply a container for experiences: a self is produced by actively weaving together various experiences, by creating a narrative for one's self which can help tie together these disparate threads. The self *produces* itself by recoiling from the *il y a*; the self *sustains* itself by making this continued recoiling (which makes experience possible) intelligible and meaningful.[38] A self is produced through the labor of separation; a self is reproduced *for that self* through the labor of narrativization, of finding ways to chain together various temporal chunks in a way that is meaningful to the self which they partially compose. Often this is an uncomplicated affair and occurs in the background of conscious thought: since there is nothing disturbing the narrative, it's easy in an everyday setting to chain together myself-in-the-morning and myself-at-night, for example. But sometimes this labor of reproducing a self is difficult; it can be a struggle and the process often involves invention and creativity in laboring to chain together experiences that seem wholly disparate. When this process of chaining together experiences is unsuccessful,

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[35] Dan Zahavi, "The Experiential Self: Objections and Clarifications," in Mark Siderits, Evan Thompson, and Dan Zahavi (eds.), *Self, No Self?: Perspectives from Analytical, Phenomenological, and Indian Traditions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 72. The reason that Zahavi relies on the 'unity of experience,' I believe, is that the opposite thesis quickly runs into problems. If there could be "successive phases *of* consciousness" without there being some form of unity which is experiencing those phases, it's difficult to see how these phases could be *of* consciousness. That is, without the unity, how could these be phases be *successive*—what transcendental rule would bind and ensure their progression?

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid., 60

[38] Here it's useful to recall that this distinction between the production of a self as a founding moment of autonomous existence and the self's reproduction across time is a somewhat artificial distinction. A self is likely never fully generated in this kind of sovereign manner: this production is always-already a *re*production. I have kept this language because attending carefully to the roles of production and reproduction in the generation/maintenance of the self would take me outside the scope of this essay.

especially unsuccessful in a way that is *meaningful* to the self which is interrupted in its persistence—there is a fracturing of the self. In such a circumstance, a self becomes discontinuous and discrete, even if these 'jumps' in continuity still belong to the same person: the self-identity of a (singular) person becomes multiple.

This attempt to trace the consequences of a self's fracturing (both the conditions that make the fracture possible and the actions that can be taken to attempt to mend the damage that's been done, without the fantasy of erasure) is undertaken in An Yountae's *The Decolonial Abyss*. Specifically, he is interested in tracing the 'abyssal' elements that exist in the space created by the failure of produce a self, especially when this failure is the product of colonial forms of violence. This 'abyss' isn't a zone of non-existence (a void) but is instead a name for the process that one undergoes in working through the diverse moments of self-fracturing. The abyss is a movement "from loss to possibility, from finitude to infinity."[39] Thus, the abyss is the name for the well of potential that exists for overcoming the gap produced in the failure of self-production: the abyss is the name for the labor involved in healing a fractured self. And by focusing on the abyss as a particular kind of fracturing indexed to colonial violence, An presents his project as one which hopes to "explore the possibility of reconstructing the fragmented sense of the self after traumatic ruins."[40]

The abyss is a common figure in decolonial literature: as a symbol of painful passage, it highlights both the work that goes into creating a self in the face of the denial of one's humanity and the literal 'middle passage' of the Atlantic slave trade which produced and continues to produce the contemporary world. The mutual recognition of having a shared history in being forced through the middle passage—or having one's ancestors forced through—despite the incredible violence involved, creates the possibility of generating selves out of collective trauma, the trauma of the denial and erasure of both the collective history and the community ties that would allow one to get enough traction to create a self through narration. As Édouard Glissant (a constant source of inspiration for An) put it,

> Experience of the abyss lies inside and outside the abyss. The torment of those who never escaped it: straight from the belly of the slave ship into the violet belly of the ocean depths they went. But their ordeal did not die; it quickened into this continuous/discontinuous thing: the panic of the new

[39] An Yountae, *The Decolonial Abyss: Mysticism and Cosmopolitics from the Ruins* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016), 10–11.

[40] Ibid., 13.

> land, the haunting of the former land, finally the alliance with the imposed land, suffered and redeemed. The unconscious memory of the abyss served as the alluvium for these metamorphoses. The populations that then formed, despite having forgotten the chasm, despite being unable to imagine the passion of those who foundered there, nonetheless wove this sail (a veil).[41]

An sees his own work as a response to this notion of the middle passage. In response to this excerpt from Glissant, he asks "how is selfhood possible for a colonized subject whose very horizon of existence is breached by the ongoing effects of 'coloniality'? What happens when the abyss is not merely a metaphysical figure but a social, historical, and political one that emerges from the terrain marked by coloniality?"[42] The colonial self is possible precisely because the abyss is something materially produced: as the name for a kind of activity, the decolonial abyss is the process by which a colonial subject—whose selfhood has been intentionally obliterated by acts of violence, suffered both by individuals and communities, at the level of physical pain and historical trauma—is able to produce a self through creative actions which make self-narration possible— even through the rupture of trauma and across the gulfs of experience that such trauma can produce.

This task is impossible within the parameters of the life-world of the colonized since it involves creation *ex nihilo*, a creation out of the nothingness of a social location which isn't afforded dignity or ontological weight and out of the emptiness emerging from obliterated collective memories. This is why the abyss is generative and fecund: a "womb abyss."[43] The abyss, in spite of the violence of its production, is a creative zone which allows for the generation of existents—or rather, a reconfiguration of the givenness of existents, a reshaping of the sedimentation which characterizes how they appear in their seeming immediacy—that is seemingly impossible within the boundaries of the contemporary world.[44] Thus, creative labor that begins from the position of living in the abyss, and which makes such a life possible, draws from the surplus of existence over any instance of the world (as the presented totality of

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[41] Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, transl. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1997), 7.

[42] An, *The Decolonial Abyss*, 13.

[43] Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 8.

[44] I believe that An's notion of 'world' is intentionally underdetermined here. When I say that the abyss marks a zone that allows for the impossible to emerge in a world, I mean that both at the 'local' and 'global' levels. That is, this could be an impossibility within the world of contemporary capitalist and imperialist relations (the 'impossibility' of creating an end to such systems at the level of the global) or the impossibility of rebuilding a self after traumatic fracturing (which is something seemingly impossible within the boundaries of a world realized at a local level).

existents) and forges new worlds. The existents given through a specific organization of this void are reformed in the context of colonial self-reconstruction by passing through an abyssal state—a reformation made possible because any given world is only one among many (the current world is always a contingent actuality)—in order to create new possibilities for existing and relating. This is an act of hypostasis, but one that involves an inward-folding conditioned by the impossibility of simply 'dwelling' since the wounds of colonial self-fracturing mediate any produced ipseity.

This curious mix of fatality and possibility characterizes the experience of passing through the abyss. It's a form of existential ambiguity that moves between symbolic and historico-material zones, "Loss haunts the horizon of life just as…the ocean is marked with balls and chains (now gone green) that weighed down the slaves thrown into the water."[45] An sees the abyss as more than just a kind of personal passage through an individualized fracturing: it is also the historical and political site which can make such fracturing a feature of a group-identity. The abyss isn't necessarily attached to a single life-history but exists "as a symptom of the loss of historical and politico-economic ground within the (colonial) context of oppression."[46] As such, this form of fracturing can't be resolved through individual action. To mend a collective fracturing, collective actions are needed, from the large-scale redistribution of land, resources, and political power back to the colonized, to the acts of care needed to support and rebuild senses of communal narrative continuity. This act of passing through the abyss is not a solitary endeavor according to An: it is a *colonial* abyss, rather than a *personal* abyss. The narrative work involved is thus one of creating collective images which can help create logical continuity for the colonized and can help create space for asserting their existence and persistence in a global situation which continually denies or obscures such an existence. (Thus, beyond the creation of concepts, the demolition of various modes of thinking is necessary to make sure

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[45] An, *The Decolonial Abyss*, 89. I'm somewhat wary of An and Glissant's use of images of slaves being thrown overboard and drowned—wary, because it comes across as a metaphor or 'mere' literary image that detracts from the real material violence that occurred and continues to occur. It's difficult to talk about such issues without doing symbolic violence to those that are being spoken about though, since the slaves in question have been either erased from history in their particularity or such presence is given over to what can be said in the account books of slaveholders. The very interiority of such slaves is lost and invoking such interiority in a literary style can also be a form of violence. On this difficulty, see Saidiya Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts," *Small Axe* 12(2), June 2008, 1–14.

[46] An, *The Decolonial Abyss*, 92. This form of collective 'fracturing,' which exists partially because of outright violence, partially because of the erasure of a shared history, and partially because of the non-existence of epistemic resources that could help make sense of the specificity of the situation of colonialism is likely an instance of 'hermeneutical injustice'. See Miranda Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice: Power & the Ethics of Knowing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

that such concepts aren't usurped and distorted by current colonial and imperial powers. This work needs to be pursued alongside and within land-back movements, rather than in opposition to them as is sometimes argued.[47]) An, in this vein, points towards the importance of the image of the shoreline in Caribbean attempts to make narrative sense out of the situation of coloniality. The shoreline is a point of passage, a liminal zone between the sea and the land, although the shore signifies (and thus its presence *doesn't allow for forgetting*) the violence of the middle passage since "new history is to be born at the very point where [the ocean's] thin line of demarcation meets the land, the rugged soil of history, just as the end of the ocean marks the beginning of land."[48] Such metaphorical descriptions are essential for mending the kind of collective fracturing that results from colonialism since they create shared discursive norms that make such fracturing intelligible and help make the self that emerges out of this fracturing into a source of meaning-making: these metaphors make the unspeakable into something speakable and thus something *communicable intersubjectively*.

Learning to narrativize events that rupture one's self understanding is crucial for mending such fractures. As Susan Brison puts it, "Piecing together a dismembered self seems to require a process of remembering in which speech and affect converge…[since] *saying* something about a traumatic memory *does* something to it."[49] Nomination is a crucial step of mending a fractured self—the act of naming brings into the open that which previously existed *under* the horizon of intentionality. It makes present-to-hand what was previously only ready-to-hand and thus makes a traumatic event into something which can be affected rather than something which only affects. An hints towards this same phenomenon when he says, speaking metaphorically about the process of repairing a broken vase, "the gathering of the broken pieces is a work of love that, at the same time, reveals the pain of its

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[47] This focus on epistemic reconstruction both *instead of* and *in opposition* to land-back initiatives is present in much of Walter Mignolo's work on 'decoloniality'. He says that "The goal [for decoloniality given the state of the world post-9/11] was no longer to 'take hold of the state' but to engage in epistemic and subjective reconstitution". It's important to note that Mignolo says 'no longer…' rather than 'no longer just…' See Walter D. Mignolo and Catherine E. Walsh, *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), 120.

[48] An, *The Decolonial Abyss*, 94. For another attempt to think through the liminality of the shoreline (or more specifically the 'swash zone') in relation to practices of whaling, commodity food production, gender relations, and human/non-human animal relations, see Russell Fielding, "The Liminal Coastline in the Life of a Whale: Transition, Identity, and Food-Production in the Eastern Caribbean," *Geoforum,* 54, 2014, 10–16.

[49] Susan J. Brison, *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of a Self* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 56.

scars."[50] This is what gives the abyss, as the space one passes through in attempting to mend a fragmented self "after traumatic ruins," a dialectical character, in the classical sense of a 'negation of the negation.' As An says, "Negation is the movement of crossing or passing through the abyss. Negation means first negating the self. Then it also signifies negating [the act of][51] negation, which points to the act of renunciation, an acceptance of loss that would, paradoxically, defy loss and defeat as the perpetual condition of existence"[52] A self is able to 'close the circuit' of its continuing production after its interruption through acts of violence, by negating such forms of violence and dialectically recognizing the reality of colonial trauma while creating epistemological tools that allow for the possibility of moving on from, and thus transforming, such trauma.

How exactly these epistemological tools are created is beyond the scope of this essay—nor is such a process something which could be given in advance anyway. There is no blueprint for overcoming the negativity which prevents a self from continuing. In this essay, I have gestured to how this works in cases of colonial trauma but it is

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[50] An, *The Decolonial Abyss*, 14. This is a reference to and commentary on Derek Walcott's essay "The Antilles: Fragments [!] of Epic Memory" where he states "Break a vase, and the love that reassembles the fragments is stronger than that love which took its symmetry for granted when it was whole. The glue that fits the pieces is the sealing of its original shape. It is such a love that reassembles our African and Asiatic fragments, the cracked heirloom whose restoration shows its white scars. This gathering of broken pieces is the care and pain of the Antilles, and if the pieces are disparate, ill-fitting, they contain more pain than their original sculpture, those icons and sacred vessels taken for granted in their ancestral places. Antillean art is this restoration of our shattered histories, our shards of vocabulary, our archipelago becoming a synonym for pieces broken off from the original continent." A beautiful example of the kind of practices of mending that both An and Glissant are gesturing towards. See Derek Walcott, "The Antilles, Fragments of Epic Memory: The 1992 Nobel Lecture," *World Literature Today* 67(2), 1993, 261–267.

[51] This insertion is made to help clarify the dialectical structure at work in this process of 'double negation.' Although it's a common summary of dialectical logic, "negating negation" means nothing. At most, it would indicate a pure positivity void of any trace of the movement of negativity, which is directly opposed to dialectical forms of thinking. Negation isn't negated in a dialectical process, but the act or structure which produces the negation is what is negated: this is why what is negated is the whole of the structure of capital in the dialectic of history and why, in An's example, the traumatic encounter or situation which negates the self (which fractures or dissolves the self, which stops the self's process of production) is what is negated. The reason that it's said that this negation is 'sublated' is because the thing which is negated in a dialectical process isn't erased (as one pretends while acting in bad faith) but is transformed by being put into a different relation to the relevant totality which grounds it. Hence, the impact of colonial trauma, which makes it impossible within a given situation to harness the narrative tools necessary to allow for a self to persist, is transformed into something intelligible through creative acts of nomination and collective acts of mourning which allow for the possibility of living—fully living—through the practical recognition of a traumatic event or series of events.

[52] An, *The Decolonial Abyss*, 81.

true for other forms of trauma too. Even the means of mending colonial forms of fracture is multiple: what works for Venezuelans will not necessarily work for Cubans, nor will it necessarily work for the indigenous populations of the U.S. or Israel as sites of settler-colonialism. Selves are produced differently in different situations: the work of curling away from the *il y a* takes many different forms and the ontological excess of the *il y a* allows for it to be presented (and thus rejected) in numerous ways. This is part of why the work of sustaining a self can be so difficult. Even such 'normal' cases as resting at home in order to feel whole again are propped up by whole systems of gendered and racialized (re)productive labor, along with whole networks of service providers that help to fill the instantaneous gaps of self-production (or at least make their failures less noticeable). Dwelling is also multiple. But here I have at least shown that the self is something produced and that its persistence is not guaranteed. When there is a failure in the process of self-production, one way of rectifying this failure is through creative acts which allow for acts of narration to continue. These acts of narration allow for a self to begin making sense of itself across instances of disunity: to make sense out of seemingly contradictory statements such as "I can no longer recognize myself as the self that once experienced/believed/felt X, but I still recognize that I am that person." Through the kind of logic presented here, there is at least the beginnings of a general theory of how a self can come into being, fracture or dissolve, and re-emerge as a being able to recognize itself in crossing an ontological gap—in fact, the act of crossing that gap (and building the structures needed in order for such) is precisely what makes such recognition possible.

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STUDIA UBB. PHILOSOPHIA, Vol. 66 (2021), 1, pp. 139-162
(RECOMMENDED CITATION)
DOI:10.24193/subbphil.2021.1.07

HERMENEUTISCHE ÜBERLEGUNGEN ZU HEIDEGGERS *SCHWARZEN HEFTEN* UND ZUM NEUDENKEN SEINES DENKWEGS (I)*

ISTVÁN M. FEHÉR**

ABSTRACT. *Hermeneutical Considerations on Heidegger's Black Notebooks and on the Revisiting of his Path of Thinking I.* Starting with preliminary philological-hermeneutical considerations concerning the way Heidegger's *Black Notebooks* can and should be dealt with, as well as concerning the question what tasks may be derived from them for future research, the paper attempts to discuss the *Black Notebooks* applying a variety of methods and multiple approaches. Themes that are discussed at more or less length include: Time factor and the formulation of our task; explanation and understanding or the way a philosophical path should be approached and dealt with methodically (hermeneutically); the theme related to "Heidegger and anti-Semitism" and the question concerning individuality; prejudices from a hermeneutical perspective and the way to deal with them; relapses and their philosophical explanation; missing and increased sensibility; Heidegger and Hegel; equivocality and the dark side of the "formal indication"; Lukács, Scheler and the devil; Heidegger's great being-historical treatises and their greatness; suggestions for a reconsideration of Heidegger's way of thinking. -- One important hermeneutical claim brought to bear on the various discussions is this: just as it would be inappropriate in our dealing with Heidegger's texts to disregard Heidegger's own self-interpretations, it would be no less inappropriate to consider those self-interpretations--which themselves call for interpretation--as telling us the sole and ultimate truth.

***Keywords**: hermeneutics, being, history, interpretation, individuality*

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* Die hier in zwei Teilen erscheinende Studie stellt die vollständige Fassung meines Aufsatzes dar, der um ein Drittel gekürzt im Band 12 des *Heidegger-Jahrbuchs* veröffentlicht worden ist. Der zweite Teil dieses Beitrags wird in der nächsten Nummer der Zeitschrift („Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai", Philosophia, 2/2021) erscheinen.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG. Ausgehend von philologisch-hermeneutischen Überlegungen zur Art und Weise, wie mit den *Schwarzen Heften* umgegangen werden kann und soll und welche Aufgabenstellungen davon resultieren, sucht dieser Beitrag, die *Schwarzen Hefte* in ihren vielfachen Schattierungen zu beleuchten und zur Diskussion zu stellen. Erörtert werden folgende Themen: Zeitfaktor und Aufgabenstellung; Erklären und Verstehen oder wie einem philosophischen Denk- und Lebensweg methodisch (hermeneutisch) nachgegangen werden soll; das Thema „Heidegger und der Antisemitismus" im Zusammenhang der Frage nach der Individualität; Vorurteile aus hermeneutischer Sicht und der Umgang mit ihnen; Rückfälle eines philosophischen Lebensweges; mangelnde und gesteigerte Sensibilität, Heidegger und Hegel; Zweideutigkeit und Schattenseite der „formalen Anzeige"; Lukács, Scheler und der Teufel; Größe der großen seinsgeschichtlichen Abhandlungen Heideggers; zum Neudenken seines Denkwegs. -- Eine im Zuge des Beitrags immer wieder geltend gemachte Einsicht lautet: So wenig es angemessen wäre, bei unserem Umgang mit seinen Texten Heideggers Selbstinterpretationen außer acht zu lassen, so wenig erwiese es als ratsam, diese, ebenfalls der Interpretation bedürftigen Texte für die alleinige Wahrheit zu halten.

***Schlüsselwörter**: Hermeneutik, Sein, Geschichte, Interpretation*

INHALT:

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Die oft auch als Denktagebücher bezeichneten und nach ihren Einbänden so genannten *Schwarzen Hefte* Martin Heideggers haben gleich nach Ihrem Erscheinen, März 2014 – wenn nicht sogar *vor* ihrem Erscheinen –, großes Aufsehen erregt und hören bis heute nicht auf, die Gemüter zu beschäftigen, ja zu beunruhigen und teils auch zu erschüttern. Die sogleich leidenschaftlichen Diskussionen konzentrierten sich auf jene Textstellen, an denen die Bezeichnungen „Juden", „Judentum", „Judenschaft", „Weltjudentum", „jüdisch", u.ä. auftauchten.[1] So hat es nicht lange gedauert, bis die Frage entstand: War Heidegger Antisemit? Die so formulierte Fragestellung führt zu etwas, was man (wie zu zeigen sein wird) als hermeneutische Sackgasse bezeichnen kann, denn sowohl die bejahende als auch die verneinende Antwort verkennt gerade das, was hier im ausgezeichneten Sinne – sofern es sich um Hermeneutik handelt – *verstanden* werden soll. Die Subsumption unter allgemeine Begriffe bzw. die Unterordnung eines Einzeldings, einer Einzelperson oder eines Begriffs unter eine bestimmte Art oder unter einen umfassenderen Begriff sieht nämlich von der Einmaligkeit oder Individualität des Gegenstandes ab und gibt somit das den Geisteswissenschaften Eigene preis. Damit geht eine lange und wertvolle deutsche hermeneutisch-geisteswissenschaftliche Tradition verloren. Ehe darauf eingegangen wird, dürften einige ganz einfache hermeneutische (oder philologisch-hermeneutische) Überlegungen vom Nutzen sein.

I. Zeitfaktor und Aufgabenstellung

Angesichts des rasch einsetzenden und kaum übersehbaren Stroms von Äußerungen über die *Schwarzen Hefte* schien es, als habe man keine Schwierigkeiten gehabt, die etwa 1250 Seiten der drei Bände *Überlegungen* (also die Bände 94, 95 und 96 der Gesamtausgabe [= GA]), zu denen kaum ein Jahr später, nämlich im März 2015, noch ein vierter Band (GA 97) hinzukam,[2] über Nacht durchzulesen und gründlich durchzuarbeiten. Daß dies kaum der Fall gewesen sein dürfte, sollte freilich einleuchten. Aber damit ist die Quantität des zu Lesenden noch bei weitem nicht erschöpft. Da eine einigermaßen fachkundige Kontextualisierung der *Schwarzen Hefte* gewisse Heidegger- bzw. Hintergrundkenntnisse im Allgemeinen voraussetzt, des Weiteren Kenntnis von zumindest zehn bis fünfzehn (oder mehr) Bänden

[1] Die wichtigsten Textpassagen sind die folgenden: GA (= Gesamtausgabe) 95, 96f., 97, 161, 325, 326, 395f.; GA 96, 46, 56, 133, 218, 242f., 262.

[2] Auch dieser Band enthält einige judenbezogene Textpassagen; siehe GA 97, 20, 159, 438, 463. Siehe jetzt auch *Marbach-Bericht über eine neue Sichtung des Heidegger-Nachlasses* erstattet von Klaus Held, Frankfurt/Main 2019, 30, 51ff., 55f, 58.

der Gesamtausgabe – hauptsächlich denjenigen, die die Vorlesungen der 1930er Jahre sowie die zu dieser Zeit entstandenen seinsgeschichtlichen Abhandlungen enthalten – erfordert, fragt es sich, ob angesichts des bloßen Zeitfaktors die Bedingungen für eine sachgemäße bzw. sachlich fundierte und fruchtbare Diskussion bei der Mehrzahl der mündlichen bzw. schriftlichen Äußerungen überhaupt vorlagen oder als gegeben angesehen werden können.

Was der Herausgeber des Bandes 65 der GA im Nachwort ausdrücklich betonte, leuchtet ein: daß nämlich das Studium der „Vorlesungen der dreißiger Jahre" „Voraussetzung ist für den nötigen Nachvollzug der »Beiträge zur Philosophie«" bzw. daß „Kenntnis und aneignendes Studium der Vorlesungstexte eine notwendige Voraussetzung seien für das Verständnis der unveröffentlichten Schriften".[3] In den *Beiträgen* gibt es jedoch zahlreiche Hinweise auch auf die *Schwarzen Hefte* bzw. die *Überlegungen* (vorwiegend auf *Überlegungen* IV), so daß es abwegig wäre, nur Vorlesungs- und Abhandlungstexte aufeinander zu beziehen. Vielmehr ist es so, daß als Drittes die Texte der *Schwarzen Hefte* hinzukommen. Diese begleiten nicht bloß die Texte der seinsgeschichtlichen Abhandlungen und treten keineswegs so in ihrer Relevanz hinter sie zurück, sondern sind öfters von gleichem Rang.[4] In den *Beiträgen* finden sich etwa eineinhalb Dutzend Verweise auf die *Überlegungen*, umgekehrt ist die Zahl der Hinweise auf die *Beiträge* in GA 94--97 geringer.[5] Daraus könnte sogar die Konsequenz gezogen werden, für ein tieferes Verständnis der *Beiträge* sei die Kenntnis der *Schwarzen Hefte* wesentlich, vielleicht auch unumgänglich, während umgekehrt die Kenntnis der *Beiträge* für das Verständnis der *Schwarzen Hefte* weniger relevant sei.

Als vorübergehendes Fazit läßt sich sagen, daß vielfache Zusammenhänge zwischen den Vorlesungen, den seinsgeschichtlichen Abhandlungen und den *Schwarzen Heften* bestehen, wobei auch wohl keine festen Grenzlinien zwischen ihnen zu ziehen sind. Finden wir doch in den *Schwarzen Heften* auch umfangreichere Textstücke, die als kleine Abhandlungen verstanden werden können (vor allem in *Überlegungen VII* = GA 95) Texte, die wohl auch in den *Beiträgen* oder in der Vorlesung des WS 1937/38 (GA 45) hätten untergebracht werden können. Einige

[3] GA 65, 513.

[4] Ähnlich Rainer Thurnher in einem kürzlich erschienenen Beitrag: „Es ist zu vermuten, daß […] man bei der Auslegung der Vorlesungen und der seinsgeschichtlichen Abhandlungen künftig an dem Aufschluß, den die Schwarzen Hefte bieten, nicht wird vorbeigehen können" Rainer Thurnher, „Heideggers seinsgeschichtliches Denken in manichäisch-adventistischer Zuspitzung", in: *Auslegungen. Von Parmenides bis zu den Schwarzen Heften,* hrsg. Harald Seubert und Klaus Neugebauer (Schriftenreihe der Martin-Heidegger-Gesellschaft, Bd. 11, Freiburg / München: Verlag Karl Alber, 2017, 272--303, hier 274).

[5] Verweise auf die „Überlegungen" in den *Beiträgen*: GA 65, 43, 57, 83, 103, 112, 118, 147, 204, 255, 294, 398, 421, 422, 456, 473, 491; Verweise auf die *Beiträge* in den *Schwarze Hefte*-Bänden: GA 94, 236, 275, 468; GA 95, 48, 155; GA 97, 177, 191f, 285, 315, 395.

Eintragungen können angesichts der seinsgeschichtlichen Abhandlungen „Ergänzungscharakter"[6] haben.

Die bisher publizierten Texte der *Schwarzen Hefte* können jedenfalls andere Texte beleuchten, und umgekehrt können sie ihrerseits durch diese anderen Texte beleuchtet werden. Eine gründlichere Aufarbeitung der hier entstehenden Zusammenhänge dürfte sich als zeitaufwendig erweisen. Wenn z.B. in *Überlegungen VII* zu lesen ist: „Jeder Anklang des Seyns ist ihm [dem Sinnlichen] geraubt", oder wenn es heißt, das Licht sei „ein Anklang des Seyns",[7] so haben wir die Möglichkeit, diese Textstellen mit dem zweiten Teil der *Beiträge*, der den Titel „Anklang" trägt, zu vergleichen.[8]

Nach der Veröffentlichung der *Schwarze Hefte* wurden nicht nur zahlreiche Zeitungs- und Zeitschriftenartikel publiziert, sondern man veranstaltete auch in raschem Tempo Tagungen und veröffentlichte daraus resultierende Sammelbände in Deutschland, Europa und Amerika. Heidegger hatte Anfang der 20er Jahre in einer seiner scharf kulturkritischen Bemerkungen die Meinung geäußert, „bei dem großen Betrieb der Philosophie" sei „alles nur darauf abgestellt […], bei der […] jetzt beginnenden »Auferstehung der Metaphysik« ja nicht zu spät zu kommen […]".[9] Ähnlich schien es nun, als komme alles darauf an, mit eigenen Meinungsäußerungen zu den *Schwarzen Heften* „nicht zu spät zu kommen". Angesichts dieser Sachlage dürfte es nicht unnütz sein, einen „Schritt zurück" zu machen (um mich eines Heideggerschen Konzepts in einem etwas abweichenden Sinne zu bedienen) und mögliche sowie hermeneutisch fruchtbare bzw. sinnvolle *Aufgabenstellungen* zu skizzieren. Bei diesen geht es allerdings oft um mehrjährige Projekte. Außer Relektüre von vielen Texten Heideggers, sollten Forschungen angestellt werden, die eine nähere Datierung der einzelnen Einträge möglich machen, oder z.B. dem US-amerikanischen Projekt der „reeducation" (Umerziehung) in den Nachkriegsjahren nachgehen –

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[6] Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, „Notwendige Erläuterungen zu den *Schwarzen Heften*. Über die naive Instrumentalisierung hinaus, die aufgrund der Mutmaßungen bequemer Einsichten inszeniert wurde", in: Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann / Francesco Alfieri, *Martin Heidegger. Die Wahrheit über die Schwarzen Hefte*, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2017, 26-48, hier 48. Siehe noch die Bemerkung, daß die „Notizbücher auch sehr vieles enthalten, […] was zum reinen, seinsgeschichtlichen Denken gehört […]" (ebd., 27).

[7] GA 95, 47, 62; vgl. noch ebd. 98, 207, 298.

[8] GA 65, 107–166.

[9] GA 63, 20. Im Kontext: „Wir sind heute so mark- und knochenlos geworden, daß wir eine Frage schon gar nicht mehr aushalten; wenn der eine philosophische Medizinmann nicht antworten kann, läuft man zum nächsten. Diese Nachfrage steigert das Angebot. Im Volksmund heißt das: gesteigertes Interesse für die Philosophie. Die Hermeneutik ist selbst nicht Philosophie; sie möchte den heutigen Philosophen lediglich einen bislang in Vergessenheit geratenen Gegenstand zur »geneigten Beachtung« vorlegen. Daß solche Nebensachen heute verloren gehen, darf bei dem großen Betrieb der Philosophie nicht wundernehmen, wo alles nur darauf abgestellt ist, bei der – wie man hört – jetzt beginnenden »Auferstehung der Metaphysik« ja nicht zu spät zu kommen […]".

was es genau zum Ziel hatte und was davon verwirklicht wurde. (Dies um Heideggers leidenschaftliche Absage an ihr zu verstehen.) Nicht zuletzt müßte in diesem Zusammenhang die Frage nach dem Unterschied zwischen „Umerziehung" in dem von Heidegger kritisierten negativen Sinne und dem von ihm in den Jahren 1933/34 im positiv aufgegriffenen Sinne gestellt und ausgearbeitet werden.[10]

Die nun veröffentlichten Texte umfassen eine Zeitspanne von fast zwei Jahrzehnten (vom 1931 bis 1948). Aus dieser Zeit stammen die Bände 33–55 der zweiten Abteilung der Gesamtausgabe, etwa zehn Bände der dritten Abteilung und einige Bände der vierten Abteilung (vorwiegend die Seminar-Bände). Bei genauerem Hinsehen dürften insgesamt wohl dreißig bis vierzig Bände der Gesamtausgabe daraufhin geprüft werden müssen, ob sie mögliche Parallelen, Konvergenzen oder Divergenzen zu den nun veröffentlichten vier Bände enthalten. Grundsätzlich aber können in *sämtlichen* Bänden der Gesamtausgabe mögliche Paralleltexte und -stellen befinden bzw. auftauchen. Eine strikte Abgrenzung ist kaum möglich. So kann z. B. Heideggers knappe Husserl-Kritik in den *Überlegungen XII* (GA 96, 46f.), die viel Aufsehen erregt hat und auf die näher einzugehen hier aus Platzgünden nicht möglich ist, nur richtig verstanden und eingeschätzt werden, wenn wir sie mit den detaillierten Erörterungen vergleichen, die Heidegger im Sommersemester 1925 in seiner Vorlesung (Bd. 20 der GA) gegeben hat. Ende der 1930er Jahre wirft er Husserl genauso wie bereits Mitte der 20er Jahre ein „Versäumnis" bzw. das „Versäumnis der Seinsfrage" vor,[11] und bemerkenswerterweise sind Heideggers Formulierungen bis in den Wortlaut hinein identisch, nur fehlen in dem späteren Text die diese Behauptung begründenden Diskussionen. Um Heideggers äußerst kurze Hinweise in den *Schwarzen Heften* (GA 96) zu verstehen, ist somit eine Kenntnis und ein Verständnis der großen Husserl-Kritik vonnöten. Heideggers Kontextualisierung mag dabei sehr wohl befremdlich wirken (Machtsteigerung des Judentums). Man braucht ihr aber auch nicht zuzustimmen bzw. man kann sie ohnehin ablehnen und sich auf sachliche Prüfung der Husserl-Kritik beschränken -- was zugleich einen produktiveren Umgang mit dieser Textstelle darstellen könnte.

Aber auch zur Interpretation von Sekundärtexten oder anderen Quellen können die nun zugänglich gewordenen *Schwarze Hefte* beitragen. Es sei als Beispiel auf einen einzigen Satz aus Karl Jaspers' *Autobiographie* hingewiesen. Dort berichtet Jaspers, Heidegger habe im lebendigen Gespräch gesagt: „Es gibt doch eine gefährliche internationale Verbindung der Juden".[12] Heidegger gegenüber wohlwollend eingestellte Interpreten – inklusive des Verf. vorliegenden Aufsatzes – haben

[10] Siehe z.B. Heidegger, „Die deutsche Universität", GA 16, 302: „die innere *Umerziehung des ganzen Volkes* zu dem Ziel, seine eigene Einigkeit und Einheit zu wollen" (Hervorh. I.M.F.). Siehe noch ebd., 282, 304, 312, 766. Für den pejorativen Gebrauch von „Umerziehung" siehe GA 97, 390.

[11] GA 96, 47; GA 20, 147, 155, 157ff., 178ff.

[12] Karl Jaspers, *Philosophische Autobiographie*, erweiterte Neuausgabe, München: Piper, 1977, 101.

gezögert, diesem Satz Glauben zu schenken, und zwar aus *dem* Grunde daß Heidegger so etwas nicht gesagt haben könne, weil er sonst doch nie etwas Ähnliches geäußert habe. Nun, nach der Veröffentlichung der *Schwarze Hefte*, in denen mehrmals in sehr scharfem Ton die Rede von dem „Judentum" oder dem „Weltjudentum" ist, ist der Kontext hergestellt, in dessen Rahmen der von Jaspers zitierte Heidegger-Satz getätigt worden sein mag. Die Berufung darauf, es sei apriori auszuschließen, daß Heidegger so etwas gesagt haben könne, ist kaum mehr haltbar. Was Heidegger Jaspers mündlich gesagt hat, wissen wir freilich nach wie vor nicht und werden es wahrscheinlich nie wissen. Aber die Chance, daß das von Jaspers angeführte Zitat doch etwas zutreffendes wiedergibt, ist erheblich erhöht.[13]

Aufgrund der nun veröffentlichten Texte kann übrigens auch ein zweiter Satz aus Jaspers' Erinnerungen an Glaubwürdigkeit gewinnen, den man bisher für ebenso unglaubwürdig oder unglaublich gehalten hat und der zumindest aber bizarr klingt. Auf seine Frage, »Wie soll ein so ungebildeter Mensch wie Hitler Deutschland regieren?«, habe Heidegger laut Jaspers' Erinnerung geantwortet: »Bildung ist ganz gleichgültig, sehen Sie nur seine wunderbaren Hände an!« Angesichts der Korrespondenz mit seinem Bruder Fritz -- insbesondere der begeisterten Worte über Hitler --, hat die Glaubwürdigkeit auch dieser Bemerkung zugenommen.[14]

Um auf konkrete Aufgabenstellungen zurückzukommen, scheint so viel festgestellt werden zu können, daß es ein Desidarat für die durch den Zugang zu den *Schwarzen Heften* ermöglichte Forschung sein könnte, Heideggers Denkweg in den dreißiger Jahren differenzierter als bisher darzustellen. Die bisher übliche Zweiteilung (Rektoratsjahr 1933/34, und dann Rücktritt und Rückzug in die denkerische Einsamkeit einschließlich der Entwicklung eines passiven geistigen Widerstands) ist kaum mehr befriedigend. Möglicherweise gibt es zwischen 1934 und 1945 mehrere Phasen, die voneinander unterschieden werden können, oder das gleichzeitige Bestehen von gegensätzlichen Tendenzen, z.B. von Kritik und Unterstützung des Nationalsozialismus. Wenn im Nachwort des Herausgebers GA 94 zu lesen ist, „dass Heidegger

[13] Siehe hierzu auch Holger Zaborowski, *„Eine Frage von Irre und Schuld?" Martin Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus.* Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 2010, 620.

[14] Es ist wohl keine allzu große Übertreibung zu sagen, Heidegger habe „seine Begeisterung mit nahezu erotischen Worten" beschrieben (Jean Grondin, „Warum ich Heidegger in schwieriger Zeit treu bleibe", in *Heidegger und der Antisemitismus. Positionen im Widerstreit. Mit Briefen von Martin und Fritz Heidegger,* hrsg. Walter Homolka, Arnulf Heidegger*,* Freiburg – Basel – Wien: Herder, 2016, 232–241, hier 235). Wie jeder bedeutende Denker verdient auch Heidegger eine Hermeneutik des Wohlwollens; diese ist aber nicht notwendig gleichbedeutend mit „Treue". Wenn irgendetwas, so müßte man der Wahrheit treu bleiben. Philosophie ist, möchte man hoffen, doch etwas anderes bzw. etwas mehr als eine Sache des „Treu-bleibens" oder „das Schiff-nicht-Verlassens" (ebd., 234).

spätestens im Sommer 1936 den Abstand zum real existierenden Nationalsozialismus findet […]",[15] so klingt das allzu entschieden. Es könnte sein, daß Heidegger bei aller Kritik am realen Nationalsozialismus einen endgültigen Abstand zu ihm nicht gefunden hat. Bei einem wirklichen Abstand – nicht nur zum ideellen, sondern „zum real existierenden Nationalsozialismus" – hätte Heidegger das Kriegsende positiver eingeschätzt, nämlich als Befreiung gefeiert, damit die Sache Deutschlands und die Sache Hitlers (bzw. die des real existierenden Nationalsozialismus) voneinander klar trennen müssen – was er eben nicht getan hat.

Was die auf Juden bezogenen Textstellen betrifft, so könnte es als Aufgabe angesehen werden, sie näheren Analysen zu unterwerfen, denn es gibt zwar zahlreiche, z.T. sehr leidenschaftliche Hinweise auf diese Stellen, aber kaum sachliche Diskussionen über sie. Von einer Heidegger gegenüber freundlich eingestellten Seite versucht man, sie so oder so zu verharmlosen oder tabuisieren, von einer ihm kritisch zugewandten Seite bleibt man meistens bei der moralischen Be- und Verurteilung stehen. Es erschiene auch wünschenswert, mit Termini wie „Antisemitismus", „antisemitisch", usw. möglichst sparsam umzugehen und klar zu differenzieren zwischen diesen und Bezeichnungen wie „antijudaistisch", „judenkritisch", usw. Die dem Judentum vorgeworfene Geschichtslosigkeit dürfte z.B. wohl auf einen religiösen, christlich geprägten Antijudaismus und nicht auf einen rassischen Antisemitismus zurückgehen.[16] Auf jeden Fall sollten plausible Erklärungen versucht werden angesichts des allzu offensichtlichen Widerspruchs zwischen antisemitischen und anti-antisemitischen Textstellen, wie z. B. jener immer wieder angeführten Textstelle aus den *Beiträgen:* „Der reine Blödsinn zu sagen, das experimentelle Forschen sei nordisch-germanisch und das rationale dagegen *fremdartig!* Wir müssen uns dann schon entschließen, Newton und Leibniz zu den »Juden« zu zählen").[17] (Nebenbei bemerkt: So harmlos und anti-antisemitisch ist diese Bemerkung nicht. Bei genauerem Hinsehen wird hier nämlich ein latenter Zusammenhang etabliert zwischen *„fremdartig"* und „»Juden«", so daß sich folgende Lesart ergibt: „Wir müssen uns entschließen, Newton und Leibniz zu den – fremdartigen, d.h. den – »Juden« zu zählen". Denn auf die Frage, warum auf „fremdartig" als Explizierung oder Konkretisierung „Juden" folgt,

[15] GA 94, 533.

[16] Vgl. für einen solchen Versuch István M. Fehér, „Heideggers theologische Herkunft – Fragen der Interpretation (mit einem Anhang über Geschichte und Geschichtslosigkeit)", in: *Auslegungen. Von Parmenides bis zu den Schwarzen Heften,* hrsg. Harald Seubert, Klaus Neugebauer (Schriftenreihe der Martin-Heidegger-Gesellschaft, Bd. 10), Freiburg/Br. – München: Verlag Karl Alber, 2017, 51–90, hier 70–90. Die relevanten Textpassagen bei Heidegger in: Martin Heidegger, *Überlegungen VII-XI (Schwarze Hefte 1938/39)* (GA 95), 96f.; *Überlegungen XII-XV (Schwarze Hefte 1939-1941)* (GA 96), 133. An die Kritik der Geschichtslosigkeit schließt sich dann die Kritik an der „Prophetie" an; siehe *Anmerkungen I-V (Schwarze Hefte 1942–1948)* (GA 97), 159, bzw. den zitierten Anhang.

[17] GA 65, 163.

kann kaum eine andere Antwort gegeben werden als die, die zwischen diesen beiden, „fremdartig" und „Juden" einen inneren Zusammenhang feststellt. Und daß Juden fremdartig sind, ist ein gut etablierter topos des Antisemitismus.) Es wäre auch geboten, den für Heideggers Denkweg in den dreißigen Jahren bestimmenden, viel zitierten und unterschiedlich interpretierten „Rückblick auf den Weg"[18] genauer zu kontextualisieren, nicht zuletzt, weil er wichtige Hinweise zur Interpretation der *Schwarzen Hefte* bzw. der *Überlegungen* selbst enthäl. Wie ist der Status dieses Textes philosophisch-biographisch einzuschätzen? Ist er in der Tat, wie Otto Pöggeler meinte, so etwas wie ein Testament? Und wenn ja, hat er mit Heideggers verändertem Verhältnis zum Nationalsozialismus bzw. zu den zeitgenössischen politisch-geschichtlichen Ereignissen etwas zu tun?

Ich schließe diesen Teil meines Beitrags mit einer allgemeinen hermeneutischen (Lehr-) Satz: So wenig es angemessen wäre, bei unserem Umgang mit seinen Texten Heideggers Selbstinterpretationen außer acht zu lassen, so wenig erwiese es sich als ratsam, diese Texte – die selbst auch der Interpretation bedürftig sind – für die alleinige Wahrheit zu halten.

II. Erklären und Verstehen oder wie einem philosophischen Denk- und Lebensweg methodisch (hermeneutisch) nachgegangen werden soll

Ich kehre zurück zu der Fragestellung: War Heidegger Antisemit?, Meine These lautet: Die so gestellte Frage führt – sei es, daß man sie bejahend, sei es, daß man sie verneinend beantwortet – in eine hermeneutische Sackgasse, denn sie sieht als reine Subsumptionsfrage von der Einmaligkeit oder Individualität des Gegenstandes ab und gibt somit das den Geisteswissenschaften innerlich Eigene preis, womit auch eine lange und wertvolle deutsche hermeneutisch-geisteswissenschaftliche Tradition verlorengeht. Dies soll im folgenden kurz dargestellt werden.[19]

Die wissenschaftstheoretische Tradition, die hier zu berücksichtigen ist, entstand zu Zeiten der Aufklärung und der Romantik und kreiste von Anfang an um die Möglichkeit dessen, was man mit einer späteren Terminologie „unity of science" oder „unified science" genannt hat. Zur Debatte steht, ob es eine Einheit der Wissenschaften schlechthin gibt, oder ob sie von Grund auf verschieden sind. Den zentralen Bezugspunkt bildet wohl der erkenntnis- oder wissenschaftstheoretische Unterschied zwischen Erklären und Verstehen. Dieser wiederum gewinnt sein Profil durch den Widerstand, den die deutsche philosophische Tradition dem im Zeichen einer "unified science"

[18] GA 66, 411–428.

[19] Vgl. zum Folgenden detaillierter István M. Fehér, "Verstehen bei Heidegger und Gadamer". *"Dimensionen des Hermeneutischen". Heidegger und Gadamer*, hrsg. G. Figal und H.-H. Gander (Schriftenreihe der Martin-Heidegger-Gesellschaft, Bd. 7), Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 2005, 89–115.

oder "unity of science"[20] positivistisch akzentuierten einheitswissenschaftlichen Ideal französisch-angelsächsischer Prägung im Laufe der Neuzeit geleistet hat. Da „der moderne Wissenschaftsbegriff" „von der Entwicklung der Naturwissenschaft des 17. Jahrhunderts geprägt worden"[21] ist, treten einheitswissenschaftliche Bestrebungen mit der ausdrücklichen oder auch stillschweigenden Forderung an die Geisteswissenschaften heran, sich am Vorbild der Naturwissenschaft zu orientieren und der naturwissenschaftlichen Methode zu folgen.

Wird ein derartiger Anspruch anerkannt, so hat dies zur Folge, daß das Einzelne, das Einmalige und vor allem das Geschichtliche, mit denen ja die Geisteswissenschaften seit jeher zu tun haben, vernachlässigt und in den Hintergrund gestellt werden zugunsten eines nomologischen Wissens, das von vornherein auf Allgemeines und Gesetzmäßiges ausgerichtet ist. Das durch die moderne Naturwissenschaft nahegelegte Gesetzesdenken kann hier umso mehr zur Herrschaft gelangen und zum Paradigma jedweder Wissenschaft werden, weil es sich mit einer alten und ehrenwürdigen Tradition der Philosophie oder zumindest mit einer ihrer ältesten Selbstauffassungen zusammenschließen kann. Dieser Auffassung zufolge ist die Philosophie Erkenntnis der ersten Prinzipien, des Allgemeinen und deswegen auch Abstrakten, wobei seit jeher gilt: *De singularibus non est scientia.*[22] Obwohl die Naturwissenschaft nicht weniger als die Geisteswissenschaften von einzelnen Phänomenen oder Erfahrungstatsachen ausgeht – deswegen heißen ja beide auch Erfahrungswissenschaften –, wird in der naturwissenschaftlichen Methode das Einzelne auf allgemeine Gesetze zurückgeführt, oder aus ihnen abgeleitet; und in eben diesem Verfahren besteht das Erklären. Damit wird man aber der spezifischen Eigenart der Gegenstände der Geisteswissenschaften nicht gerecht, vielmehr werden diese Gegenstände in ihrer Gegenständlichkeit oder Besonderheit von vornherein oder *a priori* zerstört. Dem Verfahren des Verstehens, das eine längere Vorgeschichte in der frühneuzeitlichen Hermeneutik hat, fällt in diesem Zusammenhang die Aufgabe zu, diese Einseitigkeit, diesen Mangel zu beseitigen. Das Erkenntnisziel des Verstehens besteht ja darin, das Einzelne als Einzelnes, das Einmalige als Einmaliges darzustellen.

Die den Naturwissenschaften eigene Erkenntnisform ist demgemäß das *Erklären*, wobei das Singulare durch Anwendung allgemeiner Gesetze erkannt wird, während das Singuläre als Singuläres gleichgültig bleibt. Das Erkenntnisinteresse richtet sich auf das Allgemeine. In einem naturwisseschaftlichen Experiment sind die Komponenten in ihrer Einzelheit und Einmaligkeit ganz gleichgültig. Erst im Blick auf die Gesetzmäßigkeiten, die man aus den Beobachtungen folgern kann, gewinnt z. B. das Verhalten eines Moleküls Relevanz. Der Versuch einer umfassenden Beschreibung

[20] Zum Terminus "unity of science" bei Gadamer siehe *Gesammelte Werke,* Bd. 2, 109.

[21] H.-G. Gadamer, *Gesammelte Werke,* Bd. 2, 37.

[22] Vgl. hierzu auch Manfred Riedel, *Verstehen oder Erklären? Zur Theorie und Geschichte des hermeneutischen Wissenschaften,* Stuttgart, 1978, 11.

wäre hier ganz unangemessen. Ganz anders in den Geisteswissenschaften, wo der Gegenstand eben in seiner Einmaligkeit und Unersetzbarkeit interessiert. Das für die Geisteswissenschaften grundlegende methodische Verfahren soll vor diesem Hintergrund *Beschreibung* bzw. *Verstehen* heißen. Dieses richtet sich auf das Singuläre als Singuläres, und die allgemeinen Gesetze spielen bestenfalls die Rolle eines Hilfsmittels, wobei auch oft zugestanden wird: *Individuum est ineffabile*; das Singuläre als Singuläres läßt sich nicht aussprechen.[23]

Diese Diskussion, die man auch als Methodenstreit zwischen Wissenschaften bezeichnen kann, deren Gegenstände je unterschiedliche Erkenntnisweisen voraussetzen oder – hermeneutisch formuliert –, wo das Vorverständnis bzw. die vorwissenschaftliche Erfahrung ihrer Gegenstände jeweils verschiedene Weisen ihrer wissenschaftlichen Bearbeitung verlangt, stellt den Kontext dar, in dem die hermeneutische Wende in der Philosophie des 20. Jahrhundert ansetzte. Diese hat jene Diskussion zwar weit hinter sich gelassen, aber immerhin sind deren Spuren auch noch bei Gadamer zu finden. Auch Gadamer tritt einer von seinen Vorläufern für falsch bzw. unangemessen gehaltenen und somit schlicht abgelehnten Interpretation der Geisteswissenschaften kritisch entgegen, nämlich der Auffassung, daß die Geisteswissenschaften, um sich selbst ihre eigene Wissenschaftlichkeit zu sichern bzw. um sich selbst zur Wissenschaft zu erheben, dem naturwissenschaftlichen Vorbild folgen und darauf abzielen sollten, "Gleichförmigkeiten, Regelhaftigkeiten, Gesetzmäßigkeiten zu erkennen, die die einzelnen Erscheinungen und Abläufe voraussagbar [machen]".[24] Gadamer geht hingegen davon aus – wobei er die wohlbekannten Argumente der ganzen deutschen geisteswissenschafltichen Tradition wieder einmal geltend macht,

> "daß man das Wesen der Geisteswissenschaften nicht richtig erfaßt hat, wenn man sie an dem Maßstab fortschreitender Erkenntnis von Gesetzmäßigkeiten mißt. […] historische Erkenntis erstrebt dennoch nicht, die konkrete Erscheinung als Fall einer allgemeinen Regel zu erfassen. Das Einzelne dient nicht einfach zur Bestätigung einer Gesetzmäßigkeit […]. Ihr Ideal ist vielmehr, die Erscheinung selber in ihrer einmaligen und geschichtlichen Konkretion zu verstehen."[25]

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[23] Vgl. H. Rickert, *Die Grenzen der naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung. Eine logische Einleitung in die historischen Wissenschaften*. 2. Auflage, Tübingen 1913, I. Kap. VI., 101ff., ferner 223, 304; W. Windelband: "Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft", in: ders., *Präludien. Aufsätze und Reden zur Einführung in die Philosophie*, 4. Auflage. Tübingen 1911, Bd. 2, 145ff.; W. Dilthey, "Die Entstehung der Hermeneutik", in: *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. V, 330 (vgl. noch *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. VII, 212); H.-G. Gadamer, *Gesammelte Werke*, Bd. 2, 330. Zum Unterscheiden von Erklären und Verstehen bei Droysen vgl. *Historik*. Textausgabe von P. Leyh, Stuttgart – Bad Cannstatt 1977, 29, 161ff.

[24] H.-G. Gadamer, *Gesammelte Werke,* Bd. 1, 9.

[25] H.-G. Gadamer, *Gesammelte Werke,* Bd. 1, 10. Obwohl Gadamer den Neukantianern kritisch gegenübersteht, hier scheint er, vielleicht auch unbewußt, in der Wirkungsgeschichte des Badener Neukantianismus zu stehen. "[…] in der Naturwissenschaft ist das Allgemeine Zweck", hieß es z.B. bei Rickert, die "Geschichte

Aller heftigen Kritik des Neukantianismus zum Trotz, der wir nicht nur bei Gadamer, sondern auch bei Heidegger gemäß der von ihnen vollzogenen ontologischen Wende der Hermeneutik in Bezug auf den bloß methodologisch akzentuierten Verstehensbegriff begegnen, stellt dieses Zitat eine ziemlich genaue Zusammenfassung der betreffenden Perspektive Windelbands und Rickerts dar. Die Autonomie und Andersartigkeit der Geisteswissenschaften gegenüber den Naturwissenschaften is besonders pointiert dargestellt in Windelbands Straßburger Rektoratsrede „Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft" aus dem Jahr 1894. In diesem Zusammenhang dürfte es nicht unnütz sein, einige Überlegungen daraus in Erinnerung zu rufen.

Einer der Grundgedanken von Windelbands Rede ist, daß „die Mehrzahl derjenigen empirischen Disziplinen, die man wohl sonst als Geisteswissenschaften bezeichnet, entschieden darauf gerichtet [ist], ein einzelnes, mehr oder minder ausgedehntes Geschehen von einmaliger, in der Zeit begrenzter Wirklichkeit zu voller und erschöpfender Darstellung zu bringen." Daraus ergeben sich weit reichende Konsequenzen auf der Ebene der Wissenschaftstheorie, die folgendermaßen zusammengefaßt werden können: „Hier haben wir nun eine rein methodologische, auf sichere logische Begriffe zu gründende Einteilung der Erfahrungswissenschaften vor uns. Das Einteilungsprinzip ist der formale Charakter ihrer Erkenntnissziele. Die einen suchen allgemeine Gesetze, die anderen besondere geschichtliche Tatsachen […]"[26] Und weiter: „So dürfen wir sagen: die Erfahrungswissenschaften suchen in der Erkenntniss des Wirklichen entweder das Allgemeine in der Form des Naturgesetzes oder das Einzelne in der geschichtlich bestimmten Gestalt; sie betrachten zu einem Teil die immer sich gleichbleibende Form, zum anderen Teil den einmaligen, in sich bestimmten Inhalt des wirklichen Geschehens. Die einen sind Gesetzeswissenschaften, die anderen Ereigniswissenschaften […] Das wissenschaftliche Denken ist […] in dem einen Falle nomothetisch, in dem andern idiographisch."[27] Dieser Unterschied ist grundlegend bzw. bestimmend auch für das jeweilige Verhältnis zum untersuchten Gegenstand. „Für den Naturforscher hat das einzelne gegebene Objekt seiner Beobachtung niemals als solches wissenschaftlichen Wert, es dient ihm nur

dagegen benutzt zwar ebenfalls das Allgemeine, um überhaupt […] denken und urteilen zu können, aber das Allgemeine ist für sie lediglich Mittel. Es ist Umweg, auf dem sie wieder zum Individuellen […] zurückzukommen sucht" "Die Geschichte kann […] die Wirklichkeit niemals mit Rücksicht auf das Allgemeine, sondern immer nur mit Rücksicht auf das Besondere und Individuelle darzustellen versuchen" (H. Rickert, *Die Grenzen der naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung*, 302, 217). Siehe auch W. Dilthey, *Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften*, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. 1, 26: Das Ziel der Geisteswissenschaften bildet die "Auffassung des Singularen, Individualen" (hierzu noch Dilthey, *Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften*, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. 7, 87).

[26] Wilhelm Windelband, „Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft. Straßburger Rektoratsrede", in: Ders., *Präludien: Aufsätze und Reden zur Philosophie und ihrer Geschichte,* 9. Aufl., Tübingen 1924, Bd. 2, 136–160, hier 144.

[27] Wilhelm Windelband, „Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft", 145.

soweit, als er sich für berechtigt halten darf, es als *Typus, als Spezialfall eines Gattungsbegriffs* zu betrachten und diesen daraus zu entwickeln; er reflektiert darin nur auf diejenigen Merkmale, welche zur Einsicht in eine gesetzmässige Allgemeinheit geeignet sind. Für den Historiker besteht die Aufgabe, irgend ein Gebilde der Vergangenheit in seiner ganzen individuellen Ausprägung zu ideeller Gegenwärtigkeit neu zu beleben".[28]

III. Zurück zum Thema Heidegger und der Antisemitismus – die Frage nach der Individualität

Die um Heideggers Antisemitismus kreisende Debatte ist von da aus gesehen eine rein naturwissenschaftliche: zur Frage steht, ob der Mensch Martin Heidegger „*als Typus, als Spezialfall eines Gattungsbegriffs*", nämlich des Gattungsbegriffs „Antisemit", zu verstehen sei. Dabei wird seine Einzigkeit und Einmaligkeit übersehen. Aus geisteswissenschaftlicher Perspektive sollte diese jedoch bestimmend sein. Denn Heidegger soll unsere Aufmerksamkeit nicht deswegen verdienen, weil er vielleicht Antisemit ist, aber auch nicht deswegen, weil er vielleicht Nicht-Antisemit ist, sondern deswegen, weil er als Philosoph etwas Einzigartiges und Einmaliges geschaffen hat. Das Erkenntnisziel und –interesse sollte diese Einmaligkeit vor Augen führen, ihr nachgehen und sie darstellen, wobei sicherlich nach wie vor gelten kann: *Individuum est ineffabile*. Nur aus dieser Perspektive, in deren Zentrum die Individualität, ihre Einzigkeit und Einmaligkeit, steht, erhält die Frage nach einem möglichen Antisemit-Sein Relevanz und Bedeutung. Das besagt, daß diese Frage nicht völlig irrelevant ist; sie sollte aber nicht für sich allein im Vordergrund des Interesses stehen.

Der Wert der Individualität war dem Deutschen Idealismus unbekannt. Hegel hatte den Standpunkt des Allgemeinen von früh an sozusagen auch sprachphilosophisch zu begründen versucht, und zwar unter Berufung darauf, daß das Einzelne „der Sprache, die dem Bewußtsein, dem an sich Allgemeinen, angehört, *unerreichbar* ist".[29] „*Individuum est ineffabile"* ist freilich ein häufig auftauchender Topos, der Eingang auch in den auf Hegel folgenden Neukantianismus bzw. Historismus gefunden hat und auch bei Rickert und Dilthey auftaucht.[30] Auch wenn man weder Diltheys erkenntnistheoretische Grundlegung der Geisteswissenschaften -- deren Ziel ja die „Auffassung des Singularen, Individualen bildet"[31]-- noch die Ver-

[28] Wilhelm Windelband, „Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft", 149f. (Hervorhebung I.M.F.)

[29] G.W.F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, Theorie Werkausgabe, hrsg. E. Moldenhauer, K.M. Michel, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1970, Bd. 3, 91f.

[30] Siehe Anm. 23 oben.

[31] Siehe Anm. 25 oben.

suche Windelbands und Rickerts, der generalisierenden Methode der Naturwissenschaften eine individualisierende Begriffsbildung der historischen Kulturwissenschaften entgegenzusetzen, für in jeder Hinsicht gelungen und problemlos hält, kann man sie doch als eine mögliche und plausible Alternative zu Hegels Ansatz ansehen.

Der Wert der Individualität erscheint wohl zuerst bei der Jahrhundertwende im Werk Emil Lasks, der zwischen dem Neukantianismus und der Phänomenologie Husserls zu vermitteln suchte. „Das Einzelne ist nicht als Exemplar einer Gattung untergeordnet",[32] heißt es bei ihm programmatisch. Charakteristisch für Lask ist die Individualität als Wert bzw. – wie er sie bezeichnet hat – die „Wertindividualität".[33] Es dürfte nicht uninteressant sein, in diesem Zusammenhang darauf hinzuweisen, daß in Heideggers Hauptwerk ein latenter Anschluß an diesen Lask'schen Gedanken aufzufinden ist, wo es heißt: „Dasein ist […] nie ontologisch zu fassen als Fall und Exemplar einer Gattung von Seiendem als Vorhandenem".[34]

Dieser Gedanke wird fortgeführt und weiterentwickelt bei Autoren, die an diesem Punkt an Heidegger angeknüpft haben, so vor allem bei Jean-Paul Sartre, der ihn auch noch in seinem Spätdenken mit Nachdruck geltend gemacht und ihn seiner Kritik des Marxismus als Leitfaden zugrundegelegt hat. „Es besteht kein Zweifel darüber", heißt es in seiner Vorarbeit *Fragen der Methode* zum zweiten Hauptwerk, *Critique de la raison dialectique,* „daß Valéry ein kleinbürgerlicher Intellektueller ist. Aber nicht jeder kleinbürgerliche Intellektuelle ist Valéry. Die heuristische Unzulänglichkeit des heutigen Marxismus ist in diesen beiden Sätzen enthalten."[35] Sollte es richtig

[32] Emil Lask, *Fichtes Idealismus und die Geschichte*, Ders.: *Gesammelte Schriften,* Erster Band, hrsg. Eugen Herrigel, Mit einem Geleitwort von Heinrich Rickert, Tübingen 1923, 1-274, hier 18.

[33] Emil Lask, *Fichtes Idealismus und die Geschichte*, 16ff., bes. 19f.

[34] Vgl. M. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (= SZ), 15. Aufl., Tübingen 1979, 42 = GA 2, 57. Heidegger hat sich über Lask mehrmals sehr positiv geäußert (siehe z.B, SZ 219 = GA 2, 289; GA 56/57, 180); für eine breitere Darstellung siehe István M. Fehér, "Lask, Lukács, Heidegger: The Problem of Irrationality and the Theory of Categories", in *Martin Heidegger. Critical Assessments*, ed. C. Macann, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1992, vol. II, 373–405. -- Heideggers in seiner Habilitationschrift geäußerte Hochschätzung von Duns Scotus' Begriff der *haecceitas* (welcher „dazu berufen [ist], eine Urbestimmtheit der realen Wirklichkeit abzugeben", wodurch Scotus „eine größere und feinere Nähe […] zum realen Leben, seiner Mannigfaltigkeit und Spannungsmöglichkeit" [*Frühe Schriften* (GA 1), 253, 203] gefunden habe) zeigt unmißverständlich einen wachsenden Sinn für Individualität, der in den Nachkriegsjahren durch die Thematisierung des faktischen Lebens und des Phänomens „Selbstwelt" zu demjenigen Wesenscharakter des Daseins führt, der in *Sein und Zeit* als dessen „Jemeinigkeit" angesprochen wird. Kollektivsingularen, wie sie in den *Schwarzen Heften* öfters vorkommen (Judentum, Deutschtum, Russentum. Katholizismus, Amerikanismus, Bolschewismus usw.) sind in sich selbst problematisch; sicher aber ist, daß sie mit dem Begriff „das je eigene Dasein" schlechthin unverträglich zu sein scheinen.

[35] J.-P. Sartre, *Fragen der Methode*, neu hrsg. Arlette Elkaïm-Sartre, deutsch von Vincent von Wroblewsky, Hamburg: Rowohlt, Neuausgabe 1999, 64. Siehe Sartre, *Critique de la raison dialectique (précédé de Questions de méthode),* Tome I: *Théorie des ensembles pratiques*, Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1960, 44 : „Valéry est un intellectuel petit-bourgeois, cela ne fait pas de doute. Mais tout intellectuel petit-bourgeois n'est pas Valéry. L'insuffisance euristique du marxisme contemporain tient dans ces deux phrases."

sein, daß Heidegger Antisemit war, so wäre immer noch wahr, daß nicht jeder Antisemit Heidegger war. Eine solche Untersuchung wäre demnach hermeneutisch gesehen unergiebig. Was Sartre als „heuristische Unzulänglichkeit" bezeichnet, kann in unserem Zusammenhang hermeneutischer Mangel genannt werden.[36]

Zu der Frage „War Heidegger Antisemit?" soll in hermeneutischer Hinsicht noch zweierlei bemerkt werden. („Hermeneutische Hinsicht" meint hier, daß nicht der Anspruch erhoben wird, eine inhaltich bestimmte Antwort -- „Ja" oder eben „Nein" -- zu geben, sondern vielmehr der Anspruch, den *Sinn* der Frage zu beleuchten). Zum einen tun wir gut daran (es ist sozusagen eine Art hermeneutische Fairness), wenn wir in unserem Versuch, diese Frage zu beantworten, das Verständnis des Menschen, das die Betroffenen vorgelegt haben, mit berücksichtigen. Wenn wir so vorgehen, dann sehen wir, daß für Heidegger (wie auch für Sartre) der Mensch nicht ein Seiendes ist, das feste Eigenschaften bzw. so etwas wie ein „Wesen" hat. In der Nachfolge Heideggers sieht Sartre den Menschen durch eine stetige Nicht-Koinzidenz mit sich selbst, durch einen Mangel an Identität, charakterisiert.[37]

Dieser Sachverhalt wird immer wieder durch die Formulierung ausgedrückt, nach der der Mensch ein Sein bzw. Seiendes ist, das das ist, was es nicht ist, und das nicht das ist, was es ist.[38] Dieser Gedanke wird bei Heidegger insofern antizipiert, als der Mensch bzw. das menschliche Dasein als ein Seiendes herausgestellt wird, das nicht mit denselben Kategorien zu fassen ist wie ein Vorhandenes.[39] Bei ihm liegt daher die

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[36] Es verdient, erwähnt zu werden, daß es bei Sartre zahlreiche hermeneutische Einsichten aufzufinden sind (siehe hierzu im einzelnen István M. Fehér, „Sartre and Hermeneutics", *Man and World. An International Philosophical Review* XXVIII, 1995, 65–81), bemerkenswert ist jedoch, daß Termini wie „Hermeneutik", „hermeneutisch" von Sartre sehr selten gebraucht werden, und dann auch eher distanzierend oder kritisch. In seinem ersten Hauptwerk spricht er in Zusammenhang von Heidegger z.B. über „l'insuffisance de ses descriptions herméneutiques". (Jean-Paul Sartre : *L'être et le néant. Essai d'ontologie phénoménologique*. Édition corrigée avec index par Arlette Elkaïm-Sartre, Paris : Gallimard (collection Tel), 1998, 471, vgl. noch ebd. 610 : „Il convient donc en chaque cas de dépasser les résultats de l'herméneutique heideggérienne vers un projet plus fondamental encore". Siehe Jean-Paul Sartre, *Das Sein und das Nichts. Versuch einer phänomenologischen Ontologie*, hrsg. von Traugott König, Deutsch von Hans Schöneberg und Traugott König (Gesammelte Werke in Einzelausgaben, Philosophische Schriften, Band 3), Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1991, 748: „Wenn wir zum Beispiel Heidegger lesen, überrascht uns von diesem Gesichtspunkt die Unzulänglichkeit seiner hermeneutischen Beschreibungen"; 969: „Man muß also in jedem Fall die Ergebnisse der Heideggerschen Hermeneutik auf einen noch grundlegenderen Entwurf hin überschreiten."

[37] Siehe Sartre, *Das Sein und das Nichts. Versuch einer phänomenologischen Ontologie*, 208: „Konkret ist jedes Für-sich Mangel an einer bestimmten Koinzidenz mit sich."

[38] Siehe Sartre, *Das Sein und das Nichts. Versuch einer phänomenologischen Ontologie*, z. B. 138: „es geht darum, die menschliche-Realität als ein Sein zu konstituieren, das das ist, was es nicht ist, und das nicht das ist, was es ist. Vgl. noch ebd., 147, 155, 159, 173, 191, 207, 237, 483, 537, 635, 763, 821, 971, 1055, 1062.

[39] Das „Vorhandensein" ist „eine Seinsart, die dem Seienden vom Charakter des Daseins wesensmäßig nicht zukommt" (SZ 42 = GA 2, 56).

Möglichkeit höher als die Wirklichkeit.[40] Der Mensch ist niemels „wirklich" oder „fertig", und er hat keine festen Eigenschaften und eben kein Wesen – deswegen auch keine Wesensdefinition. Dies wird durch die berühmte, viel zitierte, etwas paradoxe und vielfach mißverstandene „Definition" ausgedrückt: „Das »Wesen« des Daseins liegt in seiner Existenz".[41] Wobei die Anführungszeichen folgendermaßen expliziert werden könnten: „Das »Wesen« des Daseins, sofern solche Redeweise in Bezug auf dieses Seiende überhaupt angemessen ist […]."

Von der soeben rekonstruierten Perspektive aus ist es keineswegs unproblematisch, über den Antisemitismus von jemandem zu sprechen -- ist dieser doch zunächst stillschweigend als feste Eigenschaft oder fester bzw. markanter Charakter konzipiert. Es dürfte geboten sein, das, was Sartre in diesem Zusammenhang über den Homosexuellen gesagt hat, in Erinnerung zu rufen: „Der Homosexuelle […] will sich nicht als ein Ding betrachten lassen; er hat das dunkle, aber starke Verständnis, daß ein Homosexueller nicht homosexuell ist, wie dieser Tisch Tisch ist oder wie dieser Rothaarige rothaarig ist […] Erkennt er nicht durch sich selbst den einzigartigen und unreduzierbaren Charakter der menschlichen-Realität? Seine Haltung schließt also ein unleugbares Verständnis der Wahrheit ein. Deshalb spielt er mit dem Wort Sein. Er hätte ja recht, wenn er den Satz: «Ich bin nicht Päderast» in dem Sinn von: «Ich bin nicht das, was ich bin» verstände. Das heißt, wenn er erklärte: «In dem Maß, wie eine Reihe von Verhaltensweisen als päderastisch definiert sind und ich diese Verhaltensweisen angenommen habe, bin ich ein Päderast. In dem Maß, wie sich die menschliche-Realität jeder Definition durch die Verhaltensweisen entzieht, bin ich keiner.»".[42]

Antisemitismus als feste Eigenschaft oder festes Wesen ist also auch von da aus problematisch, sodaß sich etwas zugespitzt oder übertrieben sagen läßt: es ist recht schwer, richtig Antisemit (und nur das) zu sein.

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[40] Vgl. SZ 42 = GA 2, 57: „Dasein *ist* je seine Möglichkeit und es »hat« sie nicht nur noch eigenschaftlich als ein Vorhandenes". Ferner SZ 38 = GA 2, 51f; SZ 143f. = GA 2, 191: „Dasein ist nicht ein Vorhandenes, das als Zugabe noch besitzt, etwas zu können, sondern es ist primär Möglichsein. Dasein ist je das, was es sein kann und wie es seine Möglichkeit ist. […] Das Möglichsein, das je das Dasein existenzial ist, unterscheidet sich ebensosehr von der leeren, logischen Möglichkeit wie von der Kontingenz eines Vorhandenen, sofern mit diesem das und jenes »passieren« kann. Als modale Kategorie der Vorhandenheit bedeutet Möglichkeit das noch nicht Wirkliche und das nicht jemals Notwendige. Sie charakterisiert das nur Mögliche. Sie ist ontologisch niedriger als Wirklichkeit und Notwendigkeit. Die Möglichkeit als Existenzial dagegen ist die ursprünglichste und letzte positive ontologische Bestimmtheit des Daseins […]".

[41] SZ 42 = GA 2, 56.

[42] Siehe Sartre, *Das Sein und das Nichts. Versuch einer phänomenologischen Ontologie*, 147f.Die Fortführung der Überlegung, die in unserem Zusammenhang nicht mehr relevant ist, lautet: „Aber er gleitet heimlich zu einer anderen Auffassung des Wortes «sein» hinüber. Er versteht «nicht sein» im Sinne von «nicht an sich sein». Er erklärt, «nicht Päderast zu sein» in dem Sinn, wie dieser Tisch ein Tintenfaß nicht ist."

Die andere Überlegung besteht darin, daß es plausibel wäre, einen Unterschied zu treffen zwischen Antisemit-Sein und antisemitischen Bemerkungen. Obwohl sich der Antisemitismus von jemandem von Zeit zu Zeit in antisemitischen Bemerkungen offenbaren oder äußern kann, ist umgekehrt das Vorhandensein solcher Bemerkungen nicht notwendig schon ein Zeichen des Antisemitismus. Es kann sinnvoll von Antisemitismus nur dort die Rede sein, wo solche Äußerungen – nicht ohne bestimmte, ihm entsprechende Handlungen – dauerhaft und prägend präsent sind und regelmäßig wiederkehren.[43] Solange der Beweis des Gegenteils aussteht, dürfte eine Hermeneutik des Wohlwollens im Falle Heideggers wohl eher von einem sozusagen „gelegentlichen" Antisemitismus sprechen.

Um zu Heidegger zurückzukehren: daß er Antisemit wäre, ist aufgund des bisher Erörterten nicht naheliegend. Naheliegend ist jedoch, daß er einige Bemerkungen gemacht hat, die offensichtlich einen antisemitischen Charakter haben, der kaum geleugnet werden kann.[44] Den Grund von Heideggers „gelegentlichem Antisemitismus" anzugeben, sollte eigentlich nicht schwer sein: Heidegger ist in einem geistigen Klima aufgewachsen und großgeworden, das durch Züge des Antisemitismus durchdrungen war. „Heidegger war Antisemit, wie die meisten Deutschen von ähnlicher Herkunft und Sozialisation", er war „aber kein scharfer Antisemit", schreibt hierzu Reinhard Mehring. „Das war eine verbreitete Mitgift seiner Sozialisation. Provinz und Kleinstadt, bescheidene Herkunft, katholische Prägung, Abhängigkeit von klerikaler Förderung, Theologie- und Philosophiestudium disponierten schon dafür."[45]

In diesem Zusammenhang ist dazu hinzuzufügen, daß einige Lektüre des jungen Heidegger, wie wir sie heute kennen, dazu ausdrücklich prädisponiert haben dürften. Eine seiner ersten Schriften hatte ja aus Anlaß der Enthüllung seines Denkmals Leben und Werk des Wiener Augustiners, Abraham a Sankta Clara (1644–1709) zum

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[43] Siehe hierzu Jean-Paul Sartre, *Betrachtungen zur Judenfrage*, in: J.-P. Sartre, *Drei Essays,* Frankfurt-Berlin 1961 (Ullstein), 108-191, hier 123: „Wir beginnen zu verstehen, daß der Antisemitismus […] *die ganze Persönlichkeit des Antisemiten umfaßt.*" (Hervorhebung I.M.F.)

[44] Ein Teil der 13 oder 14 Textstellen in den *Schwarzen Heften* sind sicherlich von solchem Charakter. Siehe hierzu z.B. Jean Grondin, „Warum ich Heidegger in schwieriger Zeit treu bleibe", in *Heidegger und der Antisemitismus. Positionen im Widerstreit. Mit Briefen von Martin und Fritz Heidegger,* hrsg. Walter Homolka, Arnulf Heidegger*,* Freiburg – Basel – Wien: Herder, 2016, 232–241, hier 236: „Die »Schwarzen Hefte« […] enthalten einige Texte, die man nur als antisemitisch einstufen kann […]". Des weiteren Klaus Held: „Heidegger und das »Politische«", ebd., 257–268, hier 264.Die Sprache der „auf das Judentum bezüglichen Stellen der *Schwarzen Hefte* […] ist so offenkundig von den Standard-Topoi des modernen Antisemitismus durchsetzt, dass ich es, offen gesagt, völlig unverständlich finde, wie man den Antisemitismus dieser Äußerungen in Abrede stellen kann."

[45] Reinhard Mehring, *Heideggers „große Politik".Die semantische Revolution der Gesamtasugabe,* Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016, 174, 187.

Thema.[46] Zu dessen 300. Todestag wurde 2009 geschrieben: „Was er aber am meisten hasst, sind »die Weiber« und »die Juden«[…] Aber mehr noch als »die Weiber«, […] sind ihm die »geldgierigen« Juden ein ewiger Grund, sich zu ereifern. Wenn es um die Juden geht, versagen bei ihm Humor und Satire, da mischt sich in seine Reden der rigorose Ton des Fanatikers. Seine Hetztiraden stehen jenen des »Saubeern Luther« in nichts nach. Aus seinem katholisch fundierten Judenhass, nicht anders als aus seinem Aber- und Wunderglauben, spricht das trübste Mittelalter.“[47] „Abraham a Sancta Clara's approach to the problem of the inner enemy, the Jew", schreibt der Historiker Robert A. Kann, „was of a different nature. Here he proceeded in a spirit of highly personal animosity, fomented by centuries-old prejudices".[48]

In Heideggers Zeitungsartikel über Abraham waren allerdings die Juden nicht erwähnt – wohl aber, neben dem „eigenartig anziehenden Charakter P. Abrahams", „der unvergeßliche Lueger"[49] (1844-1910), Wiener Bürgermeister, wohlbekannt für seinen wirtschaftlich motivierten Antisemitismus und seinen verbalen Ausfälle gegen die Juden. Daß dem jungen Heidegger die Stellung von Abraham a Sankta Clara oder Karl Lueger zum Judentum nicht vertraut gewesen wäre, ist sehr implausibel und kann als ausgeschlossen gelten. Wie sehr diese Einflüsse ihn genau geprägt haben und in welchem Maße Heidegger sie aufgenommen hat, wissen wir nicht; daß er durch sie völlig unbetroffen geblieben wäre, ist wiederum sehr unwahrscheinlich

[46] M. Heidegger, „Abraham a Sankta Clara Zur Enthüllung seines Denkmals in Kreenheinstetten am 15, August 1910", GA 13, 1-3.

[47] Gerhard Staguhn: „Gestorben muß seyn", DIE ZEIT 26. November 2009, Nr. 49, siehe http://www.zeit.de/2009/49/A-Sancta-Clara/komplettansicht. Es verdient, das Zitat fortzuführen: „Abraham a Sancta Claras antijüdischer Furor wird heutzutage gern versteckt, in modernen Auswahlbänden seines Werks sind diese Hetzschriften ausgespart. Das war im 20. Jahrhundert anders. Die Nazis hatten ihre Freude daran. Der spätere Gauleiter von Wien, Baldur von Schirach, ließ im Jahre 1938 denn auch gleich eine Gesamtausgabe vorbereiten; es kam aber nur zu einer dreibändigen Auswahl mit entsprechendem Inhalt." Heideggers Schrift „Abraham a Sankta Clara (1910)" siehe jetzt in GA 13, 1–5; sie „erschien ursprünglich am 27. August 1910 in der Wochenschrift für Politik und Kultur »Allgemeine Rundschau«, VII. Jahrg., Nr. 55, S. 605, München. Der junge Theologie-student hatte am 15. August 1910 in Kreenheinstetten, einem Nachbardorf seiner Heimatstadt Meßkirch, an der Feier zur Enthüllung eines Denkmals für Abraham a Sankta Clara teilgenommen und darüber seine Gedanken niedergeschrieben" (GA 13, 245).

[48] Robert A. Kann, *A Study in Austrian Intellectual History*: *From Late Baroque to Romanticism*, New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1960, 76f.

[49] GA 13, 2. Der konservative kultur- und zeitkritische Ton der Schrift ist nicht weniger charakteristisch. „Daß unsere Zeit der Außenkultur und Schnellebigkeit doch mehr rückwärtsblickend vorwärtsschaute! Die grundstürzende Neuerungswut, das tolle Hinwegspringen über den tieferen seelischen Gehalt des Lebens und der Kunst, der auf fortwährend sich ablösende Augenblicksreize gerichtete moderne Lebenssinn, die zuweilen erstickend wirkende Schwüle, in der sich die heutige Kunst jeder Art bewegt, das sind Momente, die auf eine Dekadenz hinzeigen […]" (GA 13, 3). Dieses Urteil sollte sich als dauerhaft erweisen; „*Unsere Stunde ist das Zeitalter des Untergangs*", heißt es ein Vierteljahrhundert später in den *Beiträgen* (GA 65, 397). Heidegger sucht jedoch den Untergang zugleich als Anfang, ja als „erstester Anfang" aufzufassen (ebd.).

und auch nicht zumutbar. Im jugendlichen Alter nimmt man solche Meinungen naturgemäß wie selbstverständlich auf. Unter diesen Umständen bzw. vor dem Hintergrund des ihn umgebenden geistigen Klimas und seiner Erziehung ist also Heideggers Übernahme antisemitischer Vorurteile überhaupt nicht verwunderlich. Sie ist als Normalfall anzusehen. Vielmehr wäre das Gegenteil überaus ungewöhnlich.

IV. Vorurteile und der Umgang mit ihnen aus hermeneutischer Sicht

Es wird nochmals nützlich sein, an diesem Punkt auf das Verständnis des Menschen in der Endlichkeitshermeneutik Heidegger'scher und Gadamerscher Prägung zurückzugreifen. Demgemäß ist der Mensch ein endlich-geschichtliches Wesen, geworfen in eine (Um-) Welt und damit auch in eine (immer schon herrschende) Öffentlichkeit, öffentliche Ausgelegtheit -- Meinungen aller Art, deren Herkunft man gar nicht kennt, und die man auf ihre Richtigkeit hin nur selten und nicht ohne Veranlassung zu überprüfen gewillt oder bereit ist. Eine *tabula rasa*, eine Suspendierung aller (Vor-) Urteile ist daher utopisch. Einen übergeschichtlichen Standpunkt gibt es nicht. Der Mensch ist nicht ein vorurteilsfreies Wesen, vermag aber seine – immer schon wirkenden -- Vorurteile zu prüfen, um sie zu bestätigen oder gegebenenfalls zu verwerfen. In Heideggers Nachfolge und im Anschluß an die von ihm ausgearbeitete Vor-Struktur des Verstehens[50] entwickelt Gadamer seine Rehabilitierung der Vorurteile,[51] deren Pointe sich am besten und am kürzesten wohl durch eine provokativ klingende Kapitelüberschrift (Zweiter Teil II. b) seines Hauptwerks *Wahrheit und Methode* zusammenfassen läßt: „Vorurteile als Bedingungen des Verstehens".[52] Wohlgemerkt: Bedingungen, nicht Hindernisse (wie insbesondere die Aufklärung meinte). Denn weit davon entfernt, Hindernisse auf dem Wege des Verstehens darzustellen, bildet die Vor-struktur (und damit auch die Vorurteile) eben die Voraussetzungen dafür, daß Verstehen überhaupt möglich sein kann. Hätten wir keine Vorurteile, so könnten wir nichts verstehen. Darin besteht die „Anerkennung der wesenhaften Vorurteilshaftigkeit alles Verstehens".[53] Ein Vorurteil ist als vorheriges Urteil nicht unbedingt unwahr; es kann sich ebenso auch als wahr erweisen. Ein hermeneutisch offenes Denken diskreditiert nichts – nicht einmal die Vorurteile. Die Hermeneutik verhält sich also zu nichts mit Vorurteilen – nicht einmal zu diesen

[50] Siehe SZ 150f. = GA 2, 199f.

[51] Ausführlicher über die hermeneutische Theorie der Vorurteile siehe István M. Fehér, "Prejudice and Pre-understanding," in: *The Blackwell Companion to Hermeneutics*, eds. Niall Keane and Chris Lawn, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2016, 280–288; ders., „L'altro inizio – l'altro Heidegger. Saggio introduttivo", in: Rosa Maria Marafioti: *Gli 'Schwarze Hefte' di Heidegger. Un "passaggio" del pensiero dell'essere*, Genova: Il Nuovo Melangolo, 2016 (Università, vol. 136), 9–39, hier 34ff.

[52] *Gesammelte Werke*, Bd. 1, 281ff.

[53] Gadamer: *Gesammelte Werke,* Bd. 1, 274.

selbst. Das besagt aber: „das Vorurteil gegen die Vorurteile überhaupt" erweist sich selber als Vorurteil (diesmal im gewöhnlichen pejorativen Sinne) -- wohl das einzige Vorurteil der Aufklärung.[54]

Gadamers Rehabilitierung der Vorurteile stützt sich stillschweigend auf Heidegger'sche Ansätze und Argumente und führt diese weiter. Seine erste Marburger Vorlesung begann Heidegger mit einigen knappen Überlegungen über Status und Charakter der Vorurteile (Überlegungen, die m.E. zum Besten gehören, die er je geschrieben hat):

> Nicht Vorurteilslosigkeit, die eine Utopie ist. Die Meinung, kein Vorurteil zu haben, ist selbst das größte Vorurteil. Überlegenheit gegenüber jeder Möglichkeit, daß sich etwas als Vorurteil herausstellt. Nicht frei von Vorurteilen, sondern frei für die Möglichkeit, im entscheidenden Moment aus der Auseinandersetzung mit der Sache heraus ein Vorurteil aufzugeben. Das ist die Existenzform des wissenschaftlichen Menschen.[55]

Das Aufgeben aller Vorurteile, diese Forderung der Aufklärung erweist sich in dieser Perspektive als illusorisch. Sie trägt der ontologischen Konstitution der wesenshaften Geschichtlichkeit des Menschen einfach nicht Rechnung. Wenn das Aufgeben aller Vorurteile utopisch ist, so ist das Überprüfen einzelner (und jedweder) Vorurteile aus begründeter Motivation – „aus der Auseinandersetzung mit der Sache heraus" – aber durchaus möglich. Nur muß hierfür die Bereitschaft vorliegen. Will man mit Heidegger gegen Heidegger denken, so kann man ihm aufgrund seines eigensten Arguments vorwerfen, er habe sich nicht veranlaßt (ja genötigt) gesehen, seine antisemitischen Vorurteile „aus der Auseinandersetzung mit der Sache heraus" (d.h. in und durch regelmäßigen Umgang mit Husserl und seinen eigenen Studenten: Arendt, Jonas, Löwith) aufzugeben. Und im allgemeinen könnte man Heidegger gegenüber geltend machen, er habe durch die gedankenlose Annahme von antisemitischen Vorurteilen eben das getan, was er in seinem Hauptwerk am stärksten kritisiert hatte, sich nämlich an die Diktatur der Öffentlichkeit, des Man, ausgeliefert.[56] Sofern die Philosophie bei den Griechen mit der Überprüfung überlieferter und gängiger Meinungen, der kritischen Thematisierung und Infragestellung des Selbstverständlichen, des allgemein Akzeptierten ihren Anfang genommen hat, ist dieser Gestus, sich klicheehaften Stereotypen des

[54] Gadamer: *Gesammelte Werke,* Bd. 1, 275. Über „das Vorurteil gegen die Vorurteile" siehe noch ebd., 277, 280 („Die Überwindung aller Vorurteile, diese Pauschalforderung der Aufklärung, wird sich selber als ein Vorurteil erweisen, dessen Revision erst den Weg für ein angemessenes Verständnis der Endlichkeit freimacht").

[55] GA 17, 2.

[56] Siehe SZ 126 = GA 2, 169. Vgl. auch die dortigen Erörterungen über „Gerede" und „Zweideutigkeit" (ebd., §§ 35, 37), insbesondere die folgende Behauptung: „Das Geredete als solches zieht weitere Kreise und übernimmt autoritativen Charakter. Die Sache ist so, weil man es sagt" (SZ 168 = GA 2, 224).

Zeitalters anzuschließen, nicht einfach „unphänomenologisch" – wie Heidegger dieses Adjektiv Husserl gegenüber kritisch verwenden zu können meinte[57] --, sondern schlechthin unphilosophisch.[58] Heideggers antisemitische Äußerungen in der zweiten Hälfte der 1930er Jahre, so könnte das Fazit lauten, stellen also angesichts der in *Sein und Zeit* erreichten Positionen einen (schweren) Rückfall dar. Wenn Frithjof Rodi nach der Veröffentlichung der frühen Freiburger Vorlesungen Anfang der 1990er Jahre zu Recht meinte, Heideggers in den Jahren nach dem ersten Weltkrieg vollzogene hermeneutische Neuorientierung sei „gerade auch als Absage an die eigene Vergangenheit in einer politisierten Katholischen Provinz zu sehen",[59] so scheint, wie man heute hinzufügen könnte, diese für überwunden gehaltene Vergangenheit in den 1930er Jahren bedauerlicherweise noch lebendig gewesen zu sein.

Dieser Vorwurf ist einwandfrei, die Sache ist aber komplizierter um des Fairness willen müssen wir hierauf etwas eingehen Die genannten Rückfälle sind nämlich in die Philosophie Heideggers sozusagen hineingebaut, deswegen -- in gewisser Hinsicht -- auch philosophisch „legitimiert".

V. Rückfälle und ihre philosophische Begründung

Im obigen Zitat haben wir „ein Vorurteil aufzugeben" stillschweigend und sinnwie naturgemäß als „endgültig aufzugeben" (vor-) verstanden bzw. interpretiert. Das kann man aber durch Heideggers Texte nicht belegen – Heideggers *Sein und Zeit* kennt wie keine Ewigkeit so auch keine Endgültigkeit --, während das Gegenteil sich gut nachweisen läßt. Eine der wichtigsten einschlägigen Textstellen lautet wie folgt:

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[57] Siehe GA 20, 118, 159. Vgl. auch ebd., 405.

[58] Das ist auch der Sinn meiner Behauptung, die ich Herrn Kollegen Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann gemacht hatte, zufolge der die Juden-bezogenen Textstellen in den *Schwarzen Heften* „philosophisch belanglos" seien – eine Behauptung, die er dann mehrmals zitiert hat (siehe Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, „Notwendige Erläuterungen zu den *Schwarzen Heften*. Über die naive Instrumentalisierung hinaus, die aufgrund der Mutmaßungen bequemer Einsichten inszeniert wurde", in: Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann / Francesco Alfieri, *Martin Heidegger. Die Wahrheit über die Schwarzen Hefte*, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2017, 26-48, hier 39, bzw. ders.: „The Role of Martin Heidegger's Notebooks within the Context of His Oeuvre", in: *Reading Heidegger's Black Notebooks 1931–1941,* edited by Ingo Farin and Jeff Malpas, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2016, 89-94, hier 93.). Den nicht-philosophischen Charakter von Heideggers Aufzeichnungen in den *Schwarzen Heften* betont auch Günter Figal; siehe ders.: „Radikalität", in: *Heideggers 'Schwarze Hefte' im Kontext: Geschichte, Politik, Ideologie,* hrsg. David Espinet, Günter Figal, Tobias Keiling, Nikola Mirković, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018, 25—35, hier 26ff.

[59] Frithjof Rodi, „Wandlungen der hermeneutischen Situation im Blick auf Heideggers Frühwerk", in *Wege und Irrwege des neueren Umganges mit Heideggers Werk. Ein deutsch–ungarisches Symposium*, hrsg. István M. Fehér, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1991, 129–139, hier 138.

> „Im Dasein hat sich je schon diese Ausgelegtheit des Geredes festgesetzt. Vieles lernen wir zunächst in dieser Weise kennen, nicht weniges kommt über ein solches durchschnittliches Verständnis nie hinaus. *Dieser alltäglichen Ausgelegtheit, in die das Dasein zunächst hineinwächst, vermag es sich nie zu entziehen.* In ihr und aus ihr und gegen sie vollzieht sich alles echte Verstehen, Auslegen und Mitteilen, Wiederentdecken und neu Zueignen. Es ist nicht so, daß je ein Dasein unberührt und unverführt durch diese Ausgelegtheit vor das freie Land einer »Welt« an sich gestellt würde, um nur zu schauen, was ihm begegnet."[60]

Insbesondere der von mir kursivierte Satz kann als „theoretische" Begründung von Heideggers Aufnahme antisemitischer Einflüsse oder -- sofern er sie in den 1920er Jahren hinter sich gelassen hat -- von Heideggers „Rückfall" in sie in den 1930er Jahren gelten. Soweit ich sehe, kann man angesichts dieser und ähnlicher Überlegungen grundsätzlich zweierlei unternehmen. Zum einen kann man sie deshalb kritisieren und verwerfen, weil sie eine wohl zweifelhafte persönliche Praxis und Entscheidung theoretisch im Voraus begründen und sie dergestalt ermöglichen und vorwegnehmen. Zum anderen kann man auf eine paradoxe Konsistenz verweisen mit Hinweis darauf, daß die anerkannte Schwäche der Theorie (bezüglich des Rückfalls ins Man) auf performative Weise mit der anerkannten Schwäche der Praxis (dem tatsächlich vollzogenen Rückfall ins Man), konsistent sei, wobei die beiden Schwächen oder Lücken zwei einander ergänzende Teile eines einheitlichen Ganzen bilden.[61] An dieser

[60] SZ 169 = GA 2, 225 (Hervorhebung I.M.F.) . Die Wichtigkeit dieser Textstelle für den Zweiten Abschnitt des Werks wird betont von Joseph P. Fell, *Heidegger and Sartre. An Essay on Being and Place,* New York: Columbia University Press, 1979, 50, aber Heideggers Charakterisierung ist darüber hinaus auch kennzeichnend für die ganze hermeneutische Situation beim Stellen der Seinsfrage. Vor diesem Hintergrund darf man sagen, ein Rückfall ins Man ist immer wieder bzw. jederzeit möglich, ja vielleicht sogar auch notwendig. Auf der anderen Seite ist es so, daß ein bedeutender Rückfall nur dort möglich ist, wo sich der Denker zuvor in eine bestimmte Höhe erhoben hat. -- Siehe noch dem Sinne nach ähnliche Testpassagen in SZ 222 = GA 2, 293 („Herrschaft der öffentlichen Ausgelegtheit"); SZ 299 = GA 2, 396 („Ausgeliefertsein an die herrschende Ausgelegtheit des Man"); SZ 383 = GA 2, 507 („Das eigentliche existenzielle Verstehen entzieht sich der überkommenen Ausgelegtheit so wenig […]"). Siehe auch in den Vorlesungen: GA 24, 243: „Eigentlichkeit ist nur eine Modifikation und keine totale Ausstreichung der Uneigentlichkeit." Diese Überlegung kommt bereits im Hauptwerk zur Geltung: „Das eigentliche Selbstsein beruht nicht auf einem vom Man abgelösten Ausnahmezustand des Subjekts, sondern ist eine existenzielle Modifikation des Man als eines wesenhaften Existenzials." (SZ 130 = GA 2, 173; vgl. noch SZ 268, 317 = GA 2, 355, 420). Relevant aus unserer Sicht sind noch die Gedanken im Zusammenhang mit der These, „Das In-der-Welt-sein ist an ihm selbst *versucherisch*" (SZ 177 = GA 2, 235). Auf eine detailliertere Kommentierung dieser Textstellen muß hier wegen Platzgründen verzichtet werden.

[61] Es ist möglich und konsistent, zu lehren, daß man sich den überlieferten Meinungen nicht entziehen kann, und sie dann tatsächlich (mehr oder minder gedankenlos) zu übernehmen. Umgekehrt ist es nicht weniger möglich und konsistent, zu lehren, daß man sich den überlieferten Meinungen sehr wohl entziehen kann und dann sie tatsächlich nicht zu übernehmen.

Stelle soll auf diese Interpretationsmöglichkeiten nur verwiesen werden. Auf weitere Erörterungen muß aus Platzgründen verzichtet werden. Ob Heideggers „Rückfälle" durch den zweiten Interpretationsansatz auch „legitimiert" sind, ist nicht unbedingt ausgemacht,[62] wenigstens mit dem Anspruch, sich um eine „Erklärung" oder einen „Erklärungsversuch" (hermeneutisch ausgedrückt: um ein „Verstehen") bemüht zu haben, dürfte er aber wohl auftreten können.

VI. „Einmal Minister…"

Ein deutscher Kollege, der jahrelang Kultusminister eines deutchen Bundeslandes war, hat mir einmal bei einer negativen Erfahrung, die er als Minister a.D. in Deutschland gemacht hatte, gesagt: „Sehen Sie, in Frankreich ist es so. Dort gilt: Einmal Minister, immer Minister. Bei uns ist es anders […]" Ohne auf die Stichhaltigkeit dieses Diktums einzugehen, können wir es auf unseren Fall anwenden und uns fragen, ob es sich denn mit den Antisemiten vielleicht so verhielte, wie es sich angeblich mit den Ministern in Frankreich verhält: „Einmal Antisemit, immer Antisemit." -- Es ist schwierig, auf diese Frage mit Sicherheit eine Antwort zu geben. Grundsätzlich müßte man, um einen unangenehmen Determinismus zu vermeiden, mit „Nein" antworten können. Dem widerspricht aber die Erfahrung, die uns lehrt, daß es sehr schwer ist, wenn nicht den ausdrücklichen Antisemitismus, so doch -- nachdem man ihn einmal durch die Erziehung als kleines Kind aufgenommen hat -- den Hang oder die Neigung zu ihm *völlig* loszuwerden. Er kann – um etwas schellingisch zu formulieren -- in den Grund zurückgedrängt werden, zum Status einer Inaktivität, völlig verschwindet er jedoch kaum, so daß er sich unter bestimmten, dazu angemessenen Umständen, aktivieren, erregen läßt.[63] „Rückfälle"bleiben -- wie uns auch die oben

[62] Es gibt einen weiteren „theoretischen" Grund für die Rückfälle, und er liegt in Heideggers Konzept des Anfangs. Neben vielen anderen Textstellen scheint mir die folgende einer der charakteristischsten zu sein: „Der Anfang kann nicht und kann nie ebenso unmittelbar, wie er anfängt, dieses Anfangen auch so bewahren, wie es allein bewahrt werden kann, nämlich dadurch, daß es in seiner Ursprünglichkeit ursprünglicher wieder-holt wird" (GA 40, 199f.). Siehe noch GA 24, 438: „Alles Entspringen und alle Genesis im Felde des Ontologischen ist nicht Wachstum und Entfaltung, sondern Degeneration, sofern alles Entspringende *ent*springt, d. h. gewissermaßen entläuft, sich von der Übermacht der Quelle entfernt." Der „Ursprung [ist] notwendig reicher und trächtiger als alles, was ihm entspringen mag" (ebd.)

[63] Siehe hierzu bei Schelling *Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit und die damit zusammenhängenden Gegenstände*, in *Schellings sämmtliche Werke*, hrsg. K.F.A. Schelling, Stuttgart und Augsburg: J. G. Cotta, 1856–61, Bd. VII, 359bzw. F. W. J. Schelling: *Historisch–kritische Ausgabe*, Reihe I, Bd. 17, hrsg. Chr. Binkelmann, Th. Buchheim, Th. Frisch und V. Müller-Lüneschloss, Stuttgart – Bad Cannstatt: Frommann–Holzboog, 2018, 131: „[…] aber immer liegt noch im Grunde das Regellose, als könnte es einmal wieder durchbrechen, und nirgends scheint es, als wären Ordnung und Form das Ursprüngliche […]"

kurz diskutierten Analysen Heideggers zeigten, immer eine Möglichkeit, veranlaßt oder provoziert durch Wandlungen der jeweiligen öffentlichen Ausgelegtheit.[64] Ende der 1910er und Anfang der 1920er Jahre waren für Heidegger die Umstände (Husserls Nähe und seine väterliche Unterstützung, die Präsenz der eigenen jüdischen Schüler) dafür (sozusagen) nicht förderlich, in den 1930er Jahren (nach dem Tod Husserls und dem Abschied der Schüler) konnten diese zurückgedrängten Neigungen durch den Einfluß der verwandelten öffentlichen Ausgelegtheit aktiviert werden. Nicht zuletzt ist zu berücksichtigen, daß bestimmte Spielarten des Antisemitismus einfach unwiderlegbar sind. Wo die Behauptung aufgestellt wird, „Das Weltjudentum […] ist überall unfaßbar",[65] fragt es sich, ob nicht alle Gegenbeweise und -argumente vergeblich und überflüssig sind, weil sie *a priori* ausgeschlossen sind. Was kann hier als Gegenbeweis gelten?

[64] Antisemitisch sind weniger Heideggers eigene Behauptungen. Antisemitisch sind vielmehr die Heideggers eigenen philosophischen Bearbeitungen zugrunde liegenden clischehaften Vermutungen und Meinungen, die meistens völlig unüberprüft, d.h. unkritisch übernommen und dann als Gegenstand (sozusagen Rohstoff) weiterer philosophischer (wenn man will: seinsgesichtlicher oder metaphysischer) Bearbeitungen dienen. Nehmen wir als Beispiel den Gedankengang über die „zeitweilige Machtsteigerung des Judentums" (GA 96, 46f.). Heidegger geht es darum, für das besagte Phänomen, die Machtsteigerung, eine ihm gemäße bzw. angemessene Erklärung zu finden. Daß die von ihm gegebene Erklärung nicht besonders erhellend bzw. erläuternd, ja kaum nachvollziehbar ausfällt (was heißt es „Ansatzstelle bieten"?), ist weniger wichtig. Vom Belang ist vielmehr ein anderes: Daß das Faktum der Machtsteigerung zu Recht besteht, wird nämlich stillschweigend akzeptiert, es wird nicht eigens untersucht, in Frage gestellt oder hinterfragt. Wo und wie hat Heidegger diese Machtsteigerung (persönlich) erfahren? Rund seiner Hütte oder an der Universität Freiburg (wo jüdische Dozenten eben entlassen wurden)? Oder ist die Quelle bloßes Hörensagen oder Gelesenhaben, nicht persönliches Erfahren? Weswegen gilt es: „wir finden »empörend«, was *man* empörend findet" (SZ 127 = GA 2, 169)? Phänomenologie, hieß es an einer wichtigen Stelle des Hauptwerks, als „Wissenschaft »von« den Phänomenen besagt: eine *solche* Erfassung ihrer Gegenstände, daß alles, was über sie zur Erörterung steht, in direkter Aufweisung und direkter Ausweisung abgehandelt werden muß. […] der Titel hat […] einen prohibitiven Sinn: Fernhaltung alles nichtausweisenden Bestimmens" (SZ 35 = GA 2, 46f.). Diesen „prohibitiven Sinn" der Phänomenologie scheint Heidegger bei der Mehrzahl seiner auf die Juden bezogenen Bemerkungen nicht beibehalten, das „nichtausweisende Bestimmen" nicht ferngehalten zu haben. – Noch zwei Bemerkungen: 1. Daß der biologische Rassismus abgelehnt wird, besagt wenig, solange er auf einer anderen – metaphysischen, seinsgeschichtlichen – Ebene bestätigt wird (siehe GA 96, 243: „Die Frage nach der Rolle des Weltjudentums ist keine rassische, sondern die metaphysische Frage nach der Art von Menschentümlichkeit […]"; GA 97, 20: „Wenn erst das wesenhaft »Jüdische« im metaphysischen Sinne gegen das Jüdische kämpft […]"). 2. Ist im öffentlichen Leben die Rede über „Machtsteigerung" der Juden möglich, so beweist dies weniger die Macht als vielmehr die Ohnmacht oder Machtlosigkeit der Juden. Bei einer wirklichen Machtsteigerung wäre eine öffentliche Rede von dieser Machtsteigerung selbst wohl kaum möglich.

[65] GA 96, 262. Der Sinn des Satzes läuft darauf hinaus: „Es gibt das Weltjudentum, selbst wenn es überall unfaßbar ist". Mögliche Gegenbeweise können sich jedoch nur auf Faßbares beziehen.

STUDIA UBB. PHILOSOPHIA, Vol. 66 (2021), 1, pp. 163-177
(RECOMMENDED CITATION)
DOI:10.24193/subbphil.2021.1.08

LA PHILOSOPHIE POUR ENFANTS : UNE PISTE POUR RÉCONCILIER ENSEIGNEMENT DISCIPLINAIRE ET VIE SCOLAIRE ?

CHRISTOPHE POINT*

ABSTRACT. Philosophy for Children: a Way to Reconcile Disciplinary Teaching and School Life? Drawing mainly on John Dewey's writings, this contribution aims to extend the dualism of a traditional conception of education at the epistemological, pedagogical and organizational levels. This conception was already criticised by this author at the beginning of the 20th century and still remains widely present today among the school community. Through this approach, we demonstrate that the dualist approach is as many obstacles to be removed in the process both to improve and rebuild a better education. The hypothesis defended here consists to demonstrate how philosophy for children, strengthened by its pragmatist heritage, can challenge these dualisms and thereby jeopardize the traditional conception of education.

Keywords*: John Dewey, philosophy of education, co-curriculum, school life, philosophy for children*

RÉSUMÉ. S'appuyant principalement sur les écrits de John Dewey, cette contribution rend compte des dualismes présents au sein d'une conception traditionnelle de l'éducation aux niveaux épistémologique, pédagogique et organisationnel. Cette conception a déjà été critiquée par cet auteur au début du XX^{e} siècle mais reste encore largement présente aujourd'hui au sein de la communauté scolaire. Par cette approche, nous démontrons que l'approche dualiste est un obstacle à lever dans le processus d'amélioration et de reconstruction d'une meilleure éducation. Pour ce faire, nous interrogeons ici la capacité de la philosophie pour enfants, forte de son héritage pragmatiste, à remettre en cause ces dualismes et mettre ainsi en péril la conception traditionnelle de l'éducation.

Mots-clés *: John Dewey, philosophie de l'éducation, co-curriculum, vie scolaire, philosophie pour enfants*

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Introduction

Quiconque a déjà enseigné au sein d'un établissement scolaire reconnaitra cet étrange paradoxe : ce que les élèves vivent à l'école semble pour eux bien plus important que ce qu'ils apprennent. Et malgré ce fait, les enseignants ne sont formés qu'en vue de ce qu'ils feront apprendre aux élèves, sans prendre en compte ce que ces derniers vivront avec eux. Cette rupture entre l'enseignement disciplinaire d'une part et ce que nous nommons provisoirement ici la « vie scolaire » est paradoxalement l'une des réalités les plus frappantes au quotidien dans le système scolaire français, mais est également l'un des soubassements les moins questionnés de ce que nous nommons provisoirement ici la conception traditionnelle de l'éducation[1].

Pour mieux saisir un tel paradoxe, il convient de déplier au maximum le problème théorique et pratique qu'il cache. Pour ce faire, nous sollicitons ici la philosophie pragmatiste pour construire l'hypothèse que la conception traditionnelle de l'éducation crée une triple rupture (épistémologique, pédagogique et organisationnelle) qui valorise systématiquement la connaissance, le curriculum et l'enseignement disciplinaire au détriment de l'expérience, du co-curriculum et de la vie scolaire. Or les conséquences pratiques de cette triple rupture ne tardent pas à se faire sentir : les routines scolaires (Lacourse 2011) prennent l'habitude d'exclure l'enseignant de cette réalité (si importante pour les élèves) qu'est la vie scolaire. Celui-ci ne peut alors se servir des ressources théoriques dont il use pour penser son enseignement disciplinaire et se retrouve dans l'obligation de « bricoler » dans l'urgence ou de déléguer cette réalité à d'autres acteurs du milieu scolaire. De là notre problème *: la philosophie pour enfants (P4C) peut-elle réconcilier ces éléments qui restent pour l'heure séparés au sein de la tradition dualiste de l'éducation ?*

A partir des ressources théoriques du pragmatisme, nous verrons dans un premier temps ce qui précisément reste séparé traditionnellement en philosophie de l'éducation : connaissance et expérience, curriculum et co-curriculum, enseignement disciplinaire et vie scolaire. Puis, dans un second temps, nous proposerons un argumentaire montrant en quoi la P4C peut prétendre réconcilier ce qui est disjoint par la conception traditionnelle et dualiste de l'éducation.

[1] Nous conserverons tout au long de notre réflexion cette dénomination, qui désigne à la fois un concept pragmatiste structurel (Dewey 1916a, 77) - dont la pertinence est discutée par Sébastien Akira-Alix (2017) - et à la fois un consensus idéologique « mou » mais dominant des acteurs du milieu scolaire français sur les moyens et les fins de l'éducation. Aussi bien que ce propos mériterait de nombreuses nuances pour rendre justice à la diversité des variations possibles de ce consensus, nous les écartons cependant dans un souci de clarté.

I. Les dualismes de la tradition scolaire et leurs conséquences pratiques

Pour mieux comprendre la triple rupture présentée précédemment, il importe tout d'abord de préciser le cadre théorique qui nous permet de l'exposer et de la critiquer et qui est désormais connu sous le nom de « pragmatisme » (Frega 2015, 17–18; Cometti 2013; Oliverio, Striano, and Waks 2016). En effet, au sein de ce courant, John Dewey a ainsi développé une pensée de l'éducation qui nous semble pertinente pour notre problème (et ce même en dépit de la distance historique qui nous sépare de ses travaux) pour trois raisons.

Premièrement, ce qui frappe immédiatement le lecteur des écrits de ce philosophe pragmatiste est le refus de tout dualisme. Selon John Dewey, un dualisme est une distinction opérée au sein d'une même réalité que l'on absolutise à tort en deux termes devenant antagonistes, et qui, peu à peu, empêchent de penser la continuité entre ces deux termes, c'est-à-dire leur réalité commune et évolutive. Le dualisme oppose et sépare, là où John Dewey veut apprécier l'interaction dynamique des termes et penser la reconstruction de nouvelles possibilités que les dualismes « figent » et freinent (Dewey 2016, 371). Deuxièmement, sa conception de l'éducation comme processus complexe et commun à tout être vivant lui fait adopter une perspective interdisciplinaire qui articule à la fois ontologie, biologie, épistémologie, pédagogie, politique et éthique Ainsi, ses réflexions permettent de révéler de nombreux dualismes ayant un impact sur notre façon de penser l'éducation (Madelrieux 2016, 31–32; Dewey 1929c, 25). Enfin, troisièmement, John Dewey propose une analyse des dualismes qui met l'accent sur la continuité qu'ils entretiennent entre eux, d'un domaine de pensée à l'autre. Or si les dualismes entretiennent entre eux des relations de continuité, des affinités, relativement complexes, alors les étudier permet de mieux comprendre l'interactivité des dualismes entre eux, c'est-à-dire la façon dont, au sein d'un débat sur l'éducation, un dualisme vient en justifier ou en expliquer un second.

Ainsi, selon John Dewey, la conception traditionnelle de l'éducation est historiquement contaminée par cette triple rupture dite de « continuité dualiste ». Celle-ci peut se comprendre à partir de l'articulation des trois « niveaux » différents de réflexion que sont l'épistémologie de l'éducation, le champ du *design* pédagogique et l'ingénierie organisationnelle scolaire.

A un premier niveau, que nous qualifions ici d'épistémologique car il concerne la conception même du savoir (*epistemological theory*), la conception traditionnelle de l'éducation valide une rupture entre l'expérience et la connaissance. Cette dernière a connu tout au long de l'histoire des idées de multiples variations et de nombreux courants philosophiques ont creusé peu à peu une distance entre

l'expérience (devenant peu à peu douteuse, mensongère, illusoire, manipulable, etc.) et la connaissance (qui, à l'inverse, s'est élevée pour devenir certaine, vraie, nécessaire, objective, etc.) et qui a encore de profonds effets sur la conception traditionnelle de l'éducation. En effet, dissocier l'expérience de la connaissance signifie que l'instruction d'un enfant peut se passer de l'expérience grâce à un effort, à un déploiement d'énergie purement intellectuel. L'absorption des connaissances par l'élève se réalise « magiquement », par sympathie naturelle entre l'esprit de l'élève et ce qui est de la même nature (intellectuelle) que lui. Or, le point commun de ces approches est, pour John Dewey, de penser l'élève comme un « spectateur » (Copleston 1994, 358; Dewey 1929b, 19–157) en commettant l'erreur de croire que ce dernier pourra construire les relations entre les différentes choses qu'on lui présente sans s'impliquer lui-même (Dewey 1920, 144). Ici, la signification des choses apprises reste sans rapport avec l'intérêt de l'élève et donc ne peut être évaluée, testée et jugée par ce dernier à la lumière de ses expériences. Les affluents des fleuves de France peuvent restés des lignes bleues dessinées sur une carte, leurs noms n'évoquant aucune expérience, souvenir, affect à l'élève, peu importe, la conception traditionnelle de l'éducation validera la connaissance acquise s'il parvient à les replacer correctement sur une carte.

Les variations de ce dualisme épistémologiques sont évidemment nombreuses et nous ne pouvons que les énumérer ici. Cependant, la valorisation de l'intellect sur le matériel, de l'esprit sur le corps, de la mémorisation sur la sensibilité, du raisonnement sur la manipulation, de l'information sur l'action, de la lecture sur le dialogue, etc. peut paraitre caricaturale aux yeux de nombreux enseignants. Toutefois, force est de reconnaître que la première image que l'opinion commune se fait de l'élève ou de l'étudiant est celle d'un être passif, assis sur une chaise, qui *assiste* au cours, tel le spectateur d'une curieuse représentation, sans que d'autres expériences de sa part ne lui soit demandées.

Deuxièmement, cette première rupture épistémologique entre expérience et connaissance est donc lourde de conséquences sur le plan pédagogique. Ce qui exprime le plus clairement cette relation dans la conception traditionnelle de l'éducation est, au niveau pédagogique, le dualisme du curriculum et du co-curriculum (Arum and Roksa 2011). En effet, au niveau de *l'educational design* (Goodin 1998) on peut également constater une rupture entre ce qui fait partie d'un certain « contenu éducatif » et ce qui en est exclu. Au cours de l'histoire des idées pédagogiques, qu'il s'agisse d'informations, de techniques, de valeurs ou de compétences, ce « contenu éducatif » est au cœur de ce que l'on nomme le « curriculum scolaire ». Malgré les variations, les plans d'étude, les programmation des apprentissages, les cursus ont tous pour point commun de chercher à définir les savoirs que l'on

considère nécessaires à transmettre d'une génération à l'autre et d'en établir la progression d'apprentissage (continuité qui se déclinera alors en cycles, programmes, filières, etc.).

Ainsi, à partir de cette définition générique du curriculum, il est facile d'établir la notion de co-curriculum de façon négative ; le co-curriculum est tout ce qui échappe au curriculum (Stoller 2018, 455). On peut désigner par ce terme toutes les expériences, activités ou moments où l'élève apprend quelque chose en dehors des cours, c'est-à-dire lorsqu'il appréhende un savoir sans que ce processus ait été dirigé par un acteur du milieu pédagogique de façon consciente et déterminée. Ici, l'opposition entre le curriculum et le co-curriculum relève donc la qualité du premier, là où, à l'inverse, c'est son absence qui permet de qualifier le second. Le curriculum devient le continu visible du travail pédagogique et le co-curriculum devient son ombre, discontinu discret, échappant au pédagogue et, *in fine*, dévalorisé (Schuh et al. 2011, 385–94). Cette séparation entre ces deux termes devient problématique au fur et à mesure que la distance entre ces deux termes s'accroit. Pour le dire simplement, plus le curriculum devient précis, détaillé et s'affranchi des autres continuités éducatives, et plus le co-curriculum s'enrichit d'expériences, d'activités, d'interactions qui échappent au pédagogue.

Troisièmement, cette triple rupture implique un dernier niveau de réflexion que l'on peut identifier, en langue française, sous le terme d'organisation scolaire (Obin 1993) - *school organizational engineering* (Cheng 1997). Dans ce domaine sont débattues les questions des horaires, emplois du temps des acteurs scolaires, agencement des espaces et du mobilier, mais également des règlements intérieurs et des rapports sociaux entre les acteurs de ce milieu. Ici, c'est la séparation entre l'organisation de l'enseignement disciplinaire d'une part et celui de la vie scolaire d'autre part, qui prolonge les dualismes précédents en les radicalisant. En effet, l'expression la plus marquante de ce dualisme est la facilité par laquelle la conception traditionnelle de l'éducation définit un enseignement disciplinaire et se fait une idée de l'organisation scolaire nécessaire à sa réalisation : un enseignement de mathématiques au lycée nécessitera un certain nombre de professeurs, des heures de cours et d'examen, des salles, un matériel particulier, etc. Alors qu'il semble extrêmement plus difficile de définir le concept même de « vie scolaire » (Champy 2005, 1035–38) à cause de la variété de ses significations (Soussan 1988) suivant les époques (Vitali 1997), les contextes (Bouvier 2007) et les acteurs de l'organisation scolaire (Obin 2007).

Ainsi, là aussi, il serait facile, à cause de ce dualisme et de la valorisation excessive qu'il entraine, de définir l'un par l'absence de l'autre : « les choses de la vie scolaire c'est tout ce qui se passe dans le lycée ou le collège, à l'exception

toutefois de l'acte pédagogique lui-même » (Soussan 1988, 42). Faut-il alors comprendre qu'il s'agit de toutes les interactions vécues par les enfants en dehors de celles pensées au sein du curriculum ? Dans ce cas, la vie scolaire d'un élève comprendrait l'ensemble des expériences vécues au sein de ce lieu comme manger, discuter avec ses camarades, jouer, faire des activités, tomber amoureux, se disputer, stresser, rire, etc. soit plus de 99% de ces expériences durant la scolarité et qu'il faudrait exclure de l'enseignement disciplinaire. Ou bien, à l'inverse, la vie scolaire n'est-elle que le temps passé par l'élève en dehors de ces cours et dont un CPE aurait la charge administrative (Riondet 2017, 90–93) ? Dans ce cas, les moyens déployés par l'administration scolaire pour « gérer » cette vie scolaire semblent alors bien réduits face à la richesse et à la diversité de toutes les expériences mentionnées précédemment.

Nous ne pouvons résoudre ici cette question de la définition du concept de vie scolaire car son instabilité au sein de la conception traditionnelle de l'éducation prouve d'elle-même le dualisme que nous avons exposé pour l'instant. Avec John Dewey, notre argument a consisté à déplier les différents plis épistémologiques, pédagogiques et organisationnels de ce dualisme traditionnel. Pour cette tradition, le savoir mémorisé est plus important que l'expérience vécue, le respect du curriculum est supérieur à celui du co-curriculum et l'enseignement disciplinaire prime sur la vie scolaire. Face à ces ruptures, il s'agit désormais de se demander si la philosophie pour les enfants (P4C) permet de réduire ou non ces écarts épistémologiques, pédagogiques et organisationnels.

II. La promesse pragmatiste de la philosophie pour les enfants (P4C)

La littérature scientifique au sujet de la P4C connait depuis une vingtaine d'année une forte expansion et diversification (Leleux 2008) dans l'espace francophone[2]. Cette diversité théorique est désormais telle qu'une présentation exhaustive de ces champs de recherche ne peut plus ignorer ni les différences théoriques et pratiques entre les discussions à visée philosophique (Tozzi 2010), les ateliers de philosophie (Auriac-Slusarczyk 2015) ou encore les communautés de recherche (Sharp 2018), ni l'apport des sciences du langage, de la didactique, des approches intersectionnelles, ou encore des sciences de l'éducation. Cependant un élément semble commun à tous les témoignages des acteurs éducatifs qui s'essaient à penser ou à réaliser cette

[2] La troisième réédition de l'ouvrage d'introduction de M. Sasseville en 2009 (Sasseville 2009) ou la publication du numéro 24 de la revue *Recherches en éducation* en 2016 sur ce sujet en sont de bons exemples.

nouvelle pratique éducative : le sentiment d'appartenir à une communauté pédagogique innovante et remettant en cause les évidences professionnelles du cadre scolaire (sentiment qui les rend d'ailleurs inaudibles auprès d'autres praticiens ou chercheurs partageant l'alignement théorique traditionnel).

En effet, à bien des égards les expérimentations de la P4C ne sont pas neutres, et promettent, en tant qu'innovation pédagogique et par l'ampleur de sa transversalité théorique (épistémologique, pédagogique et organisationnelle), une remise en cause de la conception traditionnelle de l'éducation. Quel que soit les entrées du praticien (l'animation d'un temps calme du périscolaire ou la didactique de la philosophie en terminale), un alignement s'opèrerait progressivement avec les autres niveaux théoriques décrits précédemment, conformément à un héritage philosophique propre au pragmatisme (Lipman 2003; Sharp 2005). En effet, John Dewey est le premier à encourager les chercheurs en sciences de l'éducation et les pédagogues à penser profondément cette continuité théorique entre les champs de l'épistémologie, du langage, de la pédagogie, de la politique ou encore de l'esthétique (Dewey 1929c), et de chercher la plus grande cohérence possible entre ces différents champs lors de leurs réflexions ou pratiques éducatives (Stoller 2018, 453; Dewey 1916b, 400–402). C'est donc cette promotion d'une continuité radicale de l'éducation que nous voulons interroger ici. La P4C remplit-elle véritablement les promesses du pragmatisme ? Détaillons cette question sur les trois « niveaux » étudiés précédemment.

« Toute éducation est expérimentale » (Dewey 1931, 424). Sur le plan épistémologique, l'expérience sera, pour John Dewey, le point de départ de tout processus de pensée, et par conséquent, l'unique moyen de validation d'une connaissance. De plus, si le but de tout processus d'action ou de réflexion sera pour lui l'enrichissement de notre expérience, à l'inverse la qualité d'une expérience dépend des connaissances qu'elle rend possible pour le sujet (Dewey 1938a, 14). L'expérience est ici une transaction du sujet avec son environnement (Dewey 2016, 363) et le résultat de celle-ci, lorsqu'elle est réussie, est l'amélioration des connaissances du sujet. C'est pourquoi l'épistémologie pragmatiste ne peut se comprendre sans cette continuité indissoluble de l'expérience et de la connaissance (Dewey 1937, 238-241).

Cette épistémologie non-dualiste pose donc le problème suivant aux praticiens : « Quelles sont les expériences que mon cours (activité, séquence pédagogique, etc.) produit auprès des apprenants ? » L'enseignant doit chercher à créer une *vital experience* (Dewey 1916a, 216). Et c'est ce que John Dewey cherche à produire au chapitre 16 de *Democracy and Education (p.297)* en montrant comment un cours d'histoire ou de géographie peut augmenter la signification du monde de l'étudiant à partir du moment où le matériel pédagogique du cours permet à ce dernier

d'expérimenter « authentiquement » telle ou telle situation. Ainsi, Matthew Lipman hérite et transmet cette continuité entre expérience et connaissance lorsqu'il construit l'épistémologie de la P4C.

> *En ce qui concerne les enfants eux-mêmes, aucun plan éducatif ne sera digne de ce nom à moins qu'il n'aboutisse à des expériences scolaires et extrascolaires significatives. […] Par conséquent, l'un des objectifs d'un programme d'aptitudes à la réflexion devrait être l'amélioration du jugement. Car le jugement est le lien entre la pensée et l'action. […] Les significations dont les enfants ont faim sont celles qui pourraient être pertinentes et éclairer leur vie (Lipman 1980, 8–17).*

Ainsi la P4C se présente comme un dispositif pédagogique recherchant : 1/ l'augmentation et intensification des capacité d'association du sujet. Ces dernières sont effectivement nécessaires pour construire des connaissances valables[3] soi-même ou à plusieurs dont la validité est éprouvée à l'aune de la logique, du dialogue et de la faillibilité scientifique (Cossin et al. 2008, 2e éd.:136). Ainsi, au niveau épistémologique, il est clair ici que ni la connaissance, ni l'expérience ne sont dévalorisées ou valorisées, pour la simple raison que leur continuité interdit toute opposition ou indépendance excessive. La P4C illustre donc cette réconciliation épistémologique (Tozzi 2010, 17–151), mais l'on peut noter tout d'abord que celle-ci est tout à fait envisageable en dehors de l'appellation « philosophique » et pourrait s'élargir à l'ensemble des sciences humaines. De plus, comment évaluer une « amélioration du jugement » chez l'élève si celui-ci porte avant tout sur les connaissances en lien avec ses expériences personnelles et non sur des connaissances générales identifiables (et ainsi évaluables) ?

La P4C peut-elle vraiment réconcilier, au niveau du design pédagogique, le curriculum et le co-curriculum là où la conception traditionnelle de l'éducation les tient séparées ? En 1893, John Dewey déclare que l'éducation n'est pas une préparation à la vie, mais l'acte même de vivre (Dewey 1893, 50). Par cette déclaration programmatique, le curriculum et le co-curriculum se trouvent joints comme des deux moyens d'une même finalité éducative (faire émerger de nouvelles capacité d'agir de façon autonome, critique et créative). Pour ce faire, John Dewey soutient que la progression d'un curriculum ne devrait pas être « dans la succession des études, mais dans le développement de nouvelles attitudes et de nouveaux intérêts

[3] C'est-à-dire comme étant le produit d'une transaction réussie entre différentes informations présentes dans l'environnement du sujet. Par exemple, les qualités d'écoute, les compétences de reformulation, la capacité de suivre un sujet de discussion de façon assidue sont des éléments de réussite pour la plupart des méthodologies de la P4C. Ces éléments expriment ainsi cet objectif de croissance des capacités d'association (cognitive et sociale) de l'enfant.

envers l'expérience » (Dewey 1929a, 305). C'est pourquoi, dans ce cas, les curriculums doivent être envisagés comme « des écosystèmes dynamiques, hétérogènes et chargés de valeurs des pratiques sociales humaines » (Stoller 2018, 455) prêt à être modifiés au fur et à mesure de l'intérêt des élèves. Ces curriculums seront alors évalués à partir de leur capacité à favoriser l'émergence d'expériences venant redynamiser l'intérêt de l'enfant dans sa soif de toujours mieux connaitre son environnement (Dewey 1931, 417). La rigueur du curriculum pré-existant à l'intérêt de l'élève n'est alors plus de mise (Osberg and Biesta 2008, 314) et ne permet plus de fonder la supériorité du curriculum sur le co-curriculum. Pour John Dewey, toutes les activités dites « de loisir » sont des ressources encore inexploitées dont le pédagogue doit s'emparer.

Or ces dernières sont précisément ce que la P4C, quel que soit sa méthodologie, travaille et cherche à solliciter chez l'élève. Car elles sont portées par un « élan » (Ibid.) qui permet le développement de compétences spécifiques « d'organisation indépendante » (Ibid.). Qu'il s'agisse de l'intégrité critique (Slusarczyk et al. 2015), du développement du raisonnement, de l'esprit critique (Lipman 2015, 18–19; Duclos 2014), ou bien de la « raisonnabilité » de Lipman (Leleux 2008, 11–24), les compétences que la P4C cherche à développer chez l'élève sont non seulement, dans l'extrême majorité des cas transdisciplinaires, mais dépassent largement le cadre disciplinaire pour influencer le comportement de l'élève au sein de son co-curriculum en développant chez lui un sens du raisonnement, de la responsabilité ou encore de la citoyenneté.

Ainsi l'importance du dialogue et de l'interconnexion de la pensée et du langage que révèlent les travaux de Emmanuèle Auriac-Slusarczyk (Auriac-Slusarczyk 2015), Anda Fournel (Fournel 2018 ; Sasseville et al. 2018 ; Fournel and Simon 2018), ou encore Jean-Pascal Simon (Simon and Tozzi 2019) sont un bon exemple de cette attention aux compétences, qui vont permettre aux élèves de développer cet « élan » d'auto-organisation collectif de la signification. C'est-à-dire (et les témoignages des praticiens sont unanimes à ce sujet) qu'une des manifestations les plus évidentes de la réussite et des bienfaits de la P4C est le déroulement d'une communauté de recherche où le dialogue entre les élèves est fluide, où l'enseignant intervient peu, et où par ce processus dialogique émerge une signification collective et complexe du monde pour les élèves. Cependant, entre un dialogue de recherche fluide et une « organisation indépendante » des élèves, il y a un pas, et la promesse du pragmatisme s'obscurcit dans cet écart. Pour l'instant, et c'est ce qui nous pousse ici à la prudence, aucune recherche n'a pas évalué celle-ci dans la mise en œuvre d'une telle organisation à partir de la pratique de la P4C. Enfin, une dernière question, peut-être la plus difficile, doit être formulée : la P4C, lorsque l'on s'intéresse à la

manière dont elle se réalise au niveau de l'organisation scolaire quotidienne, est-elle une remise en question de la séparation entre l'organisation des enseignements disciplinaires et les activités de la vie scolaire ? Rétrospectivement, cette question semble suivre une interrogation formulée par John Dewey dès les premières lignes de *Les Sources d'une science de l'éducation* :

> *Quels sont les moyens grâce auxquels l'éducation dans toutes ses composantes et ses phases – la sélection des éléments composant le programme scolaire, les méthodes d'instruction et de discipline, l'organisation et l'administration des écoles – peut mener à bien sa fonction tout en augmentant systématiquement l'intelligence de notre compréhension et de nos actes ? (1929c, 24-25)*

La P4C peut-elle être un de ces moyens que John Dewey a cherché à construire ? Notons tout d'abord que cette question doit avoir selon lui pour préalable une conception souple de l'organisation des enseignements disciplinaires (Dewey 1929a, 306–7) avant de penser à la réconciliation avec la vie scolaire elle-même. Mais l'argument central de John Dewey ici est de rappeler que tous les enseignements disciplinaires - même la poésie (Dewey 1916a, 247–52) - ont pour objectif commun de favoriser chez l'élève le développement de l'enquête. Or la P4C de Matthew Lipman semble se donner justement cet objectif à travers les communautés de recherches[4] :

> *John Dewey était convaincu que cette éducation avait échoué parce qu'elle était coupable d'une erreur monumentale : elle confondait les produits finis et raffinés de l'enquête avec le sujet initial et brut de l'enquête et essayait d'amener les élèves à apprendre les solutions plutôt qu'à étudier les problèmes et à faire des recherches par eux-mêmes (Lipman 2003, 20).*

Cependant, la particularité de la P4C comme outil pédagogique pour développer les aptitudes à l'enquête se réalise-t-elle dans son développement actuel au sein des organisations scolaires ? Encore faiblement institutionnalisée (Auriac-Slusarczyk et al. 2011, 4; Tozzi 2008, 63), cette pratique semble se diffuser au sein des établissements à partir de deux dynamiques qui ne s'opposent pas mais, au contraire, dont la complémentarité est pleine de promesses. Dans la première dynamique, la P4C appartient au co-curriculum (comme une activité de la vie scolaire de l'établissement) et elle est introduite au sein du curriculum par la manifestation d'un certain nombre de questions nécessitant un développement de connaissances propres à une discipline en particulier. Par exemple, des collégiens réalisant une

[4] Dans la méthode de Lipman, l'une des premières étapes de la CRP est le choix d'une question commune à partir des questions proposées par les participants.

CRP durant le temps périscolaire sur le thème des différences entre les hommes et les femmes, sollicitent ensuite leur professeur de biologie-géologie par des questions ayant trait à l'anatomie humaine et ce dernier peut alors modifier son futur cours de manière à répondre à ces questions.

Pour la seconde dynamique, la P4C est inscrite au sein du curriculum scolaire et se déploie par la suite au sein du co-curriculum. Par exemple, au sein du programme belge, une séance d'un cours de morale doté de la méthodologie de la P4C peut aborder la question de l'écologie, puis que, dans un second temps, les réflexions abordées au sein de cette séance donnent envie aux élèves de s'engager pour cette valeur en sollicitant les ressources de la vie scolaire pour organiser une semaine de l'environnement au sein de leur établissement pour lutter contre le gaspillage. Bien que ces exemples soient fictifs et que des enquêtes de terrain seraient nécessaires pour approfondir ce point, il semble clair que la P4C rend possible un processus d'enquête permettant un dialogue et une recherche de valeurs communes[5], d'accroitre la confiance des élèves en leur pouvoir d'agir collectif et, *in fine*, d'accroitre leur implication au sein de la vie scolaire ou de l'enseignement disciplinaire.

Toutefois, l'animateur d'une CRP ne possède pour l'instant pas de place institutionnelle et disciplinaire stable au sein de l'espace scolaire francophone (est-il un enseignant de philosophie ? un animateur périscolaire ?). Or cela peut nuire à cette prétention à la porosité entre enseignement disciplinaire car n'étant pas identifié clairement par les autres acteurs scolaires, la coopération avec ses derniers s'en trouve malaisée. Les travaux de Bettina Berton (Berton 2017; 2015) montrent en effet que la difficulté de la P4C à s'inscrire dans une logique disciplinaire nuit plutôt à la pérennisation des expériences de P4C amorcées au sein de la vie scolaire.

Conclusion

Pour conclure, il n'est pas inutile de revenir sur la correspondance entre John Dewey et Matthew Lipman pour mesurer les enjeux qui pèsent sur la P4C. A l'époque de cet échange épistolaire, de 1949 à 1951, Matthew Lipman est encore un jeune et prometteur chercheur mais il cerne déjà l'intérêt de s'emparer de l'héritage pragmatiste pour sa propre pensée et loue l'approche de John Dewey

[5] Il est intéressant de noter par ailleurs que pour Matthew Lipman cette capacité à interroger les valeurs et à les critiquer que permet la P4C est peut-être la cause de son exclusion des enseignements disciplinaires dans la conception traditionnelle de l'éducation (Lipman 2015, 267).

(Lipman 1966). Cependant, ces louanges (que Matthew Lipman ne reniera jamais (Dewey 1951)) lui vaudront de féroces attaques au sein du milieu universitaire américain lors de la soutenance de son doctorat (Dewey 1950). En effet, une conception de l'expérience et de l'éducation aussi continuiste ne peut que paraître « répugnante » à la conception dualiste de la philosophie dominante de l'époque. Or, ce dégout semble encore si présent au sein de la conception traditionnelle de l'éducation qu'il nous a semblé légitime pour notre analyse de clarifier les promesses de l'héritage pragmatiste de la P4C.

Ainsi, sur le plan théorique, la P4C questionne la conception traditionnelle et dualiste de l'éducation sur au moins trois niveaux de réflexion. Sur le plan épistémologique, elle s'oppose à une sorte de fondationnalisme du savoir qui dévalorise l'expérience au profit d'un savoir neutre, *a priori* et impersonnel. A l'inverse, la P4C développe une conception transactionnelle de l'expérience et de la connaissance où l'une ne peut être valable sans l'autre. Sur le plan du *design* pédagogique, la P4C établit une continuité entre le curriculum et le co-curriculum au lieu de les opposer de façon scholastique. Ils ont la même finalité pédagogique et c'est en conséquence de ce fait que les processus éducatifs doivent être imaginés. La P4C peut alors intégrer les programmes d'études ou les activités périscolaires avec la même intégrité. Enfin, sur le plan de l'organisation scolaire, la P4C peut être comprise comme une prémisse d'une nouvelle ingénierie scolaire où l'enseignement disciplinaire ne s'opposera plus à la vie scolaire, mais sera au contraire sans cesse à la recherche d'interaction avec cette dernière pour s'enrichir mutuellement des recherches menées par les élèves.

Cependant, cette remise en cause théorique des dualismes de la conception traditionnelle de l'éducation est plus mitigée sur le terrain de la pratique. Pour l'heure, la P4C, en tant qu'innovation pédagogique isolée, ne semble pas pouvoir réaliser seule les promesses du pragmatisme. Il est donc possible de la considérer soit comme une curiosité pédagogique sympathique mais inoffensive, soit comme les premiers pas d'une reconstruction bien plus vaste de notre conception de l'éducation. Et pour la philosophie pragmatiste, seul l'avenir est un juge compétent pour trancher entre ces deux options.

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STUDIA UBB. PHILOSOPHIA, Vol. 66 (2021), 1, pp. 179-188
(RECOMMENDED CITATION)
DOI:10.24193/subbphil.2021.1.09

THE NORMALITY OF THE CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE NORMALITY OF THE BODY. HUSSERL'S VIEW ON NORMALITY*

IMOLA RESZEG**

ABSTRACT. In the following paper, I'll try to summarize Husserl's view on normality. I will claim that there is a contradiction between his early, transcendental conception, which claims the absolute normality of the transcendental consciousness, and his late genetic-generative analyzes that lead back the normality of experience to the normality of the psychophysical body. I will argue that his contradiction can be resolved from the perspective of the embodied consciousness which, according to Anthony Steinbock is also present in the late writings of Husserl.

***Keywords**: normality, abnormality, transcendental phenomenology, genetic phenomenology*

The Problem of Normality

How may mental disorders arise within phenomenology, a non-reductionist theory that insists on treating mental phenomena as pieces of conscious experience? Does it make any sense to speak of normal vs. abnormal experience within the context of phenomenology? And if so, what would be the appropriate concepts, categories in terms of which we may articulate this difference?

Normality, as was pointed out by such thinkers as Michel Foucault, George Canghuillem and others, is a normative, not a descriptive concept. Far from being a natural determination or a given psychic feature, it is a regulative idea informed by cultural values and rules shaping social consciousness of a particular era. Phenomenology, however, makes it its methodological principle to get rid of any form of normativity. The epoché introduced by Husserl aimed at suspending, if only temporarily, all our cultural scientific beliefs. Accordingly, we should take experience

* The author would like to thank Ádám Lovász for his help in the translation of the originally Hungarian text.

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as it would reveal itself to an unprejudiced, unbiased gaze. The phenomenological approach demands that we suspend all our judgements. If we do so then any distinction to the effect of normality as opposed to abnormality will lose all their relevance. We are supposed to contemplate our inner stream of experience revealing itself to the unbiased observer as if we had no preconceived knowledge of what normal perception, normal behaviour or a normal psyche should be like.

However, the question of the normal state of consciousness or normal experience cannot be eliminated in the mental attitude of reduction. We have experiences in which we feel, so to speak, from the inside, that something is wrong, that our perception, thinking, emotional life is not taking place in the usual manner. Experience seems to have an inherent normality, a self-regulating mechanism that immediately indicates when things are not going in the right way.

The Transcendental Perspective

The question of normality is contained in the entire Husserlian ouevre, from *Ideen* – which elaborates transcendental phenomenology – to the later texts dealing with intersubjectivity. Because it deals primarily with the constitution of meaning by the transcendental subject, the transcendental stage of Husserl's work does not really contain much about normality, but it becomes an indispensable operational concept in explaining the phenomenological problems of intersubjective reality and the constitution of objectivity. [1]

Husserl's comments regarding the topic in §55 of *Cartesian Meditations* are especially pertinent in this regard:

> *"But abnormality must first be constituted as such; and the constituting of abnormality is possible only on the basis of an intrinsically antecedent normality (…) The objective world has existence by virtue of a harmonious confirmation of the apperceptive constitution, once this has succeeded: a confirmation thereof by the continuance of experiencing life with a consistent harmoniousness, which always becomes re-established as extending through any corrections that may be required to that end."*[2]

The meaning of the world, including its anomalous elements, can only be articulated in comparison with a normality. The former – anomaly – must be considered

[1] Drawing on Eugen Fink's article (*Les concepts operatoires dans la phénoménologie de Edmund Husserl*) Tamás Ullmann states that the concept of normality is one of the most important operative notions is Husserl's philosophy. (Tamás Ullmann, *Az értelem dimenziói.* L'Harmattan, Budapest, 2012. 152-153.)

[2] Husserl, Edmund: Cartesian Medtitations. Springer Science, Nijhoff den Haague, 1960, 124-125.

as a deformation of a prior normality. As Husserl declares in another text, *"normality is the form of constitution"*[3]. A world can only come into being thanks to the normality of the constitutive ego and this normality manifests itself in the harmonious nature of the experience. In other words, the transcendental subject is absolutely normal, for normality is the very foundation and condition of world-constitution. If we find ourselves in a world, this is thanks to a normality which has already formed our world.

The experiencing-constituting subject proceeds from an absolute normality, but viewed from the transcendental-solipsistic perspective, it seems that every other human and non-human subject represents a lesser degree of normality. It is always our ego which has the primary constitutive capacity. As Husserl explains,

> *"Among the problems of abnormality the problem of non-human animality and that of the levels of "higher and lower" brutes are included. Relative to the brute, man is, constitutionally speaking, the normal case just as I myself am the primal norm constitutionally for all other men."*[4]

This logic of constitution extends not only to the animals, but children and the insane also represent examples of anomaly, because in Husserl's view they do not reach the ideal type of normality, so to speak, the normality of the adult capable of calculation, perception and movement. What matters here is who is capable of constructing the world as a more complete, coherent and harmonic whole.

However paradoxical and even problematic it may appear, this process is phenomenologically legitimate inasmuch as it furnishes us with a first-person perspective and a direct experience relating to normality, attempting to illuminate the inner laws of experience by introspection. Husserl expands his analysis to a number of concrete examples. During the course of these investigations, three or, according to other interpreters, four different criteria relating to normality can be uncovered: concordance, optimality, typicality, and familiarity.

In a text dating from between 1915-1917 dedicated to giving an explanation about the optimal givenness of experience, Husserl writes the following:

> *"...the optimal system has an advantage, namely that it reveals the most of the real thing, it brings about the greatest riches concerning the differences pertaining to the thing."*[5]

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[3] Hua XIV. 68.

[4] Husserl, Edmund: *Cartesian Meditations*. Springer Science, Nijhoff den Haague, 1960, 125.

[5] Hua XIII. 379. (My translation, I. R.)

Under „optimality", we must understand the ideal preconditions of perception. In other words, the sum of circumstances which afford the richest, most complete knowledge relating to the object of perception. In a 1921 text, the criteria of optimality is articulated in relation to the topic of the body. On this view, „normal" corporeality connects with a well-functioning or, alternately, hampered or limited system of representation, and also with a system that "that in a certain manner represents the truth".[6]

Under corporeal normality Husserl understands the normal bio-physical functioning of the body. The normal experience of the world depends upon a biophysical optimum, as well as having a healthy body.[7] Husserl also claims that biophysical normality can be brought into adequation with a constitutive normality, while biophysical anomaly also corresponds to the sum of abnormal „worldviews."[8]

On the basis of our everyday experience, we can easily verify what Husserl is speaking of, for the loss of sight or hearing, even for a transitory period of time, leads to a weakening of the perception of the world, impairing the traversal of the environment. But connecting representation to the normality of corporeal experience (the latter being the normality of phenomenological experience in general), and also collapsing these two levels into one another, all this strikes us as a problematic approach. The apparent psychophysical reductionism here contradicts, after all, the spirit of the transcendental method.[9] Other everyday intuitions tell us that physical or sensorial impairments need not necessarily lead to a deformation of the experience of the world, just as the presence of bodily health does not automatically guarantee a completely normal subjective experience of the world.

Biophysical optimality does not, in itself, guarantee the normality of experience, for the preconditions of an optimal representational system in Husserl's case are inherently intersubjective. Differently put, we can only know that our perceptions do actually result in optimal experience if we are somehow capable of comparing these experiences with those of others, in the context of an intersubjectively constituted world. Our individual experience must be in accordance with the individual and collective experiences of others, and also connect with the objectivity of a common

[6] Hua XIV. 121.

[7] Hua XIV. 122-123.

[8] Hua XIV. 123.

[9] Husserl apparently takes a few times this paradoxical step, for example at HUA XIV, 85. On the other hand, authors like Anthony Steinbock hold that on bio-physical body Husserl always means the lived body, which constitutes it's own norms while orienting itself in the surrounding world. (Steinbock: *Home and Beyond. Generative Phenomenology after Husserl*, Indiana University Press, Illinois, 1995, 138-139.)

life world. The criterion of concordance must apply within the individual life world as well, for new sensations and perceptions can only gain meaning inside an experiential horizon. In this manner, we experience constant objectivities, and in connection with these, we constitute a world.

> *"What else could normal experience be than the experience which seamlessly and concordantly fits the context in question, and which maintains the identity of the object throughout the experience."*

writes Husserl, emphasizing that concordance is an unavoidable criterion of normality.[10] Cases of anomalous perception, such as false perception, delusions, hallucinations, are all characterized by the agent falling out of the common flow of experience. The anomaly is the outlier, standing in contradiction with the rest of the intersubjective world. However, these cases can also be viewed as immanent modulations, deformations or diversions of normality.

To return briefly to the intersubjective dimension of concordance, it must also be emphasized that for Husserl, the objectivity of any experience is basically guaranteed by nothing more than this dimension. However, as Ullmann explains, the intersubjectivity of experience should not be viewed so much as the sum of individual experiences, but rather a network of mutual interpenetration in which intersubjectively constructed meaning is embedded into our own experience, informing it in turn. Not only do we construct meaning together with others, but even our perception is formed by our community. This common world, which creates the domain of normality, will be called the „life world" in Husserl's later work. [11]

In the life world, everything is at once subjective and relative, for it denotes a cultural-historical community, a concrete world, which contrasts with the universes of other cultural communities. In the broader context of interculturality, we find the third and fourth criteria, namely typicality and familiarity. The analysis of these specific properties of the life world will take us in the genetic and generative phase of transcendental phenomenology. That is, we must deal with the issue of historicity in the phenomenological analysis. Before proceeding, it must be stressed that at this point, the normal is considered as that which is familiar in our own world. Everything which diverges from this category, the unfamiliar, the alien, is, from the Husserlain perspective, abnormal.

[10] HUA XIII. 364.
[11] Ullmann 158.

The Genetic-Generative View of Normality

There are some interpreters who hold that Husserl's views on normality are not entirely articulated within a static-transcendental context. In other words, we should not view the normal as the achievement of a solipsistic ego, but rather as something intersubjectively constituted, from a genetic-generative perspective[12] On this account, concordance, optimality, typicality and familiarity are not so much different forms of normality, but instead various levels of the same phenomenon. We can view them as modes of constitution, which allow experience to harmonize and normalize itself. One of the most important characteristics of experience is self-normalization and self-stabilization. Husserl's ideas contain an implicit teleology, namely the view that meaning can eventually be stabilized and harmonized.[13]

In the genetic view, the disharmonies, complexities, breaks and anomalies in perception are held to be constitutive preconditions of new meanings. A certain chaos is required for the emergence of order. The anomaly can be viewed as a precondition for richer certainties, more complex truths, and new experiential norms.

Let us take an everyday case. In a familiar city, I am trying to get to a destination, let's say the university building. But it's night time, so the usual points of reference are a little different in my plane of consciousness, showing different aspects. The street is recognizable, but it also resists my gaze. Despite the fact that it diverges from my expectations, I go in the direction I believe to be the correct one. The building I am trying to find fails to present itself. I become uncertain, I stop and look around. Then I realize I must have gone up the wrong metro overpass in the opposite direction. At this moment, however, the right way becomes apparent because overall, despite the surprises it holds in store, the city as a whole is generally familiar to me. The mistake and the recognition of this mistake both enriched my consciousness with an experience of the night, which can be usefully recalled in later situations.

Here we have an example of the teleological and self-normalizing functioning of experience. The levels of familiarity permeate and build upon one another. Ever higher degrees of normality accumulate in our consciousness, leading to an ever more concrete articulation of the body-environment and a richer constitution of the world. On the most fundamental level, normality is grounded upon the spontaneous concordance of subconscious perceptual contents. This level should be imagined as a state in which there are not any concretized intellectual contents or objective

[12] Anthony Steinbock: *Home and Beyond. Generative Phenomenology after Husserl*, Indiana University Press, Illinois, 1995, Marosán Bence: *Kontextus és fenomén* II, L'Harmattan, 2020.

[13] Marosán Bence: *Kontextus és fenomén* II, L'Harmattan, 2020. 293.

meanings, but only loosely connected nascent elements of meaning. A critical element of objective meaning is whether these patterns, which are partially sensual and partially intellectual, can arrive at this meaning or fulfil an expectation[14]

Concordance manifests not only on the level of contents of consciousness, but also in the sensual elements of the lived body (*Leib Körper*), and also pertains to the relationship of the lived body with its environment. The synthetic unity of the object of consciousness (or any other empirical fact) is unavoidably tied to the circumstance that in every case the cooperation of the senses is required. Sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste, all of these transmit sense data which together build a representation of the world. Without the cooperation of the senses, we would have an example of anomalous experience, the highest intensity of which is dissociative chaos. Borrowing an example from Minkowski the famed psychiatrist, Steinbock gives a phenomenological description of schizophrenia, in which a state of personality dissociation may be observed:

> *"...and then sometimes everything is so fragmented, when it should be so unified. A bird in the garden chirps, for example. I hear the bird and I know that he chirps, but that it is a bird and that he chirps, these two things are separated from each other. There is an abyss. Here I am afraid because I cannot put them back together again."*[15]

Referring to the consistency between body and environment, Steinbock, referencing Maurice Merleau-Ponty, argues that already in Husserl's case we find many descriptions where the body is more than an optimal sensory system, operating also as a mode of optimization which activates experience as a function. When Husserl speaks of the biophysical body, he is referring to the lived body, which itself selects the most optimal, coherent modes of experience in a self-organizing way.[16] Describing the lived body, Husserl prefers to use the phrase „anomalous" rather than „abnormal", and in Steinbock's view there is a very important reason for this, namely that the anomalous is more than the mere negative polar opposite of the „normal." The anomalous or injured, disabled body is restricted in exercising its capacities, but it is certainly not abnormal. Perceptual anomalies are necessary components of perception in general, for it is thanks to such elements that concordance can develop. To take another typical example, we can imagine ourselves driving at night. The lights of the car illuminate a certain section of road, but this circumstance is punctuated by the fact that cars coming from the other

[14] Marosán 296.
[15] Steinbock 143.
[16] Steinbock 144-145.

direction blind us momentarily. This momentary anomaly in visual perception breaks our normal perception, while training our vision, keeping us alert. Despite the darkness, we can succeed in steering our vehicle safely at night, without suffering a car accident. Normality, understood in the sense of optimality, is not therefore the constant functioning of sensual organs, but rather the cooperative normality of the senses.

If we think of all this in temporal terms, we must note that after a while the optimal functioning of sense organs and their characteristics tend to habitualize after a while, normalizing experience in the process. That which we call normal is the product of an optimalization. This latter is an open category, making it possible to find elements even more optimal than the natural functions, such as in the case of artificial prostheses and other body enhancements. In such cases, the added component can become a normalizing force in perception. New glasses, for instance, and the optimized vision they make possible, can become a new norm in a matter of days, making us view the previous experience of vision in a new light. Steinbock mentions that the lived body is only normal to the extent that it proves capable of transgressing its own norms.[17] While creating new optimums and rules, the body also transforms the criteria of its own normality. Corporeal functioning is nothing if not the self-renewing process of optimalization and normalization. At the same time though, we must also recognize that there is no completely concordant or harmonic experience. Rather, these are only quasi-teleological tendencies instead of states.

The next level of perceptual normality is typicality. Our environment is full of phenomena which we call normal, insofar as they fulfil our expectations regarding typicality. A corporeality, an object, a situation or a behaviour that can be called typical allows us to create expectations in advance. We expect the object of consciousness to behave as it should. The typicality of experience in Steinbock's interpretation is created by the interpenetration of various optima, and composes the level where our individual experience steps into the intersubjective dimension of the life world.[18]

From the genetic view, we proceed to the generative. Typicality necessitates communication within and among various generations. A very important characteristic of its manifestation is that it applies not only to objects of consciousness and the relations between these objects, but also to the constitution of the world itself. As Marosan shows, constitution undergoes a qualitative expansion at this point. Viewing experience as a flow, we can see a series of various optimums and collections of optimality, repeating, until a typicality of elements, territories and regions emerges, aggregating into a complex network.[19] Following Steinbock, we may call the forms

[17] Steinbock 146.
[18] Steinbock 160.
[19] Marosán 301.

of this typicalized world-experience the „territories." A territory is not so much the objective environment but rather the way in which we inhabit this ecology, making it a home, a place of inhabitation. It is not an exaggeration to call it the system of typicalized modes of perception and behaviour.

The next level of normality is the most complex, encompassing the familiar/unfamiliar binary. Along with the previous levels we have described above, the territory becomes the highest and most concrete level of normality once it is recognized as a culturally coded life world. On this generative level, the cultural aspect is more pronounced than in the case of typicality, where it remains abstract. The life world's familiar and unfamiliar aspects are eminently cultural phenomena.

The life world is full of familiar forms and systems: meanings, norms, gestures, phrases, modes of behaviour, social roles, bodies, animals, and humans. All these aspects are characterized by their familiarity, including inanimate objects. These can be interpreted in turn as showing opportunities or affordances for action. At this point, it should be stressed that in Husserl's view, individual human bodies and the sum of corporealities alike form a single cultural-corporeal community. The life world's concrete mode of givenness is a culturally and traditionally given world, which stands opposed to the alien, the other. In this context that is normal which is familiar inside of our own world, while the alien, the unknown, the strange is endowed with the character of the abnormal. Steinbock emphasizes that the familiar and the unfamiliar are constituted according to one another. We can only articulate our own if there is an opposite we can compare this category with. [20]

In summary, it can be said that from the Husserlian ouevre we can reconstruct a genetic-generative concept of normality. The latter is a structural component of experience, emerging through corporeal experience, becoming in its turn a controlling and organizing force. This self-regulative movement of experience is not absolutely stable, because traumatic or cataclysmic events can destabilize it. But even these, if they do not result in a shattering of the body, can contribute to normalization. In a crisis, the stable meanings and elements are disarticulated, dashing expectations. That being said, the crisis is always already part of individual and social life. This fact was not lost on Husserl:

> *"Cannot we, however, conceive of a such a shift of fate* - writes Husserl at one point - *that shatters normality to the point that I find myself completely lost and I can no longer envisage how life may continue, how it may once again assume the form of a fruitful stable normal human life."* [21]

[20] Steinbock 221.
[21] HUA XV. 213-214 (Translated to English by me I. R.)

The traumatic event which Husserl references here, can completely untether the web of normality, leading to a condition wherein the environment fails to remain uncontroversial for me: everyday activities lose their meaning, while expectations and hopes fail to be fulfilled. The trauma can so utterly destabilize our lives that "I never again find my bearings". The shattering of normality can result in the destruction of the world, or at the very least, an alienation from the world, making the continuation of our previous life impossible.

STUDIA UBB. PHILOSOPHIA, Vol. 66 (2021), 1, pp. 189-211
(RECOMMENDED CITATION)
DOI:10.24193/subbphil.2021.1.10

ROMAN INGARDEN'S EGOLOGY AND CARTESIANISM

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ABSTRACT. The article focuses on the problem of egology in the thought of Roman Ingarden, a conception that offers a creative and critical response to Husserl's egology and converges with the historical conception of the ego in Descartes. It analyses the problem in two stages based on two important texts by Ingarden: *Controversy over the Existence of the World* and *Man and Time*. Starting with reflections on the status of pure consciousness, Ingarden recognises the pure ego as something solely abstract compared with the worldly and irreducible real ego. From there his reflections on the ego move on to the problem of its substantiality, specific temporality as well as the role and experience of the body to finally produce a philosophy of existence with ethical and personalistic overtones. In this way Ingarden recreates the egological journey in Descartes, who, searching for the foundation of knowledge, identified subjectivity as the union of body and soul and saw its fulfilment in the ethical experience of generosity.

Keywords: *egology, ego, Cartesianism, Ingarden, Husserl, substantiality, temporality, human existence, realism.*

I. Introduction

When considering the possible inspirations Ingarden might have drawn from the philosophical tradition, people rarely mention Descartes.[1] Indeed, Ingarden himself refers to Descartes rather marginally. He was not a historian of philosophy and it should perhaps come as no surprise that none of his texts makes direct mention of Descartes' philosophy. However, if one were to identify a meaningful point of departure for the exploration of his attitude to Descartes' thought it would

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[1] Research into Cartesian themes in Ingarden's thought may be inspired to some extent by texts about Descartes' philosophy that were influenced by Ingarden and written from the perspective of ontology (Tarnowski 2017) and epistemology (Gierulanka 1962). This text explores the egological dimension absent in both these authors.

have to be in the context of his discussion with Husserl, and specifically its Cartesian part related to consciousness and the ego. In his conception of consciousness, Husserl did make rather frequent references to Descartes' solutions, and they were by no means unequivocally positive. Influenced by the neo-Kantian interpretation of Descartes, he raised a number of objections against the thought of the "father of modernity"[2]. One of the main such objections concerned the status of consciousness which, according to Husserl, was not adequately separated (or cleansed) from the real world or the real *ego*, which led Descartes to "absurd transcendental realism"[3]. Interestingly, Ingarden does not share Husserl's objections about this aspect of Descartes' philosophy. Instead, he approaches it rather positively, deems it worthy of consideration and adopts it as a starting point for his own conception[4]. It might therefore be said, preliminarily, that Ingarden turns Husserl's objections around: one should not so much think of *cogito* as totally independent of the world and, ultimately, making the world meaningful as begin by describing the "natural attitude" within which

> I relate to the world or I can do it in many different ways: watching it enquiringly, acknowledging certain states of affairs, encapsulating them in concepts, comparing, differentiating, counting, reaching conclusions on the basis of established facts etc. Similarly, I may like, dislike, enjoy, be saddened by, desire or avoid certain objects as well as hope for, fear, influence or be influenced by some events etc. All these various ways of relating to the world may be encapsulated in the Cartesian term *cogito*; they are *my lived experiences.* As long as I *live currently*, I am present to myself as someone who perceives, imagines, thinks, feels, desires etc. It is as such that I find myself within and in relation to the world which is always given to me in its real existence, even when I suffer from delusions or exclude some objects from its scope.[5]

[2] see Mehl 2020; Barbaras 2017, p. 14-19.

[3] Husserl 1960, p. 24.

[4] see Ingarden 2013, p. 39-40.

[5] Ingarden 1919, p. 338. In Part 4 of his early text *Dążenia fenomenologów* [The Aims of Phenomenologists] devoted to immanent cognition and the phenomenological cognitive attitude, Ingarden presents Husserl's main views on pure consciousness. He refers to Cartesian *cogito* as enworlded (following Husserl), but does not repeat Husserl's transcendental objections against this conception, clearly abandoning characteristic Husserlian rhetoric in favour of transcendentalism. In the subsequent edition of the text from the early 1960s, Ingarden is more vocal about the need to differentiate the various forms of behaviour towards the world from *cogito's* self-presence. However, the latter never removes the irreducible feeling of the world's reality: "all my behaviours towards things and processes in this world involve in one way or another, more or less importantly, centrally or peripherally, my conscious experiences that Descartes once referred to by the common term

Following this lead, I will make the hypothesis that the problem of egology in Ingarden, developed in discussion with Husserl, bears the hallmarks of a certain Cartesian attitude or at least shares some of its aspects. However, it is worth pointing out that the very status of a philosophical sub-discipline accorded to egology may be problematic in the context of Ingarden's thought, especially when it comes to the role the discipline is supposed to play in relation to ontology. The reason is that Ingarden is believed to have been primarily an ontologist which may mean that any detailed research into his work needs to be carried out on the basis of previously reached ontological conclusions. Yet, as it concerns the problem of consciousness, and then the *ego*, Ingarden identifies a specific first-person mode as a crucial component of the fundamental experience based on which one may talk about the special status of the *ego*[6]. This raises the question of whether the problems of egology may be reflected upon autonomously or even considered to represent a privileged domain with a bearing on ontological problems formulated at a later stage.

The interrelation between egology and ontology becomes specifically important in the context of the thesis about the substantiality of the ego, i.e. at the point where the reflections upon the ego enter the area of ontology. As we know, in Descartes, the problem of substance is introduced in the *Meditations* as the *ego* makes the first-person declaration "I am a substance"[7]. It is only once this first and fundamental statement is made that further theses on substances different from the *ego* may be put forward as part of "first philosophy". Is it then the case that Ingarden attributed the concept of substance to the ego based on some general ontological knowledge or can this problem be interpreted as primary and autonomous? Without claiming to be able to settle this complex issue within the confines of this article, I only want to highlight it, assuming that it is possible to read Ingarden's egological texts somewhat independently of his ontological work.

Ingarden's conception of egology appears mainly in two of his texts: fragments of Vol. 2 of *Controversy about the Existence of the World*[8] and *Man and Time*[9]. I will try to identify and explore the "egological" Cartesian themes that are present in these texts, or even – to refer loosely to Husserl's terminology – outline a "Cartesian

cogito. As long as I am alive, I constantly experience something, behaving in a certain way, and when I experience, I relate not only to the objects of the world that surrounds me in one way or another (e.g. with kindness or hostility), but I am continuously present to myself as someone who thinks, feels, sees or hears, desires or is repulsed, loves or hates, is delighted or indignant etc. As such I find myself in the world and always find the world real" (Ingarden 1963, p. 361).

6 see Ingarden 2016, p. 696-697.

7 Descartes 1984, II, 30, 31; AT VII, 44, 45.

8 Ingarden 2016, p. 645-735.

9 Ingarden 1983, p. 33-52.

way" insofar as these themes make up a discernible series of theses and arguments. Given the fact that Ingarden undoubtedly adopted Husserl's position as his main point of reference, could it be possible that, as part of his discussion with Husserl, or, more precisely, as part of the already mentioned neutralisation of Husserl's objections against Descartes, he would also model his thought on Descartes' solutions, especially those related to the status of the ego that Husserl, motivated perhaps by historical circumstances, was too quick to reject? I will understand the "Cartesian way" as a continuation and expansion of the historical thought that often remained within the domain of intuitions and premonitions but can now be clarified or modernised thanks to the advancements in phenomenology so that it becomes a deep source of inspiration.

II. The egological theme in the *Controversy about the Existence of the World*

Based on these assumptions, I will first read the key paragraphs from Vol. 2 of the *Controversy about the Existence of the World*. To begin reconstructing the Cartesian way, let us assume that the phenomenon of thinking is a conscious, individual and temporary experience (*cogitatio*) that creates, in its multitude, a "stream of experiences"[10] structured into a process.

Next, this undefined multitude is reduced (restricted) to "pure" lived experience, i.e. experience correlated by a real being, or the world, which is also reduced in its own way[11]. It seems that it is already at this point that Ingarden's reflections may be juxtaposed with Cartesian operations known from his *Rules* or *Meditations* where one can talk both about cleansing or structuring the field of experience (towards clear and distinct perception) as well as constituting the field of the subject. Regardless of how Cartesian operations are assessed from the phenomenological standpoint, pure consciousness could be correlated by, for example, the material world accounted for through its chief attribute of extension and considered to be an extended substance.

Third, Ingarden considers the pure ego to be the subject of pure experiences[12]. Writing about lived experiences, or their stream, he concludes that they must have a subjective foundation—the pure ego. Doing so, he confronts the classic thesis of Husserl who, influenced by neo-Kantianism, departed from Descartes in that respect, advocating for the need to make a sharp distinction between the pure ego and the

[10] Ingarden 2016, p. 649.
[11] Ingarden 2016, p. 675.
[12] Ingarden 2016, p. 676.

real person (as belonging to the world). Ingarden finds this solution unsatisfactory as it does not eliminate the problem of whether pure experiences are still lived through by specific individuals and also whether the (transcendental) ego, thus understood, remains a real person. As for Descartes, his famous *cogito* dictum from the *Meditations on First Philosophy* may also be said to be fraught with ambiguity and vagueness: on the one hand, it is undoubtedly a first-person statement made by a specific individual, whilst on the other one assumes its universality. As regards the instance introduced in the *Rules for the Direction of the Mind* which follows specific methodological rules to constitute the objects of *Mathesis* as scientific objects, it definitely does not have individuality, being a set of universal rules that an anonymous subject must comply with.[13]

To the extent that Ingarden finds the status of pure ego problematic,[14] and in the context of the problems of idealism and realism that he raises, he then focuses his reflections on the issue of the agency of consciousness as the distinguishing feature of the idealistic position.[15] It should be emphasised that, both for Ingarden and Descartes, the *ego* is not a world-creating instance in spite of having specific agency[16]. What this means for our reflections is that Descartes' position may be considered convergent with Ingarden's and, in that sense, realistic. As for the problem of *cogito*'s individuality, Ingarden's solution could be encapsulated in the thesis

[13] The difference may explain why the *Rules* became obligatory reading for neo-Kantian interpreters of Descartes who largely inspired Husserl (see Mehl 2020, Dufour 2006, Natorp 1882). Ingarden in turn keeps his distance from the theory of the object presented in the *Rules*, calling it a class theory (see Ingarden 2016, 30, fn. 68; 161, fn. 527).

[14] In this context, see Ingarden's later explanations made during his lectures in ethics: "Some might perhaps want to introduce a radical difference here, e.g. Husserl would say that this object is a person, a psycho-physical individual, whereas the act of justice or injustice is performed by a pure subject of pure consciousness. I do not deny that this conception is possible, but I do not believe in the existence of pure subjects that—within our experience—are not somehow related to persons, psycho-physical individuals, and I do not believe in a person (i.e. I think that such a conception of a person is false) that would be deprived of a centre of action, thinking, decision-making etc." (Ingarden 1989, p. 273-274).

[15] The notion of idealism in philosophy is highly ambiguous and becomes even more so when applied to Husserl's phenomenology (on that topic see W. Płotka 2019, p. 103-131). On the one hand, it seems that Ingarden needed a rather authoritative (hence, perhaps, misleading) definition of Husserl's position as idealistic to develop his own thought described as ontological and realistic. On the other hand, one cannot forget about the still insufficiently explored, yet very vehement, reaction against the position Husserl expounded in *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy* that came not only from Ingarden but also from a larger group of phenomenologists active in the Munich and Göttingen circles. In this text I try to follow the Cartesian egological strand in Ingarden's thought "outside realism and idealism," as suggested by W. Płotka, although I do not treat this phrase as equivalent to "abandoning the Cartesian theme in phenomenology" (ibid. 128-129). On the contrary, I think it reopens and revives this theme.

[16] see Descartes 1984, II, 28, 31; AT VII, 41, 45.

that, even though it results from an abstraction, pure consciousness is possible and its bond with the real and individual ego is never broken. "Universal consciousness—insofar as anything determinate can be understood by this—is either some general *idea* of consciousness or an abstraction that in itself is non-self-sufficient, an abstract moment that can occur *in concreto* in the individual streams of consciousness, or in the individual experiences, only as a general structure of these"[17].

In the following step of the egological argument in Vol. 2 of the *Controversy about the Existence of the World,* Ingarden raises the problem of the temporality of consciousness as a stream of lived experiences. He acknowledges that the nature of lived experiences is that of a process, yet believes that the process is not linear but characterised by internal tensions, contradictions, discontinuities and gaps (as it is evidenced by the examples of lost consciousness or sleep). If the stream of consciousness is discontinuous, the multitude of lived experiences should again be grounded in the ego as their permanent foundation and organising principle thanks to which the stream can preserve its unity. The negative proof of that are psycho-pathological cases or the phenomenon of lost consciousness. Ingarden also clearly refers to the Cartesian hypothesis of the evil demon, which he interprets as a different consciousness intentionally engaged in creating our lived experiences, a hypothesis that clashes with and is overcome by the first-person truth-claim of the lived experience itself included in the *cogito*[18].

As regards the unity of the ego in temporary terms, it can be considered not only in the context of the immediate present marked out by the currently performed *cogitatio*, but also as intuitive and non-reflexive experience which surpasses the ego, a feeling of oneself that Ingarden links not only to Brentano's *das innere Bewusstein* and Bergson's *intuition*, but also to Cartesian *ego cogito*[19]. Writing about the link between the lived experience and the subjective nature of the ego, Ingarden states firmly: "R. Descartes already knew this, and said it expressly by declaring: *cogito, sum*—except that the *basis* of this necessary connectivity was not brought out into the open in Descartes. The concept of the ego is also not worked out to satisfactory clarity in Descartes"[20].

Ingarden thus identifies the ego as transcendental in relation to individual and present lived experiences, which enables him to advance the thesis about the ego's ontic autonomy, a thesis that may be said to resonate with the Cartesian first-

[17] Ingarden 2016, p. 647.
[18] Ingarden 2016, p. 661-662.
[19] see Ingarden 2016, p. 674, fn. 2292.
[20] Ingarden 2016, p. 683, fn. 2306.

person phrase "I am a substance" from *Meditation III*[21].

Coming back to the intuition of "living through" *(Durchleben)* as the experiential foundation of the ego's subjectivity, the question is whether this intuition has any content. As opposed to, for example, Kant, it seems that Ingarden links this intuition with special first-person knowledge that can be provisionally called existential and that would make it possible to go beyond the theoretical, pure ego. On the other hand, this raises the major problem of how to access the ego effectively and positively expand the content of that knowledge. From that perspective, the ego becomes a reality that is secret and profound. It is aware of that reality and experiences it in the most elementary way, even though it still knows little about it. Acquiring certain existential knowledge is possible, even if it remains an open question whether such knowledge can be discussed within the confines of philosophy. It seems that, for Ingarden, the most adequate way in which one can access or have insight into the profound ego is through aesthetic or moral experiences[22]. What is important at this stage of our reflections is that the ego is no longer an undefined and inaccessible foundation of lived experiences, but becomes, in the words of Ingarden, a personal centre and, eventually, a psychophysical individual object equipped with a body.

At this point, it is worth mentioning a theme that might be called performative although not in a narrow, linguistic sense. What Ingarden's ego performs is a self-constitutive expansion and transformation of reality. It extends its influence and the scope of its being, achieving this in a special way through its own body. This profound and hardly knowable ego manifests itself directly in behaviour (it is characterised by a specific form of behaviourism). In this context, Ingarden introduces the concept of the force of being and declares, citing Bergson's related concept of the tension of duration, that the ego feels the presence or absence of the force, realising its subjective potentiality and actuality.[23] Lived through, the ego is undergoing a process of continuous updating that cannot be reduced to Husserl's dispositions or habitualities. At the same time, the reality encompassed by the ego's being is subject to changes that cannot be viewed as purely cognitive. On the other hand, a characteristic feature of the ego as it performs acts of the will and feels the force of being are self-affective experiences (delight, surprise, joy, suffering). It is in these special moments that one can talk of the very essence of the ego manifesting itself, always marked by some generic qualities (e.g. general human features), but also specific, individual

[21] Descartes 1984, II, 30, 31; AT VII, 44, 45.

[22] see Ingarden 2016, p. 690.

[23] While I doubt whether the concept of the force is metaphorical as Marek Piwowarczyk claims (Piwowarczyk 2013, p. 292), I am inclined to follow Filip Kobiela's suggestion that it was Ingarden's way to describe the specific causality of the ego, although I do not believe that it should have a purely reactive and negative role as a "centre of resistance" (see Kobiela 2011, p. 136).

traits combined into a unique whole or *haecceitas*[24].

To sum up the egological argument from the *Controversy*: Ingarden considers pure consciousness as inseparable from the soul and a kind of abstraction. He links pure consciousness with the ego through including it in the scope of the soul and its "concrete fabric",[25] which leads to the problem of the dual phenomenological status of the body: as one's own body lived through in the first person and as a spatial, physical body.

For Ingarden, lived experience of one's own body takes place in two streams of consciousness—or different modalities in this context—whilst the body as such should be understood as a special field of action for the ego in its specific scope of being. Thus, and finally, Ingarden treats man as a dynamic, organic whole comprised of more or less closely related elements that are irreducible to one another. By the same token, he rejects parallelism in favour or a specific form of interactionism where separate domains of being overlap, exerting influence and "intruding" on one another. Let us also bear in mind that Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy* concludes with the introduction of the problem of the substantial union between body and soul where the two mutually irreducible and partially independent elements make up a unified, stand-alone whole of a new type corresponding to the "third primitive notion"[26] and confirmed by the first-person process of living through and experiencing

[24] Ingarden 2016, p. 692.

[25] Ingarden 2016, p. 696. The expression used by Ingarden evokes interesting associations with the conceptions of the living body (*la chair*) developed in the phenomenologies of Merleau-Ponty, Michel Henry or Jean-Luc Marion (see Starzyński 2017, 2012).

[26] Descartes 1991, III, 218; AT III, 665. It is beyond the limits of this article to reflect further on how these authors understand the soul and its relationship to the body. It should be mentioned, however, that even though Descartes rejected the tripartite division of the soul introduced by Aristotle, he did retain the concept of the soul in his "first philosophy," and even gave it an increasingly greater weight, identifying its two, intertwined dimensions. In the quoted letter to princess Elizabeth of 21 March 1643, he mentions that "there are two facts about the human soul on which depend all the knowledge we can have of its nature. The first is that it thinks, the second is that, being united to the body, it can act and be acted upon along with it (...)" and, further on, "as regards the soul and the body together, we have only the notion of their union, on which depends our notion of the soul's power to move the body, and the body's power to act on the soul and cause its sensations and passions" (Descartes III, 218; AT III, 665). In Ingarden's account of the soul, the dimension of theoretical (pure) thinking is expanded by adding practical actions and emphasising the role of the soul's "force" that can operate in "solidarity" with the body: "We also stumbled earlier onto the remarkable phenomenon of the solidarity, or even unity, between the consciousness-ego, in particular the ego of sensory perceiving, and "my" body" (Ingarden 2016, p. 703). It is not clear to what extent Ingarden was familiar with the evolution of Descartes' views on the "union between body and soul" and how much he might have been inspired by it. In the *Controversy,* he first says that "direct experience of ourselves as a concrete human being appears to be in conflict with widespread conceptions of both a scientific and philosophical bent (especially since Descartes'

the ego as equipped with its own body ("the body which by some special right, I called 'mine'")[27]. By exploring the union between body and soul, Descartes arrives at the problem of the ethical subject whose magnanimity and generosity (*générosité*) are experienced in first person as wonder and self-fulfilment[28]. Therefore, Descartes' expanded conception of the ego as a substantial union between body and soul definitely resonates with the conception advanced by Ingarden who sees the ego as a primary being, a profound, but not inaccessible, reality without which reality as such (the world of different types of "objects") could not be accessed and analysed, including through ontological analyses.

III. The egological theme in *Man and Time*

Let us now move on to other text by the Polish phenomenologist: *Man and Time.* I will examine this text in order to verify the egological "way" from the *Controversy about the Existence of the World,* outlined rather briefly so far, which, although it comes later chronologically, undoubtedly articulates Ingarden's position. As for the text itself, it is worth remembering that, in spite of being written with the general public in mind, it has been edited three times, and it is specifically in the final version that one can find direct references to the solutions from the *Controversy* (both texts were written in roughly the same period, if not simultaneously). Moreover, a closer look at the timeline of events shows that, in 1937, Ingarden participated in *Congrès Descartes*, an international philosophical congress in Paris organised with the immediate purpose of marking the 300th anniversary of the publication of Descartes' *Discourse on the Method.* He took this opportunity to deliver his paper *Der Mensch und die Zeit* [Man and Time]. That the text was much more important than its commemorative nature might suggest is best proved by the fact that, apart from the first version published in German in Vol. 8 of congress proceedings entitled *Analyse reflèxive et transcendance* alongside such authors as

times). The customary juxtaposition of the two alien factors (body and soul) does not appear to be borne out by original experience (...)" (Ingarden 2016, p. 702-703) to observe a few pages later: "But even Descartes—despite his two-substance theory—expressly points out toward the end of his "Meditations" the peculiar unity of the soul with the body in each and every one of us" (ibid., p. 707, fn. 2342). In this context, it is also necessary to highlight the potential problem of differentiating between the seemingly synonymous concepts of soul, spirit and person in Ingarden (the second and third concepts are absent in Descartes) who mentions the issue in his lecture on the thought of Edith Stein, among others (see Ingarden 1994, p. 307-309).

[27] Descartes 1984, II, 52, AT VII, 76.

[28] see Descartes 1984, I, 384-388; Marion 2013, 244-249.

Maurice Blondel, Leon Brunschvicg, Henry Corbin, Gabriel Marcel, Jean Wahl, and Oskar Becker[29], it also came out in two extended editions in Polish. The first was published in 1938 in *Przegląd Filozoficzny* [Philosophical Review][30]. The text was revised into its final version during the war to be published in 1946[31], laying the foundation for further anthropological research that I will not discuss in this article.

Ingarden's reflections in *Man and Time* take as their point of reference a Latin quotation from Descartes. He writes: „Descartes' words [from *Meditations on First Philosophy,* which] are alive and valid even today"[32]: "Hoc pronuntiatum, ego sum, ego existo, quoties a me profertur, vel mente concipitur necessario esse verum / Cette proposition : *Je suis, j'existe*, est nécessairement vraie, toutes les fois que je la prononce, ou que je la conçois en mon esprit / this proposition (pronuntiatum) *I am, I exist*, is necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me, or conceived in my mind"[33]. This first-person existential statement opens up Descartes' and Ingarden's reflections on the essence of the ego which remains enigmatic and demands to be explored: "But I do not yet have a sufficient understanding of what this 'I' is, that now necessarily exists (*nondum vero satis intelligo, quis nam sim ego ille, qui iam necessario sum),*" writes Descartes[34]. Ingarden says that "the problem of the essence of our ego as a human being living in time needs to be posed anew on the basis of the different experiences of time, and new solutions of it need to be sought"[35] and at the end of the text in its final version he refers to the *Meditations* again: "Who am I – Descartes' question returns once more – who persist in time (...)"[36].

This clearly Cartesian inspiration requires some additional comments. First, Ingarden quotes a unique form of Descartes' statement from the *Meditations* without even mentioning the traditional or canonical formula *cogito ergo sum* from the *Discourse on the Method* or *Principles of Philosophy*.[37] It may be said that Ingarden refers to what is usually called the Cartesian *cogito*, emphasising the existential moment that defines and forces itself upon the ego, but that does not privilege the intellectualist conception of the subject, of which Descartes is commonly accused. The first-person assertion of existence points to a certain primary experience that, even though it must

[29] Ingarden 1937.
[30] Ingarden 1938.
[31] Ingarden 1946.
[32] Ingarden 1983, p. 42.
[33] Descartes 1984, II, 17; AT VII, 25.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ingarden 1983, p. 42.
[36] Ingarden 1983, p. 51.
[37] On the different forms of *cogito* in Descartes' work and its special version from the *Meditations,* see Marion 1996, 7-30.

be thought and realised, seems to encompass the reality of the ego much more widely

than the mere process of thinking in the form of the stream of consciousness (as it was later put metaphorically). What is more, the first-person existential statement appears to acknowledge the existence of a special and privileged being.

Second, what Descartes pinpoints in this key ontological experience is the moment of *profertur*, i.e. a certain component act characterised by special performative activity.[38] In line with this interpretation, the essence of the ego would not consist in mere duration or remaining in existence but would require a moment of specific self-affirmation. Whatever the relation between the actual nature of asserted existence and the activity of the ego perceiving itself as existing, the asserted existence does allow one to identify a certain, still undefined, albeit specific, being. Bringing to the fore the existential formula of the ego was not Ingarden's original idea—among others, it brings to mind Husserlian reconstructions of Descartes' way based precisely on *Meditations II* —but the use he made of it seems to foreshadow the direction of many Cartesian studies in the second half of the 20th century, coinciding interestingly with Cartesian inspirations present in French phenomenology[39]. As I have already emphasised, according to Ingarden, the Cartesian *ego* must be brought up to date and made phenomenologically concrete. The Polish philosopher wants to reach that goal primarily through addressing „the problem of the essence of our ego as a human being living in time"[40].

Thus, inspired by Descartes and having asserted the existence of the ego, which he considers to be a primary and fundamental experience, Ingarden asks about the ego's essence which is supposedly accessed in the domain of time that the ego experiences. Notably, Descartes emphasises the fact that the proposition about the ego not only applies to a certain point in the present, as it were, but being a repeated experience (*quoties, quamdiu*), it refers eventually to something more durable, a temporal continuity that goes beyond the recurring "now" moments. This definitely anticipates and lays the ground for Descartes' focus on the problem of the substantiality of the ego, which Husserl criticised vehemently as a "fateful change (*verhängnisvollen*

[38] On the performative actions of Descartes' *cogito* see Marion 1981, 370-396 who, all the same, interprets the fact of the ego performing the act of a "thought thinking itself" expressed in the existential statement *Ego sum, ego existo* as "existence abstraite et universelle" "une énonciation vide": "L'existence performée reste abstraite, sauf que la marque encore une détermination : sa polarisation par l'ego. La pensée vide ne s'énonce qu'autant qu'un *ego* l'énonce; l'existence abstraite ne se performe ainsi qu'autant qu'un ego y trouve son mode d'existence" (ibid., 383). Based on the above formulas, it is hard to ascertain whether the self-affirmation of the ego in an existential statement goes anywhere towards defining it as a substance.

[39] see Starzyński 2014.

[40] Ingarden 1983, p. 42.

Wendung)"[41]. One might even suppose that *existo* is the first expansion of the assertion *sum*, the latter being empty of content, and already advances a preliminary thesis about the ontic status of the *ego*.[42]

Hence, Descartes adopts the proposition *ego sum, ego existo* as a departure point for defining the ego as a substance, which would mean not only that he surpasses the narrow understanding of the ego as a mere operator of *cogitationes*, but also that he goes beyond the theoretical problem of providing a foundation for knowledge. Substance itself would be understood here as related to independent and persisting being of the ego.

In addition, in *Meditations*, Descartes does not treat the ego as a perfectly transparent reality, but rather as reality that must be clarified by means of egology: "I will converse with myself and scrutinize myself more deeply; and in this way I will attempt to achieve, little by little, a more intimate knowledge of myself"[43]—which suggests a need for a totally new type of research or reflection.

Let us therefore assume that Ingarden cites the dictum from the *Meditations* intentionally, seeing it as an inspiration to go beyond the purely epistemological *cogito* that can only be justified in a narrow scope. From that perspective, interpreting *ego cogito* as an Archimedean foundation of certain knowledge (in the sense of nascent modern science and, later on, transcendental phenomenology) must be abandoned in favour of a different type of research where the ego determines the first-person experience—individual at first and then collective—of being human (an "I" and a "we"). "I am" is a proposition about my existence that is not uttered in a universal form as part of a "we" asserting a community of that experience.

From the very first words of his treatise, Ingarden positions himself in first-person plural: "We all live in time and we know it"[44]. However, he believes that, if the essence of the ego should be examined as "man living in time," the experience breaks into "two fundamentally different ways of experiencing time and ourselves

[41] Husserl 1960, p. 24.

[42] Jean-Marie Beyssade interprets the existential statement *Ego sum* as a direct ontological experience where: "l'affirmation que je suis enveloppe depuis le début l'affirmation que je suis une chose qui pense, puisqu'exister et être une chose sont ici termes synonimes" (Beyssade 1979, p. 227). Although he seems to derive the ego's substantiality from the experience of the multitude of acts requiring one subject: "la première vérité est-elle toujours accompagnée de la condition qui la fait connaître : la substance, qui jamais n'est immédiatement perçue, se donne par l'intermédiaire de ses actes ou de ses modes" (ibid., 223)—he does acknowledge that the existential statement applies to "l'individualité d'un Moi, mais aussi quelque chose comme une prémisse, qui lui sert d'antécédent logique, voire psychologique ou *chronologique* (my underlining - W. S.)" (ibid., 222).

[43] Descartes 1984, II, 24; AT VII, 34.

[44] Ingarden 1983, p. 33.

in time"[45]. The first of the two experiences of time discussed by Ingarden in an attempt to clarify the essence of the ego is related to our belief in our own true and durable existence—i.e. substantiality in the sense of Descartes—that accompanies the ego in spite of the simultaneous experience of constantly changing and passing *cogitationes.* "According to the first [experience of time and ourselves in time] it seems that what 'truly' exists is we ourselves; time, on the other hand, is only something derivative and merely phenomenal"[46]. Ingarden carries out a phenomenological analysis of this primary belief in the durability of the ego—that is the basis on which Descartes defines the ego as a substance—citing some more specific arguments to corroborate it.

First, his aim is to clarify the problem of the ego's permanent identity as the main component of that belief. This has to do with experiencing one's own identity that resists change and the passage of time even though it is continuously confronted with them. "In the constant passage and incessant newness of time I continually feel myself to be this same human being and I live in the primordial sensation that I shall remain myself in the future"[47]. This identity corresponds to Locke's transitive unity, coming down to the belief that "in the course of my life I am one individuum"[48].

One remains the same in time, not only in abstraction or as a postulate, but in the sense that "in the course of that very life I remain this same human being, in his full qualitatively invariant, determinate nature"[49]. This means that the "nature" is specific and unique for each individual as Ingarden's use of proper names suggests: "it is this qualification that I call my nature—thus, for each other person, e.g., Adam Mickiewicz or some Joe Doe"[50]. As we can see, Ingarden does not put forward any metaphysical thesis about universal human nature, but works on the basis of first-person and second-person experience of the belief in the specific durability of one's own and other people's individual natures expressed by a set of key qualities that resist the phenomenon of changeability typical of experienced time.

In this light, Ingarden defines the ego as a whole constituted of three components, mutually related moments: (a) the phenomenon of consciousness and conscious experiences which should be contrasted from (b) "psychic states and processes, as well as psychical and physical properties"[51], assuming their indirectly conscious nature, and finally (c) "a certain completely unrepeatable and specific

[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ingarden 1983, p. 33-34.
[48] Ingarden 1983, p. 34.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.

permanent qualification which determines the whole of me as a human being"[52]. Appearing in first person, the "nature" mentioned above provides the foundation for the experience of being oneself: "I feel myself to be a person constituted by this specific nature"[53]. A negative illustration of this concretely experienced identity of the ego is the phenomenon of split personality which represents an effective possibility of the ego's disintegration and, positively, lays bare the constantly renewed "ability to recognize my own self as I was yesterday [...] the feeling of being the self of my actual 'now' and my self of 'yesterday'"[54].

According to Ingarden, profound mental and physical changes, the phenomena of alienation and failure to understand oneself, occurring throughout the life of the ego, are certain variants confirming this "more or less distinctive feeling of being myself, of being the same as I once was"[55]. Conscious experiences, on the other hand, remain the most direct manifestations of the ego, but neither exhaust nor encompass all of human life. "I, as a human being, also appear to be independent of my conscious experiences in the sense that I can *be* even when they are not. [...] I am, in accordance with this feeling, a *lasting or abiding being*, whereas my experiences are merely *transient externalizations* or manifestations of me myself. I alone comprise the source and ultimate substratum of the experiences which on their side are something grounded in me [...] "[56].

It is worth observing that, in this analysis, whose point is to demonstrate the identity as well as autonomy of the ego as something specific for its ontic substantiality, Ingarden reconciles its two understandings, while referring to the classical definition of substance as a substrate or foundation for different properties. He founds this egologically and phenomenologically derived substantiality on the constantly repeated (albeit mundane, common and hence rather overlooked by philosophers) experience of life continuity that cannot be undermined by the transition from consciousness to sleep and vice versa: "After a period of being unconscious or after a dreamless sleep, I awake not only as the same human being that I was prior to falling asleep, but also as someone who existed whilst I was asleep"[57].

Therefore, when accounting for the ego as an independent whole providing a foundation and substrate for different properties, Ingarden says that it is a reality of a higher order compared to the reality of lived experiences or processes: "I am,

[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] ibid., p. 35, 34.
[57] Ingarden 1983, p. 35.

and have the feeling of being, a real entity, real to a higher degree, as it were, than my experiences"[58].

Ingarden eventually links the feeling of ego's existence not with current experiences, but first and foremost with being placed in the experienced world and taking effective action within it. In this sense, Ingarden defines the crucial specificity of the ego as not only having this or that special feature, but also as "really acting": "my action is not consumed in the experiencing itself, but in attacking a certain actuality with my powers"[59].

It is also worth noting that, existing as a durable reality of a higher order, the ego does so in an inter-subjective world to which it lends some of its quality of durability. "It seems to me likewise with respect to other people that they, too, are continually the self-same individuals, though I do not at all thereby ignore what happens to them, nor they change in this way or that as a result"[60]. Next, it is a world of things appearing in a non-theoretical fashion: "with these same houses, streets and cities, yesterday and today, and these same pieces of old furniture surrounding me since my childhood years, known to me in their silence and passivity"[61].

According to Ingarden, the higher order of reality, or rather its transcendence, that is typical of the ego also manifests itself in a specific dynamic relation to time whereby one can turn towards the past and future at will with the possibility of "reviving" them. This relation is not necessarily theoretically-cognitive or contemplative. On the contrary, turning towards the past seems to be woven into existence as it copes with a "burden" that puts specific restrictions on freedom. In line with Ingarden's thesis whereby I am aware of myself on the basis on my constant, albeit not directly perceptible, features that are manifested in action, living existential memory operates primarily in the domain of past actions.

> I (…) live under a distinct weight of the past; I am bound by it to a greater or lesser degree. I bend what I do 'now' to adjust to events and occurrences, which, though they had passed, still were, and which, once having occurred and been revivified by memory, *weigh* on my present. [...] I feel constrained not only because this or that once happened, but because it still exists for me today in some remarkable way […] I simply feel myself bound by, for example, obligations and promises once made. [...] There is a certain special noblesse of my own past, 'qui m'oblige' still today, just as there is a so called 'curse of the past', an anathema of culpabilities long ago perpetrated and past, yet still determining the course of my present life.[62]

[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid., 35-36.
[61] Ibid., p. 36.
[62] Ibid., p. 37.

In this context, Ingarden follows traditional metaphysical terminology to describe something that he calls preservation in being where, in each experience of the present, the past becomes revived and assimilated in a special way, including through efforts to break away from it.

Of course, talking about subjectivity constituting itself in the present, one needs to take account of the subjective inclination towards the future and "living through" it, which, however, should not be equated to Husserl's protention or Heidegger's "being-towards-death" or projection. Ingarden believes that the future is outlined in the present broadly and in many different ways as something awaiting oneself in the form of what can and cannot be anticipated. In the first-person mode this will manifest itself variously as waiting, hope or concern. Thus, Ingarden's transcendence of the ego means being independent from the present through the possibility of reaching towards the future and the past at will and actively.

As I have already mentioned, the ego can experience time in yet another way that stands in stark contrast to the first and leads to a totally different account of time. Ingarden identifies two moments here. First, I am conscious of time as a factor that contributes to the destruction of my existence which, in this light, appears to itself as random and accidental. The experience exposes the frailty of all being (not only myself, but also the entire accessible and experienced world) that can cease to exist at any moment. It is not part of the ego's essence that it must exist; quite the contrary, the ego is contingent on something external, something that precedes it. Importantly, the fact that the two experiences of time are mutually irreducible does not mean that they simply coexist in experience. Instead, one can talk about various forms of time experienced individually and collectively. For example, just as the passage of time is experienced in a special way in decadent historical periods, so too its perception is different depending on the age of an individual.

It is not hard to see that the theme of the accidental nature of the ego which, in spite of its relative autonomy, must be sustained in its existence, is also present in classical metaphysics, including Descartes'. Ingarden makes this thesis more concrete in his analysis of the phenomenon of time perspectives which, within the second meaning of time, means restricting the lived experiences of the subject to the present and stretching the experience between two abysses of nothingness: the past and the future. What this means for the ego is that it cannot free itself and be independent of time.

As I have already mentioned, in the phenomenon of time perspectives, the ego apprehends itself as intertwined with time or, more precisely, it experiences the present in terms of past or future events or as its being-so. Hindsight knowledge about the past compresses and expands time phases, but this should not be treated

as an illusion or a mistake. It is rather a certain egological process of existential importance thanks to which the ego always appears to itself in the aspect of a time perspective, thus retaining its own integrity. By juxtaposing two mutually irreducible temporalities, Ingarden endows his egology with a certain dramatic quality of existence experienced by the ego, calling into question the previously assumed core or stable foundation for the ego's essential features that make it resistant to obstacles and dependent only on its own force of being and actions in the world. Hemmed in by the two abysses of nothingness—both when it comes to the currently experienced and thus absolutely transient present moment and the tension of life that can end at any time—the ego needs a new type of existential knowledge that guarantees the possibility of keeping and ensuring its substantial status.

At this point, Ingarden refers to the phenomenon he developed during his studies into works of literature, namely shortened "time perspectives"[63], in which he sees a direct clash between two different and mutually irreducible experiences of temporality. It may be surprising that Ingarden transposes a phenomenon that has so far been described in the context of literary works onto the very heart of the existential drama of the ego without any explanations or caveats, thereby opening up the possibility of a reverse process whereby a work of art can be interpreted as a non-theoretical source record detailing the experience of one's existence.

The reference to this theory in the remarks concluding the first part of *Man and Time* proves insufficient for the author, though. In the second version published in 1938, Ingarden added Part Three where he writes explicitly about the urgent need to look for self-knowledge that would be "capable of assuring us about the existence and the properties of we ourselves as people transcending experience," admitting, in a rather peculiar way, that he himself is not able to undertake this task[64]. He seems almost to capitulate and back away, mentioning his unpreparedness and the general state of philosophy as an excuse. Nonetheless, he undertakes yet another, albeit "modest", attempt at interpreting the "existing conscious experience" in the temporal aspect where, among the multitudes of considered variants, he appears, on the one hand, to tend towards Bergson's idea of time as a "point-continuum"[65], and on the other, to claim that, in spite of the fact that its structure slips into nothingness, the present does not destroy existence and so does not undermine the order of substantial duration.

[63] see Ingarden 1973, p. 233-242.
[64] Ingarden 1983, p. 42.
[65] Ingarden 1983, p. 44.

In spite of all the previous reservations about the possibility of carrying out proper egological studies, in parts 4-6 that conclude *Man and Time* in its final version published in 1946, Ingarden outlines a positive conclusion based precisely on the existential knowledge he previously postulated and searched for. It requires a rather radical transition to the domain of *praxis* where the relation with the experienced time can be said to take on the form of an existential alternative in the function of authenticity. On the one hand, the experience of being "threatened by [its] passing on and by the unknown nothingness of tomorrow"[66] prompts the ego to adopt various escape strategies, forget and lose itself, which eventually leads to self-destruction or disintegration. In the temporal dimension, when the ego forgets about its own being, it needs to "kill" or fill time in order to detract attention from itself; "[it] neglects [itself]" (ibid.), creating external works or even building an ordered world around itself that only deepens its alienation. This losing of oneself does not only mean subjecting one's life to insignificant and worthless matters—"I 'lose' myself in the insignificance of life's everyday trivia […] spend myself in a deceptive pursuit after illusory values"[67]—but also creates an illusion of overcoming time and preserving oneself in a valuable work "of art, or science, or technical—in this world which is presumably independent of time, and to embody in it [itself], or that which [it] considers best in [itself]"[68]. Another type of an existential attitude adopted in an inauthentic effort to overcome time consists in succumbing to the illusion of modernity that breaks sharply with the past and cultural tradition, considering them obsolete. Ingarden suggests that by reducing and narrowing the world to the "present day," one achieves a false feeling of living "beyond time," and thus fails to realise that "on his tombs, on the ashes of his culture, about which some day no one will any longer know anything, *others* will build their works"[69].

How does Ingarden describe an existence that may be deemed authentic? In contrast to the attitude of escape, the one who "is" does not run but stays "with" himself. For Ingarden, this is equivalent to maintaining and developing a subjective attitude of affection: "by grasping himself through every pain and every joy, and through every effort and victory," keeping "the capability of being moved and enraptured"[70], which needs to be juxtaposed with "the source of an ever renewed

[66] Ingarden 1983, p. 46.
[67] Ingarden 1983, p. 49.
[68] Ingarden 1983, p. 47.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ingarden 1983, p. 46.

unrest"[71] and the possibility of removing it thanks to finding in oneself "the traces of being which is not subject to the passage of time"[72]. This discovery eventually leads to the internal "power of resistance"—"from the beliefs which I fostered, from the attachments with which I lived and from the desires which I tried to realize, is born the power which must be *alive* in me if I am to succeed in accomplishing the deed"[73]—and the knowledge that helps to make a choice with "no reference to ready-made models, external prescriptions or norms, but rather […] according to his own knowledge, grown out of his own deliberate effort"[74]. What this means for Ingarden is that the ego "ha[s] [itself] at [its] command and, in skirmishes with the adversities of fortune [...] shape[s] [its] own self as a continually growing inner power"[75]. This power and the feeling of having it also creates the sense of existential trust necessary "to ground [its] spirit in [itself]"[76].

Let us sum up the egological argument in *Man and Time:* Ingarden takes the Cartesian *ego sum, ego existo*, links it with the thesis about the substantiality of the ego and reflects upon it phenomenologically from the perspective of the first-person experience of one's own uniqueness and identity. He then juxtaposes it with two experiences of time appearing in that perspective. The first of those is the experience of identity that is specific to every ego, identity that resists temporary changes and leads to the thesis of the ego as a permanent being. Providing evidence of the ego's substantiality, this ontic permanence is not abstract and undefined. Rather, it inspires the phenomenological account of the ego as equipped with inner strength to act and create, i.e. transform reality. Here, the substantiality of the ego seems to offer an opportunity to become independent of time which appears to be secondary category. This definition of time stands in contrast to the other definition where the ego experiences itself not only as living in time, but also as being implicated in time or temporarily entangled so that it "carries the burden" of its past and future. Eventually, it becomes overwhelmed by the accidental nature of its existence and the world that it inhabits. Accidentality, randomness and existential frailty of the ego (including the collective ego and, consequently, certain constituted and relatively stable living worlds or civilisations) whose existence may end at any moment, all create the dramatic experience of the ego as located "between two abysses of nothingness."

[71] Ingarden 1983, p. 48.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ingarden 1983, p. 48.
[74] Ingarden 1983, p. 46.
[75] Ingarden 1983, p. 48.
[76] Ibid.

IV. Conclusion

An important feature of Ingarden's method of existential egological studies is his belief in the possibility of approaching classical metaphysical theses from a phenomenological standpoint to make them more concrete and thus give them new meaning. Taking the Cartesian thesis as his point of departure, Ingarden not only contrasts his position from the Husserlian conception of the transcendental ego, inner awareness of time and Brentano's inner perception, but also resists the temptation or formalising or homogenising time in the version suggested by both Kant and Heidegger.

His positive inspiration is Bergson's philosophy of time, idiosyncratically transformed, as a category that is secondary in relation to human cognitive activity. This is opposed to the extra-temporal experience of moments of duration which, as Ingarden believes, should be linked with single performances of free acts that are eventually described in more general and grand terms as a voluntary commitment to the "creation of goodness, beauty, and truth"[77].

The significance of this last expression is that the self-reflexive relation of the subject is not one of narcissistic egoism, but is in fact an attitude of a liberating detachment from oneself. It may be said that Ingarden's egology opens the door for the development of a personalistic-existential philosophy which stems from the experience of the accidentality or finality of existence, but in which the limitation to the present does not destroy the existence of the subject, or does not do so entirely, thanks to the subject's proper, i.e. authentic attitude. In this context, Ingarden diagnoses a specific crisis of philosophy, or even phenomenology, claiming that, in spite of the great number of accumulated studies carried out in many different, specialist areas, the two have little to say about the vital problems of human existence. Although elaborating on the idea seems difficult, it is both urgent and feasible. From that point onwards, descriptions of the phenomenon of the ego's existence are based on new reflections on its authenticity/non-authenticity. On the one hand, this entails focusing on, staying with and building oneself, all of which require maintaining and controlling the "tension of inner effort" and the courage to "forge ahead through effort and exposure to dangers"[78]. On the other, it involves fragmentation, being lost in time and escaping from oneself, which leads to "inner disintegration", "loss of faith", "betraying oneself", "slow breakup" or self-destruction through "extermination of my inner unity"[79]. This can be interpreted as heroisation of the ego, rather typical

[77] Ingarden 1983, p. 51.
[78] Ingarden 1983, p. 49.
[79] Ingarden 1983, p. 49.

of existentialist philosophy, where existential cognition of the ego results from the effort of the will and the ability to face reality during moments of trial. Hence, to exist means to resist becoming lost in time or, more precisely, to resist losing the rhythm of existence that is compatible with one's being and therefore proper.

Ingarden suggests an inward journey from the assertion of the ego's existence to the profound "ego" that, although usually not accessible to cognition, is not demoted to Kantian noumen or reduced to a transcendental structure. Even though it is radically exposed only during key moments of existential trial, this ego remains accessible to the subjective sphere of self-affecting experience of "the greatest treasures of rapture and happiness and aspires to actualize them"[80]. From this perspective, Ingarden perceives the life of the ego, on the one hand, as a continuous process of gathering existential resources, and on the other, as moments of "trial" when the amassed force is unleashed, breaking the bonds of temporal structures and overcoming them by performing, as he writes, free acts in responsibility.

Coming back to the Cartesian theme on which this article is based, I will venture the thesis that Ingarden's egology may be interpreted as one of the most consistently mapped out and phenomenologically modernised Cartesian journeys (from *Rules* to *Passions of the Soul*; from *cogito* to the union of soul and body; from a universal theoretical subject to an individualised ethico-aesthetic subject), a journey that is notable for the way it clarifies and phenomenologically develops the many unthematised ideas present in Descartes in their rudimentary form. These undoubtedly include the figure of madness (Ingarden refers to it through the recurring argument from psychopathology), the transition from sleep to wakefulness or the specification of freedom as a directly fulfilled, first-person experience. It seems that Ingarden's rather radical handling of the existential theme of the ego, whose originality rests in simultaneously retaining and working out the classical theory of substance, corresponds to the direction taken by Descartes in the last period of his thought when he developed the problems of the "third primitive notion". Finally, I believe that the experiment of reading Ingarden's egological fragments in isolation from the entire structure of the ontological "dispute" yields positive results as it opens up new vistas of research into Ingarden's philosophy and may also provide a promising foundation for the philosophical interpretation of Descartes' evolution that took place between his early and late period.

[80] Ingarden 1983, p. 51.

Acknowledgment

The project was held within the research grant on "The Presence of Kazimierz Twardowski's Thought in Early Phenomenology in Poland" financed by the National Science Centre, Poland within the OPUS program (No. 2017/27/B/HS1/02455). I would like to thank Guillaume Fréchette, Marek Piwowarczyk and Witold Płotka for their stimulating comments and suggestions.

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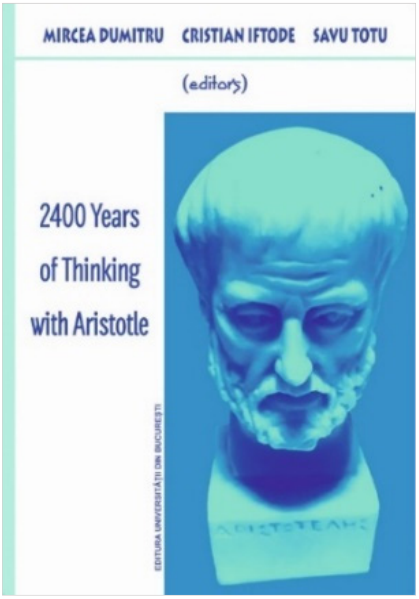
STUDIA UBB. PHILOSOPHIA, Vol. 66 (2021), 1, pp. 213-216
(RECOMMENDED CITATION)

BOOK REVIEW

Mircea Dumitru, Cristian Iftode, Savu Totu (eds.), *2400 Years of Thinking with Aristotle*, Editura Universității din București, București, 2020



Published in 2020 at Editura Universității din București (University of Bucharest Publishing House), the book "2400 Years of Thinking with Aristotle" gathers together the contributions of participants at the International Conference 2400 Aristotle, hosted by Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Bucharest in 2016, celebrating "Aristotle Anniversary Year", announced by UNESCO. This volume represents a generous contribution to the western philosophical cultural, its horizon opening opportunities for a more precisely form of Stagirite's discourse, covering theories and concepts of political philosophy, ontology, logic, ethics, aesthetics, anthropology and cosmology.

The editors Mircea Dumitru, Cristian Iftode and Savu Totu have successfully created a strong and fluid structure of Aristotelian exegesis, each one of the twenty-one articles coming as a consolidation of the whole intellectual character of the paperwork. It is gratifying to see that the Romanian philosophy is updating and highlighting the meaning and destiny of Aristotle's way of reasoning, in a time when the society is facing public approaches of truth full of negligence, superficiality and a wane of inspirational approaches.

In this way, the current volume is marking a fresh shade of the intellectual speech on various sides of reality, a celebration of lucidity, a disclosure of depths, a courageous act emerged as a result of a duty towards our psychological, moral and social manhood. In Aristotelian key, the life of every individual includes the relationship this one has with values, with meanings and its purposes. To a large extend, this capacity to reflect on the meanings of his existence is of a great importance for his own process of individuation, also for his dedication to the world. In so far as the horizon of knowledge is penetrated by the limpidity of pure reflection, the man begins to assert

himself as self-centered, free, self-determined, stimulating *energeia* to become excellency, *entelecheia.*

Being able to recognise the particular shades of reality is not easy and it's not to be done in any conditions. The philosophy of the Stagirite is similar to a rigorous design of concepts where *dynamis* becomes *energeia*, a living organism of reason, *prima materia* for any future step. This freshness and boldness of reason is very much present in this volume. Its editors detach themselves from the corrupt and obscure deep sense, engaging in an original search, often using strong bibliographic resources, relevant for a wider understanding of the great Greek philosopher's mind. I would dare to say that the volume is showing off as an act of awe for the things we forgot ourselves to surprise with. We are turning way too fast the act of philosophizing into a verdict, trying to save resources and to rationalise the tools and effort. The haste replaced the systematic reflection, exactly the one that touches the spirit of the self-thinking reason.

This volume releases the eyesight territory in order to reconsider obsessive interrogations, making them accessible to the reader, challenging him to explore meanings and to engage himself into a free philosophical speech. In this way, the thirst to conquer increases and it can be seen as a sparking technique for mental liberty, free of any biases, meticulously shaped to look for symbolic meanings of the analysed world. The book's guides, passionate and dedicated researchers on Stagirite's philosophy, propose a process rather than a product. Instead of highlighting the accuracy of language in giving a verdict, they are paving the ways towards wisdom with a sincere, responsible wish, like a *pathemata mathemata*, a deepening in itself with the aim to overcome the impersonal, public thinking. Thus, the authors approach, similar to the Greek philosopher's, becomes a purposeful search, and not a mentally comfortable way to publish an anomalous verdict. The tone of research is not indifferent, however is specifically addressed, and the courageous energy manages to fill in the pages of the volume. Therefore, the reader will be pleased to discover various research that belong to philosophers who appreciate the authenticity and the value of Aristotelian contributions for the history of philosophy. We can enjoy a beautiful work on Aristotle's view on philia and substance, contemplation and happiness, a brilliant interpretation of Aristotle's Categories in the Middle Ages of the scholastic theology of Thomas Aquinas, a questioning of Aristotle as a political philosopher, or some interesting studies of his semantics, syllogistics and biology considerations.

The structured logic of all the articles are chasing a well-defined contextual drawing. Thereby, concreteness and coherency rules the volume, and the author's honesty treats and spreads away the anguish of meaninglessness. This small gathering of wisdom lovers resembles the Greeks polis, a living organism, effervescent, governed by specific laws to which existence must participate different parties. The main necessity of this dialectic form is to find what is proprium to the nature of things. The antipodes and the finitude cannot be dissolved, however revealed, lifted to the surface of the mind in order to be discussed, a fundamental feature of the Greeks way of thinking.

The space of thought, so well highlighted in his volume, is that special place in which the philosopher is not dissolved into the black void of abstraction. On contrary, the discretion of reflection is a fortified privacy that opens its gates to the others under the form of a particular cultural destiny. Therefore, in each and every argument we discover a world of logos who puts aside the borrowed metaphors and gained exemplarity. With the aid of different conceptual systems present in this paper, arouses a new essence of truth and a rationality which is revealing itself both vertically- by stepping into all stages of seeking the meanings- and horizontally, containing a various particular expression of exploring knowledge. With Aristotle, it is allowed to move freely into an original way of thinking and it is clearly highlighted the fluidity between physics and metaphysics.

By the way, the authors express the exemplarity of Stagirite's thinking; we can broadly identify the logic core of his speech. It is clear that Aristotle stood out in philosophy as a systematic mind. Each analysis done in the name of science must be developed under the form of an axiomatic system, a kind of geometry in which the analysis and the ordering of elements are part of research's ethos. The methods, premises and the terminology of the Stagirite's philosophy are carefully selected and analysed by the authors, with any skipping stage. In this way, the authors managed to create a frame to reference and a comprehensive approach of a more complex structure of reason.

This is a clear evidence of cognitive efficacy, which allows the reader to easily go in the Aristotelian interests, such as his distinction of categories, the logical syntax of language, the concepts of continuum, time, substrate, form and final cause or the notion of being and that of substance. In this way, the volume touches all the key elements of the Stagirite's interests, like: reality and truth, the meaning of political activity, logic and the structure of science, arts and psychology. Thus, the light of knowledge sparkles, and takes the reader to a deeper personal search of the true nature of things. The methods, the arguments and the conceptual soil of each article leads to a disciplined understanding, released from the pressure of a kidnaped thinking, without any destination.

The Aristotelian reason, successfully represented through the articles of the volume "2400 Years of Thinking with Aristotle" is aiming to foresee its limits and options, its comprehension mechanism and its own freedom territory. We might often encounter questions that, at first glance, seem more ambitious then the mind's capacity to understand. Therefore, we are drawn into a wide range of inquiries by an irresistible force, a kind of strange obsession to go beyond cognition, into a state of logos undressed by impotence and confusion. This mighty mechanism of self-improvement is the core element of Aristotelian destiny of mind. Self-fulfillment is *summum bonum*, and the reason, *prima materia*, is the inducement of conquering the unknown.

Apart from convenience, inertia and volatility, the art of Aristotle's reflection encourage us to research, to become an active part of a well-grounded hermeneutics. This selection of articles makes a strong and useful addition to the literature on Aristotle's range of research, as it brings together the components of a wide research perspective, originally shaped. The stylistics are miscellaneous, technical or narrative, with an obvious

lexical diversity, where rhetorical interrogations are being balanced by stringent arguments, highlighting the true meaning of terms, with a high interest on maintaining a standard intellectual attire.

Fluctuating between critical function, neutral or controversy of the affective message of the articles, this volume manages to go through along with the reader, diverse positions from the presented ideas, without arousing partisanship or ignoring thesis and principles. In this way, the elegant and scientifically expressive note of the paper is maintained, and the stylistic subtlety manages to enrich and ennoble the content of the volume.

What remains after reading this volume is a sincere appreciation for the diligence and effort of each editor and author of structuring their contributions in a set of notions, thoughts and paradigms, orderly, structured and strong fundamented. It is comfortable to know that you can venture to unknown places of self along with partners who can maintain the certainty of a liberating and dignified intellectual path. Obvious as it is, we are troubled at every step by overwhelming and confusing temptations, by humiliating seductions of things, of moments of empty time of ridicule and boredom. The terrible prospect of agony and a sleepwalking personal movement in the world can frighten and overwhelm us alike. Chaotic, indefinite thoughts are always presented to our minds, and getting to know reality is often a difficult task for a distracted mind. It is therefore necessary to enter into a nourishing dialogue with the world of meanings in order to embrace them in a worthy way. The Stagirite's thinking is an oriented one, which wants to get somewhere and it's looking for valid options, well-anchored, to perfect itself. This volume reveals an active participation, full of passion and boldness, in the process of overcoming all the narrative and practical elements that fragment and undermines our possibilities. Last but not least, the volume suggests a conduct released from the pressure of haste and sensationalism, a kind of being specific to the explorer of the unknown, whose quality as a witness of the truth empowers and exalts him.

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