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The Iranian Yearbook of Phenomenology

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The Iranian Yearbook of Phenomenology

Second issue /Volume 2

Publisher

The Iranian Political Science Association/Gam-e-Nou

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The community's two bodies: incorporation and incarnation in the political phenomenology of Marc Richir

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DOI:10.22034/IYP.2021.245801

Abstract

This paper presents some elements of Marc Richir's political phenomenology. Drawing from the Husserlian distinction between Leib and Körper and from the ontology of the flesh sketched in the last works of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Richir proposed a novel reading of the relation between phenomenology, the social, and the political. His project is built upon the distinction between incarnation and incorporation, two forms of embodiment that, while corresponding to the two ways of experiencing One's own body noted by Husserl and Merleau-Ponty, concern not only the embodied subject but also the individuation of the social body. This approach can be read as a radically embodied inquiry into the social and the political that constitutes a phenomenological critique of identitarian essentialism and disembodied universalism. In the first section of the article, I explain the role played by intersubjectivity, subjectivity, and embodiment in Richir's understanding of the process of phenomenalization. The second section is dedicated to his elaborations on the joint sensemaking of the ipse and the community, articulated around the distinction between incarnation and incorporation. In the final section, I outline a possible application of the concepts developed by Richir to the contemporary debate around identity-based politics.

Keywords: Embodiment, Social Body, Identity, Asubjectivity, Francophone Phenomenology.



Introduction

In recent years, the question of embodiment has steadily gained importance in philosophical discussions. In the English-speaking world, this importance is noticeable mainly in the fields of phenomenology and neuroscience, where the influence of Merleau-Ponty's work on the development of the concept is conspicuous (Varela et al., 1991; Gallagher, 2005; Fuchs, 2018). The term "embodiment" can be used to translate both the French expressions "incorporation" and "incarnation." Nevertheless, this equivocal use may lead to the neglect of a critical nuance that exists in the work of some francophone phenomenologists as well as in the foundational works of Edmund Husserl: the distinction of *Körper* and *Leib*, which reappears in *Phenomenology of perception* as the distinction between *corps objectif* (objective body) and *corps propre* (One's own body).

During the final years of his life, Merleau-Ponty began to articulate his philosophy around the concept of the *chair* (flesh), one of the possible translations for the German term *Leib*. The *corps propre* became *corps de chair*, an *incarnate* flesh body that does not exist prior to the world but is continually born with it (co-né)- and within it. The body of flesh is neither a mere object-body among others nor a substance enclosed within itself that acts on a pre-given objective world, but a "field" always open to transformation and re-elaboration (Merleau-Ponty, 1992, p. 239), in a permanent relationship of mutual determination with the world. According to Belgian phenomenologist Marc Richir, it results from a process of incarnation, which must be distinguished from a process of incorporation. This turn's consequences are phenomenological, ontological, and political. The most evident political consequences concern the *alter ego* and community status. This is clearly expressed by Merleau-Ponty's introduction of the concept of "intercorporeity" as a radicalized version of Husserl's intersubjectivity. However, there is another possible political reading of the "ontology of flesh" that, although not explicitly developed by Merleau-Ponty, was built on his theories by Richir. In this article, I offer a glimpse into Richir's phenomenology of the political through his distinction of incarnation and incorporation, expressed mainly in his 1991 book *Du sublime en politique*. I aim to show how Richir's work, iterating the "commonplace in Hellenistic theories of the state, that the state is 'man writ large'" (Taubes, 2009, p. 62), opens new possibilities for the phenomenological thinking of

politics in general and for overcoming the problems of contemporary identity-based politics in particular.

The flesh and the problem of the incarnation

Although traditionally linked to theological discussions, the problem of incarnation became a pivotal question for phenomenology in the first half of the 20th century. While the introduction of the concept to phenomenological inquiries is usually attributed to Merleau-Ponty (who became aware of its philosophical relevance thanks to the influence of Gabriel Marcel), the first outlines of the question can already be identified in the work of Husserl. In the distinction between *Körper* and *Leib*, Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the lived-body or "One's own body" found its primary theoretical basis. Following this distinction, the problem of incarnation, that is, the problem of the individuality and identity of the incarnate subject, became a significant issue for phenomenology. The reflections concerning the ontology of the flesh that followed Merleau-Ponty's seminal investigations consummated the institution of what we, following Natalie Depraz, could call the phenomenological sense of incarnation: "Incarnation, in its phenomenological sense, is a process that accounts for the coming of the flesh into itself, as an originary entanglement of the body and the mind that transforms the first of them from matter-body (*Körper*), not perceived as such and not reflected upon, into flesh-body that perceives itself as flesh, while the other one [the mind] stops being a disincarnate mind, retired in itself and unconscious of itself, and becomes an incarnated mind" (1995, p. 36).

This definition might seem somewhat elliptical to those unfamiliar with Merleau-Ponty's vocabulary and its influence on francophone phenomenology. We could simplify it by revisiting the concept of flesh (*chair*), a keystone of his philosophy. In his unfinished work, *The Visible and the Invisible*, the French philosopher often refers to Husserl's famous example in which the right hand touches the left hand and reveals the twofold way of experiencing One's own body: as an object among others (*Körper*) and as a phenomenal field with its own particular sensations and spatiality, the lived flesh-body (*Leib*). The reversibility of the poles of dichotomies, such as activity and passivity, subject and object, inner and outer, revealed by this analysis constitutes the kernel of Merleau-Ponty's conception of the flesh. In

the last sentence of the manuscript, he asserts that reversibility is “the ultimate truth” (Merleau-Ponty, 1992, p. 155). Besides this radical claim, the original contribution of Merleau-Ponty to what we could call phenomenology (or ontology)[1] of the flesh is the movement by which he extends the reversibility that characterizes the flesh body as one's own body to the totality of the world. As a result, the phenomenological flesh is no longer confined to the individual body. However, it becomes the flesh of the world: “Because our flesh lines and even envelops all the visible and tangible things with which nevertheless it is surrounded, the world and I are within one another [...] Each landscape of my life, because it is not a wandering troop of sensations or a system of ephemeral judgments but a segment of the durable flesh of the world, is qua visible, pregnant with many other visions besides my own” (Merleau-Ponty, 1992, p. 123). The crucial point of the transition from the flesh body to the flesh of the world is, as we will see, the embodied approach to intersubjectivity suggested by the idea that the phenomenological field is “pregnant with many other visions besides my own.”

How is it that “our flesh lines and even envelops all the visible and tangible things with which nevertheless it is surrounded”? This is one of the main topics addressed in a 1994's article by Marc Richir in *Phénoménologie et politique*. The first part of the paper is dedicated to “refounding” phenomenology through a redefinition of the phenomenon. Richir revisits the Husserlian principle of perception by off-shadings (*Abschattungen*) to free it from the metaphysical conception of space that still permeated Husserl's understanding of intentionality. According to Richir, Husserl's conception of intentionality as the relation of a particular profile to the totality of possible profiles that we can grasp imagining an all-encompassing geometrical course around the object is solipsist and still dependent on the ideal of a “thinking which looks on from above” (*une pensée de survol*), i.e., a universal perspective of spatiality detached from embodied facticity. The cohesion of the *Abschattungen* is instead achieved by “the non-manifestation, but nevertheless, phenomenological operativity (*être-en-œuvre phénoménologique*)” of gazes of other concrete human beings that, even if absent from my actual perception, still play a role in its shaping as ontological possibilities in the Heideggerian sense (Richir, 1994, p. 13). The “I can” that characterizes the movement potentialities signaled by Husserl and Merleau-Ponty as the phenomenological basis of any knowledge of the phenomenon

beyond its actual manifestation is made possible by these absent but effective gazes of other flesh bodies.

In other words, it is not the faculty of imagining *myself* observing the thing from all possible points of view that relates the actual perceived profile to the perception of the thing itself, but my capacity of imagining other flesh bodies perceiving the thing, even from points in space that I could never reach. Every perception is, therefore, intersubjective or, as Richir states in a rereading of Patočka, asubjective. The unity of every phenomenon is built upon an unstable cohesion of presence (the actual perception) and absence (the non-manifested profiles of the phenomenon that I nevertheless know to exist). The non-manifested profiles constitute the phenomenon's phenomenality, its excess concerning the positively perceived. The phenomenon is always contingently individuated; its phenomenality is marked by its indeterminacy, just like the existence of the incarnate subject.

Moreover, further, the non-given that accounts for the phenomenality of the phenomenon is not grasped through the conscious acts and potentialities of an individual cogito but through an anonymous embodied subjectivity similar to the One described by Merleau-Ponty in his unfinished manuscript (1992, pp. 139-140). Following Richir's reading, the enveloping of the world by my own flesh and of my own flesh by the flesh of the world occurs due to the indeterminacy and contingency of every phenomenon. This co-implication of the present and the absent, the visible and the invisible, always in a dynamic relation of reversibility, constitutes the *Leibhaftigkeit* of every phenomenon, the flesh of the body and the flesh of the world.

The complexity of the problem of incarnation arises here. In Merleau-Ponty's words, "Where are we to put the limit between the body and the world, since the world is flesh?" (1992, p. 138). While the dethronement of the *cosmotheoros* (the disembodied subject that contemplates the world utterly detached from it) contributes to a better understanding of many of the issues that stem from classical metaphysical dichotomies, it considerably increases the difficulty of apprehending the empirical ego. How is the ego individuated in a flesh world where everything is entangled (*Ineinander*)? How can we distinguish it from the "surface of separation between me and the other, which is also the place of our union" that composes the "inner

framework of intersubjectivity"?[2] These are the leading questions of any inquiry into phenomenological incarnation. Although an extensive exploration of these falls beyond the scope of this paper, we will partially address their political aspects in the remaining sections.

The flesh is, thus, the phenomenological element that allows us to think beyond the strict dichotomies of traditional metaphysics. It accounts for the integrity of body and mind in most of our everyday experiences (gestuality and body language being the most classic examples). Still, it also proposes a new way of understanding phenomenality itself and, through it, the world we inhabit. Depraz's description of incarnation as "the coming of the flesh into itself" can then be comprehended as an allusion to the blurry division between the body and the world in the ontology of the flesh and as an invitation to reflect upon the problem of phenomenological individuation. Since the notion of the "flesh of the world" is inextricably linked to the intersubjective dimension of the world, the question of the incarnation must be understood not only as an inquiry into the phenomenality of phenomena and the relations between the world and phenomenological body but also as a crucial point for the understanding of the political in general and of the embodied collectivity in particular. This last aspect will be treated in the following pages.

Incarnation and incorporation

According to Richir's reading, every phenomenalisation is always intersubjective (*toujours déjà*). Since the intersubjectivity that constitutes the phenomenon is not actual but the anonymous convergence of absent glances of other flesh bodies, he prefers to use the Patockian notion of "asubjectivity." This means that our way of perceiving and experiencing is always already collective. That intersubjectivity is not a problem that shows up after we have built the necessary conditions for experience and knowledge on the isolated subject's grasping of the object. However, it is a precondition for any sense-making. Henceforth, the institution of any possible object of experience is shaped by an "incarnated community" and thus by the political institution of the social.

The ontological significance of the concept of community in Richir's work can be drawn from here. In the words of Ádám Takács, Richir's concept of community refers "to an indefinite realm of

excessively shared worldly situations of experiencing, linked to our being-in-world, within which the individuation of sense precedes and ontologically conditions the individuation of objects and subjects" (2019, p.3). The individuation of objects and subjects is dependent on the sense-making that constitutes the phenomenological matrix of every individuated phenomenon. Although the question of what "sense" means in Richir's phenomenology is too complex to be addressed in this paper³ we can roughly present it as the ever-changing result of the encounter between two irreducible fields: the savage phenomenality and the symbolic institution. The savage phenomenological field accounts for the pre-reflexive ground that provides the affective *hylé* of every phenomenon, the "brut Being (*Être brut*)," at the basis of Merleau-Ponty's later ontology. The symbolic institution is defined by the Belgian philosopher as "the coherent set of symbolic systems (languages, practices, beliefs, representations, techniques, etc.) that frame or configure the being, the atmosphere, the beliefs and ways of thinking of humans without them (deliberately) "deciding" about it" (Richir, 2015, p. 247). These two fields are irreducibly indeterminate and indefinitely open to new elaborations, meaning neither the symbolic nor the phenomenological dimensions are structured by strict causality or rigid chains of unequivocal meaning. It is also important to highlight that, even if the two fields are analytically distinguished in theory, they are always intertwined in our actual experience: there is neither a purely phenomenological nor a purely symbolic experience; there is thought in every phenomenon and phenomenality in every thought. Richir says this is the enigmatic formula of incarnation, being-in-the-world, and phenomenology.

The sense-making at the source of every individuated phenomenon is then partly shaped by sociality. As Takács points out, the community has an ontological relevance that precedes and shapes the phenomenalisation of empirical objects. The individuation of sense appears to us always already framed by the symbolic institutions of our incarnated sociality (our culture in the broadest meaning of the word) in a coherent but contingent way. It is "excessively shared" insofar as there is always "something of the social that emerges in phenomenality" (Richir, 1991, p. 64), something which is not always present to the phenomenological subjects but that operatively founds their intentional disclosure of the world. Nevertheless, this social

institution (*Stiftung*) of sense-making implies an ever-present danger of obliterating the indeterminacy and multiplicity of the phenomenon through its identification with the manifest. This tendency to comprehend the phenomenal dimension correlates to the dogmatic understanding of the symbolic dimension. Richir exemplifies it by extending the two ways of experiencing One's own body to the apperception of other bodies and then to grasping phenomena in general. Richir understands the classical Husserlian distinction of *Leib* and *Körper* as the crystallization of two different ways of making sense of phenomena. The first one is the result of the fortunate encounter (*rencontre*) of the phenomenological and symbolic fields, in which both remain open to their own contingency and mutability of sense. This does not mean that the phenomenon is perceived as a tohubohu of infinite shapeless possibilities but that its individuation keeps the consciousness of its own indeterminacy open by its horizons of absence. This is the process that Richir names "incarnation." As for the phenomenalisation of *Körper*, he presents it as the result of an opposite process, i.e., an unfortunate encounter (*malencontre*) between the symbolic and the phenomenological fields, in which the phenomenal is identified with the manifest and the symbolic is reduced to a mechanical linking of rigid and saturated signifiers. This is what Richir calls "incorporation." The understanding of the human body (either mine or the other's) as an object, the reduction of the phenomenon to its positively observable profiles, and the closure that degrades the symbolic field into a blind system of linear determinations are all the product of the same "failure of incarnation within incorporation" (Richir, 1991, p.115).

Cartesian dualism is one of the most historically significant and philosophically influential forms of incorporation. The conception according to which the body, like all matter, is an inanimate mass that has to be governed by an immaterial, reasonable, self-transparent, free will has indeed been a ubiquitous leitmotiv of modern Western speculation. This strict distinction between the mental and the physical, the source of many persisting philosophical aporias, results from a misunderstanding of the flesh body. The outcome of phenomenological disincarnation, it had (and still has) several political implications as well, such as the reckless exploitation of "natural resources" or the idea of the soul being the master of the body, considered by Richir to be the basis of modern techniques and

discourses about dominion and disciplining of the bodies of others. Nevertheless, the simplistic inversion of the hierarchical relation of mind and body also encounters the same dead ends and perpetuates similar phenomenological reductionisms. Neither the Pythagorean idea of the body as a prison for the soul nor the conviction of the soul being the prison of the body, expressed in the graffiti that Franco "Bifo" Berardi saw in Bologna in 1977 (Berardi, 2009, p.150) manage to overcome the limits that disincarnated dualism sets to philosophical and political praxis, as the contemporary paradigm of domination through affectivity, sexuality, and desire studied by the Italian philosopher shows.

In Richir's terms, the rigid, metaphysical concept of humans derived from Cartesian incorporation is called the anthropological-political institution. It refers not only to the philosophical construction of dualism that we just presented but also to the ideological projection of a universal essence common to all humankind that constitutes the core of most of the political discourses that stemmed from the Enlightenment. The ideological and imperialistic uses of this discourse have mainly been discussed by several authors (Mbembe, 2016; Dussel, 1994; Schmitt, 2006). Besides the aporias we already referred to, its philosophical implications account for an artificial separation of the theoretical and the political or, one may also say, of the theoretical and the practical. Richir notes the consequences of this disjunction in the context of phenomenology when he asserts that "what was missing from phenomenology in order for it to be open to the political was this *epoché* of a *metaphysically predetermined ipse*" (1991, p. 42). The notion of a universal essence or nature of humanity, untouched by time and by the multiplicity of socially institutionalized horizons of sense, entails the split between reified humans and the world that surrounds them, obscuring our understanding of the interplay that constitutes the phenomenality of politics and the political institution of the sense of phenomena. In this sense, although it was projected as the basis of an ongoing process of liberation and conquest of autonomy, the anthropological-political institution turned out to be a new form of metaphysical disincarnation with its own rigid, objectifying conceptualization and the latent risk of its own form of totalitarian despotism.

According to Richir, the institution of the anthropological-political paradigm is the continuation of the theological-political paradigm "by

other means, insofar as it is the perpetuation of the unfortunate encounter that abruptly turns incarnation into incorporation" (1991, p. 119). Elaborating on the work of Ernst Kantorowicz and Claude Lefort, Richir introduces a comparison between the king's two bodies and the two bodies of men (*Körper* and *Leib*) in order to extend his concepts of incarnation and incorporation to the individuation of the *social body*. What, following Lefort, he calls "monarchical incarnation" refers to the symbolic and political unification of the social body through the identification with its king. This process, which relies both on the explicit doctrine of divine right and the "unconscious mediation between the divine and the human" (Lefort, 1986, p. 287) embodied by the king as a supreme individual, can be understood as a form of incarnation when the monarch appears as the figure that makes the concord among humans and the cohesion of political institutions possible, as shown in the famous stories of wise kings. In contrast, the theological-political institution becomes an instance of incorporation when it is embodied by a tyrannical king, following a "despotic affirmation of the head above the bodies" (Richir, 1994, p. 2)[3] that presents itself as unavoidable through a dogmatic affirmation of the identity of the royal and the divine. In this case, the absolute, coercive power of the king descends from the head to the parts of the body (*corporations*) following a pseudo-necessity whose contingency was first revealed by the French Revolution. However, the restructuring of the social body initiated by the revolution failed in establishing the conditions of possibility for an incarnated community insofar as they installed a new rigid system of symbolic institutions based on ideological, reified conceptions of humanity, freedom, people, or democracy. Richir considers the instrumental use of such essentialist notions a blatant sign of demagoguery since the people (*demos*) and democracy can only be incarnated by acknowledging their irreducible indetermination.

Notwithstanding, even if the historical outcome of the French Revolution was a re-establishment of the disincarnated embodiment that stems from phenomenological and political forms of incorporation, Richir claims that the revolution itself remains the indispensable horizon for any modern reflection upon the political. This is because it is the event that indicates the radical contingency of every political institution, the lack of foundation that opens the possibility of indefinite ways of individuation for the incarnated

community. The irreducibly indeterminate but infinitely determinable character of the socio-political institution is revealed by the moments of total indeterminacy of revolutions, in the same way as the contingency and indeterminacy of the phenomenon is revealed by the experience of the Kantian sublime.[4] It is nevertheless crucial not to play into what Richir calls "the transcendental illusion of politics," i.e., the belief that the symbolic institution can be shaped entirely by the will of humans through a supposedly complete command over the political. It is important to recall that we not only actively constitute the social institution of sense but are also passively constituted by it. This means that there will always be an essential part of the phenomenological and symbolic fields that escape our consciousness and our power of transformation. There is neither a mechanical chain of rigid determinations nor a total freedom of voluntary sense-making, but a relation of reversibility and intertwining between the phenomenological and the symbolic, where we have individuated ourselves and where we find a *Spielraum* for interpretative and transformative action.

Essentialism and incorporation: Towards a phenomenological critique of identity-based politics

As shown above, Richir considers that the subject and the phenomena are polifacetic, ever-changing crystallizations of sense individuated through the encounter between the savage phenomenological field and the symbolic institution. The ipseity (Richir prefers to use this term instead of "individuality") of the subject and his understanding of the world are thus embedded in the horizon of sense open by the incarnate community that constitutes the asubjective cohesion of every phenomenalisation. On this basis, following both the Husserlian distinction between *Leib* and *Körper* and the Richirian distinction between incorporation and incarnation, we can begin to sketch a phenomenological-political approach to the problem of identity.

If, as Richir wrote, what hindered the development of a phenomenological exploration of the political was the unquestioned assumption of a metaphysically constituted ego, the dethronement of such a notion must be a central task for any project of political phenomenology. In this sense, the radical questioning of the anthropological-political institution in its Cartesian dualist form and its essentialist ideological form inaugurated by the Belgian

philosopher opens the way to a novel and necessary reading of political issues. If one intends to pursue this phenomenological path, one should consider the critique of the old and new forms of rigid incorporation as a keystone of their endeavor. This brings us to the urgency of a phenomenological critique of "identity." Already noted by Richir himself as a form of disincarnation, mainly thriving in contemporary democracies, it has evolved to be one of the main axes of several ideological discourses of our age. The indeterminacy that should characterize the *demos* and their democracy is degenerated into a conglomerate of identitarian factions cloistered within themselves, in which the individualization and the communitarian horizon of sense-making seem to be mechanistically determined. The challenge that this process bears to any perspective of authentic democracy, that is, of a phenomenologically and politically incarnated community, was highlighted by Richir in 1994 when he wrote that "it is thus, today, in what it is still agreed to call "democracy," that identifying and determining incorporations proliferate more than ever, and the question of communitary incarnation becomes all the more crucial" (1994, p. 26). Suppose openness to indetermination and recognition of its own contingency are the pillars of any democratic incarnated community. In that case, these forms of identifying incorporation are relevant in a simultaneously phenomenological and political sense since they determine both phenomena' sense-making and political praxis dynamics from a rigid, mechanistic perspective. A few elements for their critique shall occupy the last pages of this paper.

What is an identifying and determining incorporation? It refers to the process of individuation resulting in a form of subjectivity that relies on an ensemble of specific properties, which supposedly constitute its essence and delimit its opening to sense. These properties can be linked to physiological determinism or symbolic essentialism. Still, in both cases, they are meant to provide a fixed characterization of the ipse and its being in the world. From a strictly phenomenological point of view, such a form of incorporation obliterates the grasping of phenomenality since, in a certain way, the horizon of sense is always already decided by the subject's identity. From a classically political point of view (understanding politics as what concerns the organization of the *polis*), it hinders the construction of a shared space insofar as it encloses individuals in hermetic, inward-oriented groups motivated solely by particular

interests. The militant revindication of rigid conceptions of particularities finds its most vehement expressions in xenophobic movements such as European Identitarianism. Still, it is also present in left-leaning organizations based on identity politics.

Nevertheless, it would be mistaken to think that identifying incorporations can only be based on revindications of particularity. As we suggested in the preceding section, the essentialist universalism defended by some humanist discourses can also fall into the same determinism and, ironically enough, even more, violent xenophobia since the unilateral postulation of a supposedly universal core of humanity turns all the human beings that do not fit in it into "inhumane" or even "enemies of humanity." From a phenomenological-political point of view, both the particularist and the universalist forms follow the same process of essentialist incorporation. Any project of communitary incarnation should therefore challenge them.

It is crucial to clarify that rejecting identity-based politics and rigid forms of identifying incarnation does not imply refusing the political and phenomenological relevancy of the physical and symbolic factors composing empirical identities. Overlooking the role played by factors such as ethnicity, gender, or religion in every subject's understanding of themselves, their bodies, and the world would fall into an undeniable case of metaphysical disincarnation. In a certain way, it would be a form of the abstract, universalist form of incorporation defined by Richir as the anthropological-political institution. What the project of an incarnated community strives for is instead a recognition of particularities that, while acknowledging their constitutive role in every political praxis and everyday theoretical sense-making, also uncovers their historical and phenomenological contingency, thereby avoiding any essentialist stagnation and repudiating any ideological or commercial instrumentalization. Identity is understood more as an ideologically imposed elucidation of the embodied subject and its possibilities than as an insurmountable determinism of subjectivity. In other words, an incarnated perspective considers the elements associated with identity as radically contingent, as partial determinations that, while effective, do not close down the possibilities of other forms of experience and sense-making that go beyond the horizon assigned to a particular identity. In this sense, it is closer to the perspective deployed by Fanon in *"Black Skin, white masks"* than to the idealistic conception of a transcendental subject

completely detached from material, socio-political and historical determinations.

The role played by the embodiment in the structure of experience and in the constitution of the political world can thus be approached in at least two forms, one corresponding to what Richir named "incarnation" and the other to what he named "incorporation." Making this distinction seems, as Richir wrote, especially urgent in the current political landscape, in which rigid forms of incorporation are fostered by demagogue politicians and capitalized by marketing strategists, blocking any possibility of constructing common spaces for encounter and dialogue indispensable to a genuine, incarnated democracy. The importance of embodiment for the political must be revindicated but in a radically anti-essentialist way. As the Brazilian philosopher Vladimir Safatle puts it, "we don't need politics without a body, since there is no such thing as politics without a body. What we really need is the possibility of incarnation forms that are radically non-identitarian" (2015, p. 70). Richir's work on the concept of "incarnation" seems to offer such a possibility, as it proposes an understanding of politics centered on the body that strongly rejects imaginary forms of incorporation and the multiple strains of ontic dogmatism or cultural essentialism that stem from them. The phenomenological perspective on the political that could be built upon the Belgian philosopher's work would, in some aspects, resemble the elaborations on culture and identity provided by Latinamerican authors such as Bolívar Echeverría (2000) and Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui (2018). Both the baroque ethos analyzed by Echeverría and the ch'ixi approach to culture and identity that Rivera Cusicanqui draws from the Aymara tradition is characterized by a nonfixed conception of sociality and subjectivity, composing a *Lebenswelt* (Echeverría uses the Husserlian term) conscious of its own contingency and open to the permanent influence of alterity in its sense of self. The radical indeterminacy of the ipse and the incarnate community that in Richir's work might appear too abstract finds in the conceptualizations of these authors a social and historical concretion.

The inquiry into the possibility of communitarian incarnation implies a calling into question our notions of ipseity from a phenomenological perspective. The correlated phenomenalisation of the embodied subject and the sense-making of the world, presented in the work of Richir as the joint individuation of the ipse and the social

body through the symbolic institution, opens possibilities for the overcoming of both the universalist program of disembodied politics and the identitarian essentialism based upon rigid forms of incorporation. The indeterminacy, contingency, and reversibility that constitute the incarnated subject and the utopian incarnated community enable the configuration of a radically anti-identitarian relation to embodiment and communitary sense-making. The word "utopian" here does not mean "illusory" but refers to the ultimately unattainable goal of instituting a political body free of any form of rigid incarnation and completely conscious of its own contingency. This unattainability, Richir writes, should not inspire discouragement but constitute the source of a permanent movement of critique and recreation of the social body. The fact that the incarnated community is ultimately unattainable should serve as an antidote to demagogic reifications that intend to turn the horizon of political praxis into an ideological object, perpetuating "the unfortunate encounter that abruptly turns incarnation into incorporation." Thus, we could conclude our considerations by drawing a line of convergence between the endless striving towards an incarnated form of community and the "prayer" with which Frantz Fanon ends *Black skins, white masks*: "O my body, make of me always a man who questions!" (1986, p. 232).

Conclusion

The field that Merleau-Ponty opened to phenomenology in his latest works offers a new understanding of the relationship between the body and the world. The intertwining of the flesh body and the flesh of the world implies a new way of making sense of the relation between the embodied subject, the phenomena, and the social milieu constituted by multiple other embodied subjects sharing a horizon of sense and experience. The embodied subject is not *in front* of the world but *inside* it, interwoven. World and embodied subjectivity are born together (co-nées) in an evergoing sense-making process. The further elaborations of Merleau-Ponty's work undertaken by Marc Richir distinguish two possible ways of relating to this joint individuation of sense: incarnation and incorporation. While the first One refers to a form of phenomenalisation that remains open to its own indeterminacy and conscious of its own contingency, the last one names the symbolical dogmatism that stems from a rigid, reductionist

grasping of the body and the phenomena. In both cases, the role played by sociality in every phenomenalisation through the symbolic institution is fundamental. It accounts for the socially instituted symbolic framing of the "savage" phenomenological field. It acknowledges the reciprocity between the political implications present in phenomenalisation and the phenomenological content at the basis of every political praxis.

This conceptual basis allows us to approach the constitution of the political world from a phenomenological perspective that articulates the phenomenalisation of the embodied ipse and the sense-making of the world. The distinction between incarnation and incorporation sketches new possible ways of discussing the question of identity and cultural essentialism without recurring to the disembodied notions of abstract universalism. The unending movement of questioning that motivates this critique is oriented by the utopian horizon of the incarnated community, which, irreducibly indeterminate, cannot become a defined object of ideology without stagnating into a new form of metaphysical incorporation. The recognition of the importance of the body in politics and of the influence of politics in our relation to the body can undoubtedly be fruitful for phenomenology, just as the emphasis given to indetermination by specific phenomenological approaches can contribute to the radically anti-identitarian and anti-essentialist praxis that seems urgent in today's political landscape. The project of a political phenomenology delineated in the work of Marc Richir could hence lay the groundwork for a third way that avoids both disincarnated abstract universalism and essentialist, self-contained identitarianism.

Endnotes

1. In one of his 1953 courses published under *Le monde sensible et le monde de l'expression*, Merleau-Ponty declared that he did not make any difference between phenomenology and ontology. This position is position, among many others that show Merleau-Ponty's approach to ontology, is quoted by Emmanuel de Saint Aubert in *Vers une ontologie indirecte: Sources et enjeux critiques de l'appel à l'ontologie chez Merleau-Ponty*, Vrin, Paris, France, 2006.
2. Merleau-Ponty, 1992, p. 234. An interesting inquiry into this problem based on the works of Marc Richir can be found in Itsván Fazakas, *Le clignotement du soi: Genèse et institutions de l'ipséité*, Mémoires des Annales de Phénoménologie, N. XII, Dixmont, France, 2020.
3. A systematic exploration of this question can be found in Alexander Schnell, *Le sens se faisant: Marc Richir et la refondation de la phénoménologie*, Ousia, Brussels, Belgium, 2011.
4. The importance of the Kantian sublime for grasping phenomena' phenomenality is central to Richir's thought. A concise synthesis of this approach is presented in the introduction to *Phénomènes, temps, êtres : phénoménologie et ontologie*, Jérôme Millon, Grenoble, France, 1987.

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From transcendental phenomenology to phenomenological sociology

Alfred Schütz and the social sciences

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DOI: 10.22034/IYP.2021.245798

Abstract

This work aims to demonstrate that Alfred Schütz's contribution to the social sciences is understandable only within the framework of his troubled relationship with Husserl's phenomenology. We will see how Schütz tries to take charge, to face and resolve a good part of the critical issues present in Husserl's work, and, above all, to make a turning point in the field of investigation of phenomenology which will prove decisive for the human sciences as it will focus his attention on the question of intersubjectivity, considered no longer as a problem concerning only the phenomenological sphere but as a fundamental category of human existence. Therefore, we will try to show how Schütz's path assumes a considerable critical value as it contributes to raising the expectations of sociology and strengthening the confidence of this discipline which tends to go beyond the narrow boundaries outlined by Husserl and go in a direction diametrically opposite to "The Crisis of European sciences" outlined by the father of phenomenology since Schütz provides stable and adequate bases for the social sciences that allow analyzing the fundamental structures that support the social World, and, in this way, at the same time, he manages to safeguard the basic nucleus of the phenomenological discipline, since, stripped of metaphysical lure and devoid of verbal and oracular enchantments, it is traced back to the Husserlian idea of rigorous science. From this point of view, Schütz's merit lies primarily in having made a critical revision of phenomenology by initiating a broad debate on the role of the social sciences and providing the first ideas for the foundation of a phenomenologically oriented sociology.

Keywords: Schütz, Husserl, phenomenology, sociology, intersubjectivity.



In the shadow of phenomenology

Among the scholars who contributed to the development of Husserl's phenomenology beyond the mere philosophical sphere, opening it to contamination with other disciplines, a particular place is occupied by Alfred Schütz (1889-1959)[1]. Born in Vienna, he studied economics and law, graduated with Hans Kelsen, met Husserl several times, and participated in the Vienna phenomenological circle meetings. Before the Nazi invasion, he left Austria. He lived in Paris until 1939 before moving permanently to the United States, where, from 1943 to 1959, he taught at the Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research in New York. Schütz was essentially a theorist of the social sciences and the founder of phenomenological sociology, that is, an approach to sociology in which elements of Weber's thought and Husserl's thought come together in an original synthesis, such as the aspect relative to the epistemological assumptions of the social sciences and the question of intersubjectivity, that is, the complex of structures and relations that exist between human subjects. Schütz tries to face and solve a good part of the criticalities present in Husserl's work and, above all, he implements a shift in the field of investigation of phenomenology that will prove decisive for the human sciences since he has always conceived his work as a contribution to the clarification of the fundamental concepts of the social sciences through the study of the forms of intersubjective constitution of reality.

By discovering the constitutive meaning of intersubjectivity, which Schütz no longer considers as a phenomenological question but as a fundamental category of human existence, the object par excellence of phenomenology becomes the social phenomenon. Husserl himself had seen in Schütz's work an attempt to find the origin of the categories of social sciences in the fundamental facts of the life of consciousness. In a March 3, 1932 letter, Husserl declared himself anxious to meet with a «serious» phenomenologist.[2]. His work acquires a significant critical value and, above all, contributes to raising the hopes of phenomenology in that it leads it to go beyond the narrow boundaries outlined by Husserl and, at the same time, to push it in a direction opposed to the “The Crisis of European Sciences” outlined by the father of phenomenology, because it seeks to provide a solid and practical foundation for the social sciences, that allows him to highlight the constructs and plots within which the social World

unfolds and in this way, Schütz manages to save the core of the phenomenological discipline, because it, free of verbal enchantments and free from metaphysical and oracular temptations, is brought back to its essential simplicity of rigorous science. Schütz has always conceived his work as a contribution to elucidating fundamental concepts of the social sciences by studying the intersubjective forms of construction of reality. In this regard, Thomas Luckmann, who edited and organized, based on the material left by Schütz, the text on which the philosopher was working in the last phase of his life, *Die Strukturen der Lebenswelt*, has defined Schütz's work as «the continuation and the first remarkable realization of the program advanced by Husserl in his *Krisis* in the field almost entirely unknown to Husserl of the problem of social sciences.»[3]. The importance of Schütz's theoretical work lies precisely in its originality concerning Husserl's thought because it opens the way and proceeds along a path, that of social sciences, which Husserl had escaped, or to which he had only remotely hinted at, partly because of his inadequate knowledge of this subject, because of his inability to solve the problems related to the question of solipsism and intersubjectivity. The new solution proposed by Schütz will consider intersubjectivity as not a problem concerning only the strictly phenomenological sphere but as a fundamental category of human existence. Then, thanks to Alfred Schütz's cartographic work, which redraws the layout and map of social sciences, they can expand their investigation territory and overcome their own narrow boundaries, ending up investigating and analyzing the World of all human experiences in their entirety. This work aims to reconstruct the theoretical path of Alfred Schütz and his comparison with Husserl to highlight how the Viennese philosopher contributed to extending the phenomenological method from the philosophical to the social sciences, opening the way to phenomenological sociology.

Schütz's encounter with phenomenology

Alfred Schütz has been confronted with Husserl's thoughts since the 1930s. The encounter with phenomenology marks the beginning of a path of analysis and revision of the central concepts in Husserl's philosophy and, above all, the question of transcendental intersubjectivity. The analysis of this theme occupies Schütz's reflection for a period that lasts approximately twenty-five years, and

the problematic confrontation with Husserl's positions, at times, leads to polemical tones towards the father of phenomenology. In his first work, *Der sinnhafte Aufbau der sozialen Welt* (Schutz, 1932), Schütz examines the questions relating to the problem of understanding the other analyzed by Husserl in formal and transcendental logic. In this work, Husserl brought the question of the alter Ego back into the context of the transcendental Ego and considered that the alter Ego had a fundamental role in giving the Ego a concrete meaning to the World (Husserl, 1974,9). Schütz is fully aware of the importance of Husserlian analysis both as regards the epistemological field and for possible and future development of the social sciences. However, he believes that Husserl, while providing exciting insights, could not solve the problem of intersubjectivity. According to him, the focus of the question must be shifted: intersubjectivity and, with it, the recognition of otherness must be analyzed not in the transcendental sphere but in that of the Social World of the naive and natural vision of the World, that is, within the sphere of the individual who lives in the natural attitude. Therefore, it is necessary to put aside Husserl's transcendental analysis and tackle the question of intersubjectivity employing phenomenological psychology, that is, a psychology of pure intersubjectivity, a phenomenology constitutive of the natural attitude.

However, at this stage of his thought, Schütz does not take critical positions nor express negative judgments towards the Husserlian conception of transcendental intersubjectivity. It will only start from the early 1940s or the American period when doubts take on consistency. Schütz develops his criticism (Muzzetto, 1997, p. 29) against Husserl. However, it should be noted that in 1932, in a letter addressed to Felix Kaufmann, after meeting with Husserl, he had stated that he had «serious doubts» about things that «seemed to him, before, completely established» (Wagner, 1978, p. 47). The critical tension towards phenomenology also animates one of the first essays published in the United States, *Phenomenology and Social Sciences*. In this work, Schütz recognizes the importance of Husserl's thought for the social sciences and the foundation of « a constitutive phenomenology of the natural attitude» (Schütz, 1962a, p. 138). After a brief analysis of the question relating to the status and future of phenomenological philosophy, the essential aim of which is «to be a philosophy of man in his life-world and to be able to explain the

meaning of this life-world in a rigorously scientific manner» (Schütz, 1962a, p. 120).

Schütz's attention focuses on the question of intersubjectivity and on the examination of some critical issues that emerge in the Fifth Meditation. In this meditation, Husserl brought intersubjectivity back into the context of «pairing» (*Paarung*), that associative process in which two different elements form a couple and are recognized as similar. This concept, which Husserl uses to investigate the enigmatic structure of the stranger and otherness concerning the living body of the other, is clarified in paragraph 51 of the Fifth Meditation. In this paragraph, Husserl tries to indicate the characteristic of the analogical understanding according to which a body is received within my primordial sphere as my own organic body, which is always also a physical body. He states that the Ego and the alter Ego are always and necessarily given in an original coupling. This coupling is an original form of that passive synthesis which, as opposed to the passive synthesis of identification, is designated as an association (Husserl, 1950, § 51). Schütz has serious doubts he deduces on the Husserlian conception of pairing. The main problem concerns the other psychological subjects reached by the Ego through this associative process. They, in fact, «are not merely related using associative pairing to my psychophysical being in their capacity as being bodily opposite me.» The others are in a relationship with the Ego through «an objective equalization» or «a mutual interrelatedness of my existence and that of all Others.» Indeed,

As the body of the Other is appresented by me as an Other, my body is experienced by the Other as his Other, and so forth. The same thing obtains for all subjects, that is, for this open community of monads which Husserl has designated as transcendental intersubjectivity (Schütz, 1962a, p. 126).

In this work, on the one hand, a first recognition of the problems resulting from the Husserlian conception of intersubjectivity emerges and, on the other hand, Schütz's partial detachment from Husserlian phenomenology based on the awareness that a «critique of the Husserlian establishment of the transcendental, subjectivity, against which, in my opinion, certain important objections can be raised, must wait for another publication» (Schütz, 1962a, 124, footnote).

Over the years, Schütz returns to confront Husserl several times, and his attention shifts more and more towards a critical analysis of the Fifth Cartesian Meditation. In the 1942 essay, *Scheler's theory of intersubjectivity and the general thesis of the alter Ego*, Schütz dwells once again on this meditation and the question of solipsism.

Husserl, for example, clearly sees the imminent danger of solipsism as the consequence of transcendental reduction. He tries courageously to “light up this dark corner, feared only by children in philosophy because the specter of solipsism haunts it” and offers a solution to the alter ego problem in the fifth of his *Méditations Cartésiennes* (Schütz, 1962b, p. 165).

For Schütz, solipsism occurs immediately after the execution of the transcendental reduction. In this case, the subject who carries out the reduction isolates his particular sphere within the transcendental dimension and removes all the activities related to the subjectivity of the Others. This occurs through a procedure based on abstraction from all the meanings that refer to the Others and subtraction of the character of intersubjectivity from the surrounding Nature. Thus, Nature is a world no longer common to everyone but a private dimension. Within this dimension, through the passive synthesis, some objects emerge that are interpreted as similar to my own body and therefore understood as other people's bodies. In this way, the Other is constituted within my monad as an Ego that is not my Ego but a second, an alter ego. Schütz's objection hinges on the fact that in the process of transcendental reduction, the subject, by eliminating any reference to other egos from his consciousness, becomes a windowless monad, as Husserl emphasized in the Fifth Meditation. The conclusion reached by Husserl in this meditation is that of a universe of monads, a cosmos populated by separate entities, isolated and without the possibility of communicating and understanding each other. Schütz recognizes that, in this way, it is not clear whether intersubjectivity is a question concerning the dimension of the transcendental sphere or whether it belongs to that of the World of life (Schütz, 1962b, p. 166).

The comparison with Scheler and the general thesis of the Alter Ego

To overcome the problems that emerged with the question of solipsism faced by Husserl, Schütz proposes to put aside the transcendental problems and direct his attention towards Scheler's thought. In the essay *Scheler's Theory of Intersubjectivity and the General Thesis of the Alter Ego*, Schütz exposes «Scheler's own theory of understanding the Other.» This theory, called by Scheler «Wahrnehmungstheorie des fremden Ich,» is based on the fact that

As man remains entangled in his bodily feelings, he cannot find an approach to the Other's life. Nobody can seize the Other's bodily feelings. Only as a Person can he access the other Persons' streams of thought. However, the Person is not the I. The Person and his acts can never be objectified. It is the I which always is objectifiable. Moreover, as no intentional reflections upon the Person and his acts are possible, the other Person's acts can be seized only 'by co-performing, pre-performing, and re-performing them (Schütz, 1962b, p. 164).

Schütz takes up Scheler's distinction: the I-we experience belongs to the dimension of thought, while the Person manifests itself only through the acts in which he lives and experiences himself. The primary purpose of Scheler's theory of the perception of the alter Ego is to emphasize that intersubjectivity is based on an interactionist rather than a theoretical dimension and that the Ego always has a social nature (Di Chiro, 2020, p. 200). Indeed, according to Schütz, for

According to Scheler, the belief in the existence of alter egos is not based on acts of theoretical cognition. A person-like being, capable of all kinds of emotional acts such as love, hate, will, etc., but incapable of theoretical acts - i.e., objectifying cognitions - would not at all lack any evidence of the existence of Others. The "essentially social feelings" alone are sufficient to establish the scheme of reference of society *as* an ever-present element of his consciousness (Schütz, 1962b, p. 158).

Thanks to Scheler, Schütz comes to recognize that in the beginning, man lives in the experiences of others rather than in his individual sphere, and this, therefore, implies a priority and precedence of the sphere of We concerning the sphere of the I. This discovery of the

primacy of sociality will allow Schütz to overcome Husserlian transcendentalism and formulate his general thesis on the existence of the alter Ego (Cusinato, 2015, p. 5).

In this regard, he identifies and distinguishes two different attitudes: one which consists in living in our acts, turned towards the objects of our acts, and the other which consists of a reflexive attitude, through which we move towards our acts by understanding them through other acts. They both have a time structure. As for the first attitude, we live in our present and are directed towards the immediate future that we anticipate with our expectations. These expectations, called protensions by Husserl, belong to our present action and nevertheless refer to our immediate future (Schütz, 1962b, p. 172)). The present with which these protensions have to do is defined by Schütz, taking up James and then Mead as «a specious present,» or even a «vivid present,» specifying that living in this dimension means living in our acts (Schütz, 1962b, p. 158)[4]. In this way, we cannot approach the sphere of our Self, of our course of thought, without a reflexive act of return. However, Schütz continues, through the reflexive act, we never grasp the specious present, but only and exclusively the past. «The whole present, therefore, and also the vivid present of our Self, is inaccessible for the reflective attitude» (Schütz, 1962b, p. 173). We can only grasp the course of our thinking and our last experience. «In other words, self-consciousness can only be experienced *modo praeterito*, in the past tense» (Schütz, 1962b, p. 173).

The situation is different, however, as regards the second attitude. Among the objects we experience in the vivid present are the acts and thoughts of others. Schütz considers the case of our participation in a conference: if we listen to a lecturer, we seem to participate directly and without mediation in his speech. As we listen,

our attitude in doing so differs from that we adopt in turning to our own stream of thought by reflection. We catch the Other's thought in its vivid presence and not *modo praeterito*; we catch it as a "Now" and not as a "Just Now." The Other's speech and our listening are experienced as a vivid simultaneity (Schütz, 1962b, p. 173).

I can understand and grasp the Other's course of thought, that is, the subjectivity of the alter Ego in its vivid present. In contrast, I can grasp my own Self only in the modality of reflection on its past. That

is why we can define the concept of alter Ego. In Schütz's words, «the alter ego is that subjective stream of thought which can be experienced in its vivid present» (Schütz, 1962b, p. 174). To highlight this, we must not artificially stop the Other's course of thought: «It is simultaneous with our own stream of consciousness, we share together the same vivid present - in a word: we grow old together» (Schütz, 1962b, p. 174). The general thesis of the existence of the alter Ego is based on the fact that I understand that the Other is, like me, capable of thinking and acting, that his course of thought is connected with mine, that his life of conscience has the same temporal structure as mine, the same experiences of reflections and protensions, and that all the phenomena of memory and attention are connected with their changes and that the Other «has the genuine experience of growing old with me as I know that I do with him» (Schütz, 1962b, p. 174). Schütz recognizes that the general thesis of the alter Ego is fundamental for the social sciences, since all our possible knowledge of the Social World, even in its most anonymous and remote phenomena and in the most diverse types of social communities, «is based upon the possibility of experiencing an alter ego in vivid presence» (Schütz, 1962b, p. 175). This thesis on the existence of the alter Ego will allow Schütz the definitive detachment from Husserl and the overcoming of the question of solipsism on which the reflection of the father of phenomenology had stalled.

The farewell from Husserl and the resolution of the question of intersubjectivity

Schütz returns several times to the Husserlian conception of transcendental intersubjectivity. However, after the essay on Scheler, he decides to talk about this issue only through correspondence with friends and colleagues (Sanna, 2007, p. 67) as he had always shown a certain reluctance to publicly express his disagreement with Husserl's work (Muzzetto, 1997, p. 32). In the correspondence, intersubjectivity seems to merge, once again, with that relating to solipsism. In fact, in a letter to Eric Voegelin, Schütz affirms that Husserl's transcendental phenomenology does not succeed in getting out of transcendental solipsism and that Husserl, starting from the intent to describe the constitution of the World of experience, ends up proposing the creation of the World by an Ego transformed into God (Wagner, 1978,

pp. 311-316). Schütz, therefore, after the essay on Scheler, appears increasingly convinced to address the question of the origin of intersubjectivity no longer in the transcendental sphere but in that of the World of everyday life. The critical comparison with Husserl is also present in two other essays: *Sartre's Theory of Alter Ego* and *Edmund Husserl's Ideas, Volume II*.

In the first essay, Schütz focuses on Sartre's criticisms of Husserl. Sartre, despite the recognition of the innovative aspect of the theory of intentionality and the contribution that the theory of the alter Ego makes to the constitution of the empirical World, believes that Husserl has not managed to avoid solipsism as his phenomenology of intersubjectivity it limits itself to understand the otherness of others only through the cognitive modality without taking into account the ontological and existential one: «The Other does not have to be grasped as an object of our cogitations, but in his existence “for us” as affecting our actual concrete being.» (Schütz, 1962c, p. 188). Furthermore, for Schütz, «Sartre is right in stating that in terms of Husserl's philosophy, the problem of the Other could be explained only as a relationship between transcendental subjects» (Schütz, 1962c, pp. 194-195). From the examination of Sartre's positions, for Schütz, a question emerges that

Is the most challenging problem of phenomenology - perhaps an insoluble one - to reconcile the transcendental Ego as the source of the constitution of the World with the idea of a plurality of coexistent transcendental subjects (Schütz, 1962c, p. 195).

and above all, the awareness that the problem of alter Ego constitutes the crucial point of any transcendental philosophy.

As for the second essay, Schütz focuses, here, too, on the problems that remained unsolved in Husserl's philosophy. The work opens with a question relating to Husserl's failure to publish the second volume of *Ideas*. Schütz, in this regard, declares Husserl himself, in 1934, had confided to him that «he left the second volume of the *Ideas* unpublished because he had not at that time found a satisfactory solution for the problem of intersubjectivity, which he believed to have achieved in the fifth Cartesian Meditation» (Schütz, 1970a, p. 17). He further acknowledges that almost all the basic concepts of transcendental phenomenology have undergone a radical change during the period in question, that this change is due to the attempt to

refute solipsism, and above all, that Husserl's battle against solipsism represents «a significant phase of a work in progress, the more significant as the topics treated therein are of decisive importance for the foundation of the social sciences. It is a transitional phase in the development of phenomenology» (Schütz, 1970a, p. 18). The observations on Husserl's work are crucial and occupy a place of extraordinary importance in Schützian architecture as they will form the basis for a subsequent reflection that will be exposed in an essay from 1957, *The Problem of Transcendental Intersubjectivity in Husserl*, which constitutes the sum of his confrontation with Husserl and which establishes his detachment from transcendental phenomenology. Schütz, in this work, takes stock of his confrontation with the fundamental questions of phenomenology, starting from the assumption that the problems of intersubjectivity are fundamental for the whole system of transcendental phenomenology.[5], but, above all, it is interesting to know if the results of the phenomenological constitutional analysis apply to all social sciences (Schütz, 1970b, p. 55).

For Schütz, the question of intersubjectivity was already addressed by Husserl in the first volume of the *Ideas* on the occasion of the analysis of natural attitude. In this case, however, Husserl limited himself to assuming that the other egological subjects I meet in my surrounding World have the same awareness of the World and that they and I can communicate and understand each other. Schütz, however, points out that the theme of intersubjectivity is only hinted at and not developed in the first volume of the *Ideas* since Husserl intended to reserve these investigations for the second volume. In his *Nachwort zu meinen "Ideen,"* Husserl knew that the first volume of the *Ideas* had several gaps concerning the problem of transcendental intersubjectivity and the question of solipsism. His analysis, therefore, focuses on Cartesian Meditations, underlining how the difficulties related to the problem of solipsism and intersubjectivity present in this work contribute to questioning the fact that Husserl's attempt to develop a transcendental theory of the experience of Others was successful.

Specifically, Schütz, after a brief analysis of the first meditations, dwells on the Fifth Meditation and the second epoché, which must be performed within the egological sphere, which is, in turn, the result of a previous phenomenological reduction. This second epoché, which tends to divide everything that belongs to the Ego from everything

that is not, involves a series of problems that are not easy to solve. First, it becomes difficult to identify what belongs to the Ego. Secondly, the concept of what belongs to the Ego, from which abstraction must be made, changes considerably. Furthermore, referring to Eugen Fink's essay, *Die Phänomenologische Philosophie Edmund Husserl in der gegenwärtigen Kritik* (Fink, 1933, 368). Schütz emphasizes the need to make a distinction between the «three types of ego involved in phenomenological reduction»: 1) the mundane Ego; 2) the transcendental Ego; 3) the detached observer who performs the epoché (Schütz, 1970b, p. 60).

Another topic discussed concerns the constitution of the Ego of the Other within the primordial sphere and the mechanism that leads to conferring the sense of the living body to another body. By observing reflexively our experience of subjective otherness, we see that the other is in front of us in flesh and blood, but this does not mean that he presents himself to us with his experiences since if it were directly accessible, it would not be other than a moment of my own life of conscience. Therefore, we experience the other, but we experience him precisely as another ego, a consciousness we have no immediate access to, unlike ours. To avoid that, the other is experienced only as an undue extension of my consciousness and, therefore, not as something else but only as a part of me; the experience of the other must be based on what Husserl calls a specific indirect intentionality. According to Husserl, this mediated character of intentionality, by which I experience a consciousness other than mine, therefore without being able to reduce it to my stream of consciousness, is given by the fact that the alter Ego manifests itself, enters my life of experience, announcing in it another life of conscience that remains to me, yet alien and inaccessible. For Schütz, this mechanism is based on a process that implies an analogy and which is defined by Husserl as «analogical apperception, or “appresentation” and is «a particular form of mediated intentionality» (Schütz, 1970b, p. 62). This consideration raises further questions concerning the theme of corporeality and the difficulty of establishing a concept of «congruence» that can allow us to grasp the behavior of others and to establish «standards of normality» regarding this behavior, in how much there are different forms of normality that have to do, for example, with the behavior of a man and a woman and that can vary according to age and health and this implies that what «is congruent

according to one order of “normality” is not congruent according to another.» Schütz's conclusion is, therefore, that the «second epoché could never yield the constitution of the Other as a monad within my monad, but at most, it yields appresentation of another psychophysical ego beginning from the substratum of my psychophysical ego» (Schütz, 1970b, pp. 66-67). Schütz's attention then shifts to the theme relating to what Husserl had defined a "surrounding communicative world," that is a world based on relations of mutual consent and reciprocity between people and on a unitary interdependence with the shared environment. According to Husserl, in this World, sociality is made up of specific communicative acts in which the Ego addresses Others, aware that these Others will understand it and, for their part, will address the Ego. Also, in this case, Schütz dwells on the criticalities of this theory, emphasizing that both the idea of communication and mutual understanding presuppose a community of knowledge, even a common surrounding world (and social relations), and not the other way around. Therefore, the common surrounding World and the social relationship cannot derive from the idea of communication since communication already presupposes intersubjectivity; that is, the fact that the subjects who speak and interact through language and speech acts are already in a situation of mutual harmony. Finally, Schütz dwells again on the *Fifth Cartesian meditation*, reporting a partial list of the fundamental problems concerning transcendental intersubjectivity. The first criticality concerns the problem of the relationship with the Other and the modalities according to which it could come to constitute the basis of every community and, therefore, on how the single monad can enter into a transcendental relationship with the Other. The second difficulty concerns the possibility of speaking of a multiplicity of transcendental egos, as it is unclear whether the transcendental Ego is conceivable only in the singular or can also be declined as the plural (Schütz, 1970b, p. 77). Finally, the last difficulty concerns the question of the Ego that accomplishes the epoché and ends up becoming isolated. The critical issues analyzed allow Schütz to affirm that.

As a result of these considerations, Husserl's attempt to account for the constitution of transcendental intersubjectivity in terms of operations of the consciousness of the transcendental Ego has not succeeded. Intersubjectivity is not a problem of the constitution that can be solved within the transcendental sphere

but is a datum (*Gegebenheit*) of the life-world. It is the fundamental ontological category of human existence in the World and, therefore, of all philosophical anthropology. As long as man is born of woman, intersubjectivity and the we-relationship will be the foundation for all other categories of human existence (Schütz, 1970b, p. 82).

These observations, which have an ultimate character and embrace the entire course of Husserl's thought, sanction the definitive detachment from the father of phenomenology and his conception of intersubjectivity. Regarding his confrontation with Husserl, in a letter to Gurwitsch from 1957, Schütz states that in the essay of 1957, he shows the impossibility of every single step of the fifth meditation and his detachment from the analysis of the transcendental constitution (Schütz - Gurwitsch, 1989, 263). However, This does not mean that Schütz criticizes Husserl's phenomenology in its entirety, but it should be specified only the concept of intersubjectivity proposed by Husserl (Schütz - Gurwitsch, 1989, 255).

Towards a Phenomenology of the Social World

Regarding Schütz's detachment from Husserl and transcendental phenomenology, it is appropriate to recall the observations of Anthony Giddens, who points out how Schütz, despite having put aside the specific Husserlian epistemological program, preserves the umbilical cord with the subjectivity of the Ego, and that he does not even attempt to be critical of the residual problem of intersubjectivity. According to Giddens, Schütz's works remain very rigidly linked to the phenomenological program initially developed by Husserl. Although they detach themselves from transcendental phenomenology, this happens arbitrarily rather than through reasoned arguments (Giddens, 1976, pp. 36-38). Although ungenerous, Giddens' reflections are interesting because they raise two interrelated questions.

The first question is based on the fact that phenomenology, placing subjectivity, the intentionality of consciousness, as a starting point, cannot examine the social World as an objective world. This implies that Husserl's difficulties are the same as those in Schütz's work, with the difference that the latter assumes intersubjectivity as a sociological and not a philosophical problem. The second question concerns

whether Schütz is perfectly aware of the unresolved problems and questions left open by Husserl's phenomenology. According to Muzzetto, several critics of Schütz's thought unduly prolong some problematic issues of transcendental phenomenology to the phenomenology of the natural attitude. Giddens himself also incurs this error based on the contamination between the two spheres of phenomenology. This error derives essentially from the difficulty of identifying a precise distinction between the two levels in Husserl's work, that is, in the recognized legitimacy of the passage of knowledge acquired in the transcendental sphere to the worldly sphere and in the incompleteness of the work of Schütz. To this, we must also add the series of changes and modifications that Schütz's position has developed during its evolution concerning transcendental phenomenology. In this regard, to understand Schütz's relationship with phenomenology, it is appropriate to consider two orders of concomitant reasons (Muzzetto, 1997, p. 25).

On the one hand, it should be pointed out that while Schütz places the problems relating to the question of the foundations of the social sciences at the center of his work and believes that methodological, epistemological, and theoretical issues are related to them, Husserl, on the other hand, focuses exclusively on phenomenology as a rigorous science, leaving the problems relating to the social dimension only sketchy.

On the other hand, it is necessary to emphasize that Husserl's thinking, especially on the question of intersubjectivity, was constantly changing, and Schütz, considering each new elaboration and revision by Husserl of his thought as a partial and momentary systematization, always limited to sectoral criticisms, trusting in the fact that the difficulties that emerged in Husserl's work could still find a solution. From this point of view, Giddens' observations, in addition to being completely unfounded, fail to fully grasp the connection that links Schütz's thought to Husserl's phenomenology. We, therefore, believe that it is appropriate to state that Schütz continues to follow the transcendental path outlined by Husserl, opening the way to a new dimension of phenomenology. In this way, he develops the Husserlian psychology of pure intersubjectivity, considering it fundamental for the foundation of the social sciences. In fact, in the essay *Some Leading Concepts of Phenomenology* Schütz states that the importance of phenomenology for the social sciences is not to be

sought in the possibility of its use for the analysis of concrete problems but in its ability to respond to relevant methodological problems of these sciences and to clearly define their essential notions, since the social sciences take their fundamental problems for granted, just like common sense. However, he points out that.

The methods of the social sciences cannot answer these questions. They require a philosophical analysis. Furthermore, phenomenology [...] has not only opened an avenue of approach for such an analysis but has also started the analysis itself (Schütz, 1962d, p. 117).

In this way, Schütz confirms his debt to Husserl and, while analyzing the questions and problems inherent in the phenomenology of the natural attitude and precisely delimiting the boundaries of phenomenological philosophy, he continues, despite the difficulties that emerged from Husserl's thought, to recall the unity of the original project of the father of phenomenology, a project in which the social sciences could not fail to be interested (Muzzetto, 1997, p. 58).

End Notes

1. For a general introduction to Schütz's thought, see Izzo, A. (1979); Wagner, H.R. (1978); Protti, M. (1995); Muzzetto, L. (2006); Di Chiro, A. (2018); Rogers, M. (2000); Dreher, J. (2011); Endreß, M. (1999).
2. Van Breda, H.L. (1962, X, footnote): «I am anxious to meet such a serious and thorough phenomenologist, one of the few who have penetrated to the core of the meaning of my life's work, access to which is unfortunately so difficult, and who promises to continue it as representative of the genuine *Philosophia perennis* which alone can be the future of philosophy. »
3. In the introduction to the German translation of *Die Strukturen der Lebenswelt*. See Luckmann, T. (1971, 21).
4. For an analysis of the concept of «vivid present» in Schütz's thought, see Di Chiro, A. (2019)
5. On Schutz's confrontation with Husserl on intersubjectivity, see Wagner (1984); Carrington (1979).

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The Wake of Love: Critical Considerations of Steinbock's Gift

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DOI:10.22034/IYP.2021.525471.1029

Abstract:

In his book, *It's Not About the Gift: From Givenness to Loving*, Steinbock advances a new phenomenological analysis of the gift. In this analysis, the gift is not about what is being given but about the event of a loving relationship between two subjects. In this interpersonal relationship, the gift emerges as each beloved withdraws themselves to reveal the other as they are by being loved in humility. In this paper, I express two main challenges for Steinbock's account of the gift. The first concerns Steinbock's attempt to disengage the phenomenon of surprise from the possibility of the gift. The second involves his neglecting the body. This neglect raises serious questions about the kind of love during which the gift is supposed to emerge. In the epilogue, instead of a conclusion, I offer some thoughts on the gift that has yet to be given much attention in the philosophical discussion of the gift.

Keywords: gift, body, metaphysics of presence, Derrida, Steinbock, love, femininity.



Introduction

Philosophizing about the gift, in the sense of trying to define or phenomenologically describe what the gift is, carries on today even after Derrida's deconstruction, according to which the gift *is* an aporia.[1] For Derrida, the gift constitutes an aporia since it is impossible when it comes to its realization, but it is possible concerning its being somehow named and thought of. Thus, the gift suffers an “aporetic paralysis.” (Derrida, 1992,p.28)

There have been many attempts to resist Derrida's analysis of/the gift. Marion's resistance, for instance, has refueled our philosophical interest in the gift by suggesting that the issue with the philosophy of the gift should not be about finding an adequate representation or, better yet, an accurate phenomenological analysis of or for the phenomenon of the gift.[2] Instead, it is to find instances in life that match our phenomenological description of the gift after having bracketed those elements Derrida identified that would otherwise make the gift (seem) impossible. For Marion, Derrida's work marks the limit of a phenomenological reduction, allowing us to bracket those elements that make the gift impossible (to find). It is within this spirit of tracing a different path for describing the gift that Anthony Steinbock.[3] Has recently written that the issue with the gift is not about the gift but loving. In his latest book, he attempts to show how the gift is not (about the) given gift or what is given(ness) but (what) emerges in a loving relationship with an Other.[4]

I want to raise some phenomenological concerns about Steinbock's account in this paper. The first one refers to his attempt to disengage the gift from being surprising. Steinbock is the first philosopher who attempts to separate the phenomenon of surprise from that of the gift. I want to raise some questions about the presuppositions that motivate this disengagement. The second phenomenological inconsistency concerns the body. Following Steinbock, if we accept that the gift emerges in the event of loving, that is, as we shall shortly explore, the taking place of the taking place of a loving (interpersonal) relation, then we are faced with the question of the body. Steinbock does not give any (phenomenological) account of the interpersonal relation in its embodied occurrence, and this raises serious questions about the (kind of) love in which the gift is supposed to emerge.

A Synopsis as a Beginning

I will employ Derrida's analyses as a reference point to summarise some of the issues concerning the gift. This decision is because Derrida's interrogation is extensive since most of his works deal with various aspects of the gift.[6] This will also help me raise the two issues I hypothesize are problematic in Steinbock's account. However, this is risky since, among the disseminated effects of this decision, one may wonder if I was using Derrida to fill the phenomenological gaps in Steinbock's account. This is not my intention, and by raising this concern, I hope that such a possibility does not over-determine the whole undertaking.

I will follow Derrida and start, as he does, with what would seem unequivocal about the gift. What could be a common understanding of the gift? A gift is something that we give to someone else. Insofar as we are all in agreement that a gift can be described or defined as 'someone gives something to someone else' or, to formalize it a bit, 'A gives C to B,' or $A \rightarrow (\text{gift}) \rightarrow B$, then this conceptual representation can never take place as such without problems; or, with what Derrida calls reserves or remains. Furthermore, there are many. First, if the gift is justly defined by the above, anything we give that could harm someone must be registered as a gift. However, the gift is commonly presupposed to be something positive, something good for the other. Even if we amend the definition to 'someone gives something *good* to someone else,' the problems will remain. Moreover, these problems will not revolve only around the definition of the 'good' but about the realization of the linear structure of this gesture.

Briefly, for there to be a gift, A will have to give something and completely forget it; otherwise, the anamnesis or recognition of giving would destroy its linear structure since the anamnesis or recognition would take the form of a counter-gift as something exchanged for the gift, as something given-back. For instance, if I give a birthday present to my best friend, they cannot say thank you as this will destroy the linear movement required in the formula above. Nevertheless, even if they are ungrateful or keep silent, my memory of giving counts as giving something back to myself in a narcissistic exchange. For the same reason, as a giver, I should neither feel satisfaction nor contentment in giving. That is, if, when giving, I feel contentment,

then it would be as if I was giving something to myself in return: The “good conscience maintains the circle of exchange.” (Derrida, 1974, p. 59) If I were to give a gift, then I should not even tell a story about it; I should not in any way have a consciousness of my giving since that would defy the linearity of the formula above. To use a more technological example, if I were to (e)mail something to someone and track its reception, that would also destroy the possibility of being given since the certainty of reception comes back as a counter-gift. Even with social media, Snapchat, where the given message supposedly vanishes immediately after being sent, it would still not count as a gift since the possibility of tracking the sent item down through its servers and re-producing it would count as a counter-gift.[6] Similarly, the receiver must receive without receiving, for even the reception acknowledgment would destroy the linear movement of the gift structure. All the above suggests that the gift is impossible since both the receiver and the giver must intend to receive and give, respectively. However, this intention would have to vanish immediately after the event in order to avoid any form of counter-gift.

The possibility of the gift requires nothing in return, a non-reciprocity, and non-return, a certain dissymmetry so that it does not annul itself by being entangled or turned into circuits of exchange. And these circuits of exchange may be narrow, as in the case of the giver giving alone to oneself, the giver and receiver being only two, or, as in the case of Mauss’ potlatch, (Mauss, 1954) An extended circle of exchange that involves the whole social formation. For the gift to be a gift, it must remain in B (the receiver) and not be passed on to a D or E, and so on, as in the case of the potlatch. Therefore, what we take as given from this preliminary analysis of Derrida is, as Steinbock writes, “the moment the gift appears to another as a gift, when it takes on the meaning of the gift, it becomes part of the economic structure, a circulation of exchange in the circle of debt and narcissistic gratitude.” (Steinbock, 2018, p. 108)

Insofar as something is *intended* as a gift from either the giver or the receiver – in being received as something given by someone – there is a “delinearization” of the “linear trait” required for the phenomenological manifestation of the gift. (Derrida, 1982, p. 91) That is why there can be nothing in exchange for the gift. However, nothing in return does not mean absolutely nothing “nor an ineffable exteriority that would be transcendent without relation. It is *this*

exteriority that sets the circle going; it is this exteriority that puts the economy in motion."(Derrida, 1992, p.30) [7] Thus, the gift, if there is any, must be oxymoronicly exterior to the circle as its transcendental condition and simultaneously in touch with it as its empirical condition. This "transcendental contra-band."(Derrida,1974, p.244) as a prime cannot be captured with the logic of Being, even if it allows for every possibility of Being. If we trace the gift through the logic of Being, then that would be its *λόγος ἐξωτερικός*; outside yet in touch with every possibility of Being. (Derrida, 1992, p.27-28) [8] This exterior logos or contra-band transcendental, sometimes also referred to by Derrida as 'quasi-transcendental' and which is analogized with the structure of the gift, would have to have come as a surprise in the sense of interrupting everything that is.

It has been suggested that the later Derrida traces the gift in the possibility of hospitality following Lévinas's account of visitation.[9] In *Adieu to Emmanuel Lévinas*,(Derrida ,1997) Derrida entertains, and we can even risk the hypothesis that he sides with it, Lévinas' account of visitation as an approximation of the event of the gift. According to Lévinas, the face of the Other constitutes a surface, an *ἐπιφάνεια* (epiphany)[10] Where we are presented to each other as we are: finite, mortal, by coming in contact, the Other breaks my course of action and compels me to act anew. I am compelled to take a stance faced with the Other who reveals my finitude reflected on their (sur)face. The face of the Other is a calling that compels me to act in a particular way, to help or dismiss them.[11] If we tamper a bit with the logic of Derrida's *Gift of Death*,(Derrida,199) The other as (w)holly other presents (me) with (my) finitude to the point of my being arrested, held hostage by them. However, this hosting is not an incarceration but an opportunity to be unconditional(ly one)self. The latter would imply a beginning as a decision.

What is very important about facing the Other is that this occurrence has no beginning or end. In his analysis of *Adieu*, Derrida appreciates this event as involving paradoxical reciprocity. In this paradoxical reciprocity, A and B give themselves to each other as they are in their naked finitude. The gift is nothing in particular passed from here to there but the revelation of each one to the other instantly in their finitude, their naked being. This means that the occurrence of the gift is to be appreciated not in what is given but as the limit of, the instance of, perhaps even the horizon of there where one and another

come to each other. We could also say where one counts and counters finitude. This encounter, an event anterior to any form of communication, is not about a meeting of subjects if we can borrow some elements from *Given Time*.^[12] The gift here loses its positive valence; it becomes a "stranger to morality." (Derrida, 1992, p.154) Moreover, it *comes to be* the instant of coming in touch with an Other. However, this coming to touch, this contact with one another other, requires the presence of bodies that meet instantly. This instant is complicitous, if not identical, with the phenomenon of disruption – to come in contact with another cannot take place without some disruption and a body.^[13]

Thus, the gift is henceforth problematized through the question of how we give ourselves to another. In *On Touching Jean-Luc Nancy*^[14] The whole work is about a gift without being a gift to Jean-Luc Nancy. Without going into the nuances of the performativity of Derrida's philosophizing, what is required in our analysis is the aspect that to give oneself to another outside of the discourse of the metaphysics of presence or, what amounts to the same, the logic of Being, comes to be how we extend ourselves to another; ultimately how communication would have had to have begun. However, this communication is anterior, prior, to any language as a system of pre-given signs which we learn to exchange to express ourselves.

Since every person is entirely different from another person, getting in touch with another ends up being a quest to another world. The gift comes to be how we give ourselves to others and request them. Here, however, Derrida will accept that the giving, which means how we get in touch with another, takes place whether we kiss or kick them. Since to extend to an Other as another world which is entirely other, wholly other, implies some breaking-in, the genesis of an opening, always already, then the question of giving positively would be a question of minimizing the violence of communication – which is the pre-given in the process of giving oneself to the other for whatever reason. In this construal, the topology of the gift does not entail a beginning as an ultra-transcendental principle. Instead, it can take place while interrupting what has been going on. That is why, as contra-band transcendental, it has no specific topology or chronology. However, for there to have been a gift, a form of disruption comes to be a priori.^[15]

Removal of Surprise as Surprising Removal

In the previous section, I explored some central philosophical issues around the gift with Derrida's analyses as a reference point. I also explored how the gift, if it exists, would have to be surprising in formal terms and interpersonal relations. The element of surprise carries with it a disruption that the occurrence of the gift would necessitate. This detour is significant since Steinbock attempts to make the phenomenon of surprise irrelevant to the gift. While acknowledging and representing Derrida's association of the two phenomena, Steinbock does not explore the reasons for which Derrida underscores the surprising element of the gift.[16] I shall now follow Steinbock's account to retrace this removal's movement.

Early on, Steinbock admits that "[b]y a careful phenomenological analysis of the experience of surprise, I tease apart the gift from how it is usually accepted as tied to the surprise." (Steinbock, 2018, p.10) The first chapter starts immediately with such a careful phenomenology of surprise. At the beginning of the section "1. THE BELIEF STRUCTURE OF SURPRISE," we read:

A peculiar relation to being can characterize surprise. Allow me to describe this relation by examining its "belief structure," especially concerning the future. I do this because it is commonly held that surprise is simply a rupture of what is expected." (Steinbock, 2018, p.2)

With the use of the impersonal passive voice of phrasing possibility where *surprise can be characterized*, there is no direct reference to who is characterizing. At least one who can characterize can do so by having a surprise peculiarly related to being. This impersonal passive voice is not the same as the second one we follow in this passage, whereby *it is commonly held*. The adverb 'commonly' takes us to the possibility of common sense or what would have been unequivocal about surprise. Is this important?

To begin with, 'what is commonly held' is something we saw with Derrida. Nevertheless, such a beginning, such a tactic of starting with something commonly held or pre-given, possibly unequivocal, has a very long history. It starts with Aristotle's *Mendoza*, and it is even more amplified with Kant.[17] However, while Derrida starts with what is commonly assumed as a possible definition or representation

of the gift, he does not claim to be advancing a phenomenological analysis of the belief structure of the gift. Steinbock has announced a careful phenomenological analysis whereby the expectation would be to begin with some bracketing or phenomenological reduction rather than a beginning with a belief structure. Furthermore, it is even more surprising since the phenomenological analysis will now be on the belief structure of surprise rather than what is commonly believed about it or a phenomenological analysis of (the phenomenon of) surprise in the how of its givenness. Instead of moving to 'the things themselves,' which, in this case, would translate into 'to surprise itself,' we move to 'the belief structure of surprise itself.'

This transgression regarding the beginning of the phenomenological method, or what we would have expected as a phenomenological analysis of surprise, justifies Steinbock's move to request permission – in the request *to describe this relation*, the relation of being and surprise, *by examining* the belief structure of surprise. A request for permission is not usually expected when one picks up a book to read. Insofar as one is reading Steinbock's or any writer's book, permission has, in one sense, been granted. Read a book takes place while giving permission for the writer's expression. In the writer's offering of their writing, in an offering without a particular destination, our attention to it by reading it would already have been a permission of expression. Insofar as we give attention, we have already been giving.[18] Steinbock's is being given attention. To ask for an additional allowance comes as an effect of the surprise that one might, as we do here, experience in not being given what has been promised: "in the phenomenological tradition."

We start then elliptically and with a detour.[19] Following Steinbock's analysis, we see that his intended belief structure is not propositional but phenomenological. Phenomenological belief relates to how we come to believe and how we make sense. The constitution of sense in a phenomenological way is described temporally, and it may or may not involve our being fully aware of it, or as we sometimes say, without egoic activity. Following Husserl's notion of passive synthesis, we can make sense of and understand something, something being what it is as it is given to us, without egoic, that is, active awareness. Sense can be constituted passively, by analogical repetition, without the immediate reflecting ego.[20] In this way, "belief" need not necessarily be "an active, reflective commitment to

or positing of being." However, it may be a "presupposing" or "'passive-positing' of being, of pre-predicative 'taking in' what takes place or what is." (Steinbock, 2018, p.5)

Steinbock provides a helpful example to summarise this process. Suppose I am on my way to enjoy how the ball will drop in Times Square on New Year's Eve. I walk towards the area believing the pavement to be even, even if I did not actively form this belief. I am on my way to cross the street, expecting the taxi to stop while my attention is directed toward the ball while I anticipate it to drop. All these future orientations harbor expectations that can be actively or passively constituted. The belief structure is always related to positing some future to an expectation. "Intrinsic to the act of expectation is the fact that the existence of something futural is posited. The expectation is carried out in the mode of belief as an unbroken, straightforward relation to something in the future." (Steinbock, 2018, p.3) As Steinbock carefully observes, our beliefs involve expectations, and these expectations can be affected in many ways. Steinbock will locate the phenomenon of surprise, along with other modalities, such as a shock and a startle, in the modalities of the disturbance of our expectations.

So far, following Steinbock, we have explored what we refer to as phenomenological belief in general. In phenomenological terms, we have been describing the *eidōs* or the eidetic structure of belief. Now we move to the belief structure of the modalities of disruption of belief. To describe the structure of belief of surprise, Steinbock uses the following formula: "I believe what I cannot believe." (Steinbock, 2018, p.4) "Surprise can be characterized as a movement of an 'I am now believing what I could not believe at first' or again, 'I am somehow accepting what I can't (in other circumstances) accept.'" (Steinbock, 2018, p.5) Similarly, shock is when "I cannot believe what I cannot believe;" there is no acceptance of what I cannot accept. Finally, a startle would be the in-between modality between surprise and shock; "startle takes place under the threshold of the surprise and the shock." (Steinbock, 2018, p.7)

According to Steinbock, the key difference among the modalities of disruption of belief revolves around the notion of 'reconstitution of sense.' While in surprise, I can reconfigure what is given as "shattering. (Steinbock, 2018, p.7) " To what I already believe or take for granted as being in shock, there is no reintegration or

reconstitution of what is given and is breaking off my ongoing sense-making, which harbors futural expectations. Finally, in the startle experience, things can vary since the startle is placed as the being in-between surprise and shock since it “does not necessarily entail a reconstitution of sense.” (Steinbock, 2018, p.9)

Focusing on surprise, Steinbock introduces another criterion to describe its belief structure. This criterion is the direction of attentiveness in the reconstitution of sense. As we have seen, surprise implies an interruption or disruption in the sense of disequilibrium or being caught off guard. After the disruption of having been surprised, the surprised person is thrown back into the experience by incorporating anew the disruptive given elements or the disruptive elements of the given by reconstituting (a new) sense. This throwing back, however, does not come to be reflective. Reflective here means not only thinking about what is happening but also about our involvement in the happening. According to Steinbock, surprise does not lead the surprised person to face themselves as if they were an Other. To understand what this means, we need to explore briefly some distinctions that Steinbock makes based on his other works.

Steinbock distinguishes interpersonal emotions and involves an Other, as another person, from those that do not involve the Other. The former is also called interpersonal or moral. In addition, he distinguishes between disequilibrium and diremption. Diremptive experiences are shame, humiliation, embarrassment, and the like, which involve an Other who engages with us in such a way as to “throw [us] me back on [ourselves] myself as before another.” (Steinbock, 2018, p.16) In disequilibrium, however, I am “disoriented sheerly in relation to my previous orientation.” (Steinbock, 2018, p.17) Moreover, thus not thrown back to myself as an Other. According to Steinbock's descriptions, surprise can be “neither a diremptive experience nor a moral emotion,” which is to say that surprise “does not reveal me to myself as before another, but it does catch me off guard and throw me back on the experience.” (Steinbock, 2018, p.17) It creates a disequilibrium in my course of action, but it does not lead me to reflect on myself and my involvement in the situation as if I was an Other. Shame, for instance, would be a moral emotion and a diremptive experience. It requires another person who somehow disrupts my doings and motivates me to reflect on them as if I were an Other. Humility, on the other hand, is a moral emotion since I am

humble before an Other. However, it is not a diremptive experience since it does not disrupt my previous course of action. In humility, I am revealed to myself in virtue of another and not objectified or thematized by them as it would be the case in a diremptive experience.

Before advancing on how surprise is unrelated to the gift, some observations are required for the phenomenological description since some of the steps are difficult to follow. The first hurdle in following Steinbock's phenomenological description relates to the 'reconstitution of sense.' The difference between shock and the rest of the modalities that Steinbock explores rests on the fact that *there is no reconstitution of sense* in the former. The difficulty in this existential stipulation is the following: How could it be phenomenologically possible not to have a reconstitution of sense? *Is it ever possible not to have reconstitution of sense? What would it mean to have a disruption of sense such that it will not be reconstituted?*

Consciousness as the constitution of sense is an uninterrupted stream – this is perhaps the only axiom of Husserlian phenomenology. Let us try some hypotheses. No reconstitution of sense would mean absolute passivity, maybe being in a coma, shocked permanently without overcoming it. If the person experiencing the surprise, the shock, the startle can somehow relate it to their experience *after* the experience itself, then there is/or there would always already have been some reconstitution of sense *after* the shock – or whatever the experience of disruption. Maybe the case of being in shock is the limiting case, but still, we cannot say that no reconstitution of sense will take place. Otherwise, what would be the difference between being in a coma, unconscious, non-conscious, or dead, for that matter?

The instant of surprise, shock, startle, or whatever the experience of disruption of sense-making may be could be 'in-itself' void of sense-making. However, there is still a sense reconstitution *after the disruption*. To bring it back to the classical existential-phenomenological debates, even if in such experiences where the person is contracted to the point of meaninglessness is not being able to make sense, a solus ipse *Dasein* in (its) crisis, then, passive or active, reflective or not, there must be some sense-making, some reconstitution of sense; otherwise, after this limiting and limited point, we would be forced to claim a phenomenological death if not an existential one.[21]

The eidetic description Steinbock attempts is based on whether *there is* reconstitution of sense in the various modalities of disruption. The issue is about more than whether *there is* reconstitution of sense. Instead, we can ask phenomenologically in temporal terms: *How long does the reconstitution of sense take place in the various modalities of disruption of sense?* Furthermore, if we bracket the impersonal grammar, we can ask: *How long did I require to constitute what was just given itself to me?* Such a move will allow us to include other forms of disruption, which Steinbock still needs to include.

Along with the surprise, the startle, or the shock, there are other modalities in the eidetic vicinity, like fright and terror. We say, 'You gave me a fright.' Frightening someone is close to shocking or startling someone. In the case of the fright, overcoming the shock happens quickly, but there is still shock involved. An intense fright where one is petrified or frozen is analogous to a shock. The question that may orient us more effectively is whether surprise is always already included in all these experiences eidetically or whether each one is an *eidos*, as Steinbock suggests.

Since Steinbock puts the phenomenological register of belief as primary, we must consider the possibility that the belief as a passive sense constitution involves habits, or better yet, to use a Husserlian term, *habitualities*. Sense constitution in classical phenomenology is eidetically related to habits. What is expected is so expected only because the present allows for associations with past experiences. Furthermore, these associations allow *habituates* to form, which leads to beliefs.[22] These *habituates*, these similar passed or past associations, give rise to expectations that may not be actively posited. These associations are challenged and give rise to the phenomena we are discussing. These *habitualities* are the norms, the standard way of things. A disruption of sense does not mean a break, a void of sense but a difference, a different way, an unexpected way, an abnormal way that things unfold such that we have not experienced before in the sense of creating links with what has been lived through so far. Essentially, we are talking of a crisis or discordance of *hows*.

The issue may not be about whether we can associate the unexpected that imposes itself on us but how we will constitute it by reconstituting our expectations that have been challenged or put in crisis. One way, one 'how' is how long it would take to make or, better, re-make these associations that would allow for a renewed

sense-making which would include the unexpected as new. Put in such temporal terms, we do not only mean ontic time as measured time by a clock. This is also important. A severe shock might require more time to process what is happening than one which is not so acrid. However, this ontic time is always for the Other, not the self whose sense is in crisis. The time we mean here is the re-temporalizing of the given in the sense of coming to feel and tell the difference, the so-called just-before-and-just-after. Moreover, making sense, noema, or the constitution of things, experience *tout court*, as we learn from Husserl, is all about (this) difference.[23]

Now let us change slightly and think through (existential) psychoanalysis. A person in denial or bad faith is still making sense. I offer an anecdotal example. Imagine a man or a woman who would continue to serve coffee to their long-gone partner. The partner has died, but they continue to engage with their world as if the person was there. In one sense, the person alive could not believe what they could not believe, as Steinbock says, but they still believed *what they could not have believed* – otherwise, we could not talk about denial. Denial means attempting to negate a given situation as if to reconstitute it before it has been disrupted. The pluperfect modality must be introduced to make sense of how it is possible to believe what one *could not have believed* otherwise. The possibility of making sense of surprise comes *after* the fact or event. However, in the moment of doxically reconstituting it, that is, actively/reflectively, we are continuously already operating with a past passive reconstitution of sense. As Sartre put it in *Nausea*(2000), Nothing happens when we live; everything happens when we talk about the living. When we live, we feel continuously in different intensities. The disruption of this continuum may be described as a fold, not a complete rupture.

We see from the example above and similar cases that surprise, startle, shock, and the analogous modalities of freight and terror relate to the intensity of the disruption of the expectations we have actively or passively formed. It is not an issue of whether *there is* disruption but more of the intensity of the disruption. Whether something can be registered as one of the experiences above, it would already have to be re-reconstituted *after having (passively) reconstituted* the given. Since the given is constantly reconstituted somehow, otherwise, we would not be able to talk about it at all; the eidetic criterion for making sense of these phenomena could be the intensity of the disruption.

Furthermore, this intensity is about something other than whether there is an expectation in some of the disruptions and not in others. Instead, it would be about harmonizing the given with what one had expected it to have been.

This phenomenological observation is crucial since it dissociates the modalities of sense disruption with the possibility of expectation with which Steinbock attempts to associate them. An example that could make this obvious would be the following. Suppose I am returning to my house after a hectic day at work. I would expect to find the house as I left it in the morning while rushing out or a combination of the former and all the past times, I analogously left my home. My expectations could be many, but the important one that would be relevant here is the absence of other people in my flat. Now, for this particular time, imagine I open the door and...

1. I see my friends shouting, 'Surprise, Happy Birthday.'
2. I see a dead body lying in a pool of blood.
3. I suddenly see my partner shouting 'boo.'
4. I see broken furniture everywhere.

These and a million other possibilities could happen. Suppose I expect to find my residence the way I left it in the morning or how I have been experiencing it after work for the past x number of times. In that case, that means dialectically that any other possibility is unlikely. In case one, I am positively surprised. In case (2), I am startled, possibly shocked, and experiencing fear. In case (3), I am given a fright. In case (4), any disruption modality could be possible. Steinbock writes: "If a surprise arises as something unexpected, it is partly because of the temporal mode of givenness that we can call generally an expectation." However, the examples above show that this temporal mode we call an expectation cannot be excluded from the other modalities of sense disruption.

These observations impact how Steinbock attempts to classify emotions as moral and non-moral and diremptive and non-diremptive moral emotions. Although the first distinction appears straightforward in empirical terms, it does not so in phenomenological terms. If we go back to the examples above, an empirical observation would be that we only have others present in (1) and (3). However, phenomenologically and even phaneroscopically[24] The presence of

the Other is found in all examples as it can be traced through the remains of their intentions which (have) affected (ed) me. The difference can be traced to the embodied presence of the Other, lacking in (2) and (4). Steinbock's distinction, however, does not rest on the embodied actualization of the other person but on the Other who can affect us in some way; that is as if their presence would motivate us to reflect on ourselves, turn towards ourselves and see ourselves as an Other for better or worse.

Nevertheless, if the difference between moral and non-moral emotions cannot be grounded on the embodied presence of the Other, this Other could also be myself as an Other in a narcissistic exchange. In phenomenological terms, subjectivity is construed as the possibility of seeing oneself as another. Husserl makes this point explicit in his lectures on inner time consciousness, even in temporal terms.[25] The difference between reflection as seeing oneself as another and what Steinbock suggests to be a moral emotion would necessitate the embodied presence of the Other. Without the body of the Other, their embodied situated existence, what Steinbock describes as moral emotions would not be able to be differentiated from solipsism, narcissism, or pathologies of the self in a psychoanalytic register.

The problems which arise in this bodiless phenomenological description roll over to the interpersonal loving that the gift is supposed to emerge.

Love without Touching

For Steinbock, the gift emerges in a loving relationship. In this interpersonal relation, what emerges as a gift is not the gift but the revelation of each beloved, which takes place in their being directly related to each other by being loved in humility. "There is a direct "relation" with the other person that allows the gift to emerge as gift, for me as lover, and for the other as beloved, in humility." (Steinbock , 2018, p.76)

The problem we encountered earlier concerning the absence of phenomenological reduction has similar effects on understanding the event of love. Steinbock describes the love that would fit the schema of the gift whereby one gives something to someone else. As Steinbock seems to presuppose, is the loving relationship only a party of two beloveds? Furthermore, before one thinks of erotic

polyamorous relations, there is also the mother's case with her children. A mother's love, however, is never mentioned. The first love one experiences goes unnoticed. This mother's love that goes unnoticed and allows all the possibilities would approximate the gift as contraband that we explored with Derrida.

The omission of the role of the feminine leads us to other questions. Would a mother be revealed as she is in her loving relations with her children? Furthermore, what would that revelation be? Would it be exhaustive for the woman (as) mother? What would be the difference between this love and her partner's, especially if it is of the same sex? Furthermore, these questions should also be raised if the mother is not a woman. Steinbock's account of love is restricted to the problematic of revelation and manifestation, problems in thinking with(in) being, and the metaphysics of presence cannot welcome those questions affirmatively.

Another critical question of love: How many are (be)loved in a loving relationship? Since Steinbock accepts the schema 'A-gift-B,' we must explore what is formalized or quantified under 'A' and 'B' as beloveds. Steinbock does not give in to the linearity of the gift since he takes the gift as an event following Heidegger's *ereignis*. Moreover, the reciprocal revelation in which he locates the emergence of the gift does not imply the dissymmetry required in the schema of the gift. In his analysis, the hints move us to consider that the beloveds are only two in a *direct relationship*, so they can be fully revealed as they are as if they were each other's other. To be in a direct relationship with another person would mean some exclusivity to that person. The revelation does neither suggest a schema where the one is revealed with many. What does this entail? In *The Gift of Death*, Derrida explores the implications of a possible direct relation that exhausts itself in a love of two at the sacrifice of all other beings. Even if it were possible to have such an exclusive love with only one other, that would be conditioned on an exclusion, a sacrifice of all others. I am found in an event where our revealed selves are two, at the expense of all others who could be loved and revealed as they are – and help me reveal me as well. Most importantly, in Steinbock's account, and this is the focus of this paper, the loving relation of the two does not only sacrifice all others but also their own bodies.

Finally, we go back to the beginning. Even if the gift would emerge in a loving relationship as described in Steinbock's philosophical

synthesis, could we not ask how would such love begin? How does one fall in love? Even in cases of love at first sight, the sight where sights meet requires bodies as pre-given. The presence of the bodies constitutes the pre-given, a pre-given which Steinbock neglects. Speaking phenomenologically, if love has its own eidetic region, what is the difference with that region of not being in love? If there is no interruption of our previous, not-being-in-love being, how would love be differentiated from any other habituality?

There can be no caress in a love where the body does not play a role. Can love take place without some caressing? In the phenomenological tradition, the caress's role in revealing the subjectivity of the other plays a key role. Even Henry (2015) recognizes the critical role of the caress in the erotic relationship. In Steinbock, however, there is no mention of caressing at all. Furthermore, there is no mention of touching either. This comes as a surprise since Steinbock has given us a rather exhaustive exploration of the role of the body in the phenomenological experience.[26]

Epilogue: A Poor Conclusion

In this paper, I have raised some challenging questions about the recent philosophical analysis of the gift offered by Steinbock. In this epilogue, instead of retracing the steps of these questions, I offer some thoughts on the gift for further discussion, which have yet to receive due attention.

I started with Derrida's analyses whereby the gift is an aporia. Before Derrida, 'aporia' has been used to designate an impasse. From the Aristotelian tradition aporia is a philosophical problem:

ἀλλ' ἡ τῆς διανοίας ἀπορία δηλοῖ τοῦτο περὶ τοῦ πράγματος· ἢ γὰρ ἀπορεῖ, ταύτη παραπλήσιον πέπονθε τοῖς δεδεμένοις· ἀδύνατον γὰρ ἀμφοτέρως προελθεῖν εἰς τὸ πρόσθεν. διὸ δεῖ τὰς δυσχερείας τεθεωρηκέναι πάσας πρότερον, τούτων τε χάριν καὶ διὰ τὸ τοὺς ζητοῦντας ἄνευ τοῦ διαπορῆσαι πρῶτον ὁμοίους εἶναι τοῖς ποῖδεῖ βαδίζειν ἀγνοοῦσι.[27]

The mind, as if tight in a knot, is found in a place where it cannot escape. The possibility of exiting this place is initially impossible. Interestingly, this is an aporia concerning the mind, a noetic or theoretical aporia. The metaphors used, however, to describe the

theoretical aporia take us back to our body. “For just as one whose feet are tied cannot move forward on an earthly road, in a similar way one who is puzzled, and whose mind is bound, as it were, cannot move forward on the road of speculative knowledge.” [28] Aporia is like suffering as if tied or bound. For knowledge, aporia constitutes a problem. However, for the body, it is there where it is found without being able to move or where the movement is very poor.

Aporia has a close semantic relation and a direct semantic relation with poverty. In Plato,[29] poverty is the very opposite of fullness, of abundance, of the god who symbolizes wealth; Poros – to transfer it in English, Porus. Taken by itself, in-itself, poverty, is an aporia: ἡ οὖν Πενία ἐπιβουλεύουσα διὰ τὴν αὐτῆς ἀπορίαν παιδίον ποιήσασθαι ἐκ τοῦ Πόρου. We could say that out of this extremity, out of these extremes, of poverty and abundance comes Eros – desire, love, elan, instinct, and the like. When poverty gives itself to abundance, there comes Eros.[30] Eros comes out of two extremes, constantly torn between two antithetical elements. However, the movement of fullness to abundance is out of nothing. As the absence of all possibility of movement passes, poverty creates a passage to fullness. Eros, as given in the antithetical relation between poverty and abundance, comes from an impossible movement.

Based on this exploration, the gift as an aporia could have the following possibilities if we take an analogical displacement movement. The gift could be this Eros as the in-between of extremes – a blind, mad desire or love. Alternatively, the gift could be the very movement or drive whereby poverty relieves herself from (her)self by copulating with its other. Or, the gift could be traced at or on the edge of the myth. Concerning Steinbock's gift, the latter would emerge like Eros, although it is not Eros but a full presence of the two extremes which it reve(a)ls. That middle area of a double-faced mirror allows each term to be revealed to itself without being manifested as such yet revealed as the condition of their revelation.

Again metaphorically, Derrida's gift would be “that which while *giving place* to that opposition as to so many others, seems sometimes to be itself no longer subject to the law of the very thing which it situates.”[31] Here, however, we are at an impasse precisely because what gives place, what fleshes out Eros as the opposition of the two extremes can be traced in poverty herself, or the feminine as poverty or *the very event (of the myth) of the birth of Aphrodite* who becomes

its own other without manifesting or revealing itself in the process. Aphrodite would have had to happen for all the rest to ensue.

Aphrodite, the paradigm of femininity, retreats in this myth which is for her; of her; because of her; in virtue of her...all the auxiliaries *come after her* to give the possibility to all and nothing. In Plato's myth, the event of the birth of Aphrodite cannot be referred lest through the birth of opposition and madness. Nevertheless, insofar as a totality can be exhausted in the apostasies, the distancing, the rebellion of poverty to abundance; the movement from nothingness to all that could be, to all the possibilities of being, those that have been and yet to come; insofar as totality requires its dialectical other, there will always have been the figure of Aphrodite, the (im)possible figure of the waking of the foam; literally Aphrodite.

End Notes

1. Góis, 1592; see The literature on the 'gift' is extensive and diverse. It is difficult to single out representative or exemplary analyses as a starting point. It is tempting to say that the interest in the gift starts with Mauss' anthropological research. Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange*, trans. W.D. Halls (London: Routledge, 1954); hereafter *The Gift*. However, that would neglect reflections that can be traced back to Seneca (see Lucius Annaeus Seneca, *On Benefits*, trans. Miriam Griffin, Brad Inwood (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 2011), and even Heraclitus. (see. Kostas Axelos, *Héraclite et la philosophie* (Paris: EDM, 1962)). Even if we start with Mauss' work in the sense that it sparks a renewed interest in the gift, we cannot ignore the debate between Bataille and Sartre on the implications of givenness and the limit of giving (see Douglas Smith, "Between the Devil and the Good Lord" in *Sartre Studies International*, 8 (2002): 1-17. For recent developments, see Alan D. Schrift *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity* (1997); hereafter, *The Logic*. For further research, one should not neglect the special issue on The Gift by Angelaki in 2001 and two edited volumes that make substantial contributions to the philosophical discussion. Yet, they have received little attention: Jean Baudrillard and Dan Cameron, *Il Dono: The Gift*, eds. Gianfranco Maranello, Sergio Risaliti, Antonio Somaini (Charta: 2002) and Genevieve Vaughan, *Athamor: Il Dono, the gift, a Feminist analysis* (Meltemi: 2004). Carvalho, 2018e; Góis, 1593b; see Carvalho, 2018f; Góis, 1593c; see Carvalho, 2018d; Góis, 1593a; see Carvalho, 2018c; Góis, 1593d; see Carvalho, 2018h; Góis, 1597; see Carvalho, 2018g; Góis, Álvares, & Magalhães 1598; see Carvalho, 2018i; Couto, 1606; see Carvalho, 2018j & 2018a.
2. Jean-Luc Marion, *Being Given: Toward a Phenomenology of Givenness*, trans. Jeffrey L. Kosky (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002). See also the discussion between Derrida and Marion in John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon, eds. *God, the gift, and Postmodernism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999); hereafter *God*.
3. Anthony J. Steinbock, *It's Not About the Gift: From Givenness to Loving*, (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018); hereafter *It's Not About the Gift*.
4. Derrida has also explored love with the possibility of the gift without analogizing the two events (cf. Jacques Derrida, *Glas*, trans. John P. Leavey, Jr. And Richard Rand, (Lincoln, NE: 1984), 17-18; hereafter *Glas*.
5. In the foreword of *Given Time*, as well as in other works, Derrida avows that his work consists of a "set of questions which for a long time had organized themselves around that of the gift...whether it appeared in its

own name, as was often the case, or employing the indissociable motifs of speculation, destination, or the promise, of sacrifice, the "yes," or originary affirmation, of the event, invention, the coming of the "come." *Given Time*, ix. The relation of Being thought and the gift "has expressly oriented all the texts [Derrida has] published since about 1972." Jacques Derrida, *Psyche: Inventions of the Other, Volume II* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008); hereafter *Psyche II*.

6. See Cixous' analysis of the relationship between the unconscious and the gift in Schrift, *The Logic*.
7. my emphasis.
8. Such logos would be on edge or the edge of everything without belonging to anything, like the *punctum* that Derrida reads in Barthes: "this singularity that is nowhere in the field mobilizes everything everywhere; it pluralizes itself" (Derrida *Psyche I*, 288). Derrida explores an analogous structure in the metaphoricity of metaphor since "metaphor perhaps retires, withdraws from the worldwide scene, and does so at the moment of its most invasive extension, at the instant it overflows every limit." Jacques Derrida, *Psyche: Inventions of the Other, Volume I* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), 51; hereafter *Psyche I*. Derrida has also explored an analogous structure in our having been given our proper name insofar as one would "be tempted to say first that a proper name, in the proper sense, does not properly belong to language; it does not belong there, although and because its call makes the language possible" (*Psyche I*, 198). Genevieve Vaughan also describes the gift based on such a structure of λόγος ἐξωτερικός, yet she places it as the desire to come in touch with an Other. Genevieve Vaughan, "The Exemplar and the Gift," *Semiotica* (2004): 1-27.
9. See Robert Bernasconi, "What Goes Around Comes Around: Derrida and Lévinas on the Economy of the Gift and the Gift of Genealogy," in Schrift, *The Logic*.
10. ἐπιφάνεια has a double meaning. It means both the surface of a body and the coming into light or view. See relevant entries in Lidell, Scott, and Jones.
<http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/lsg/#eid=42635&context=lsj&action=hw-list-click>
11. The calling here plays the analogy of the gift through a philosophical thread that can be traced in Heidegger's calling – See Marion *Being Given* and also *L'Interloque*: Jean-Luc Marion, "L'Interloque," in *Who Comes After the Subject?* eds. Eduardo Cadava, Peter Connor, and Jean-Luc Nancy (New York: Routledge, 1991) 236-245. Hereafter *L'Interloque*.

12. See Derrida, *Given Time*, 24; 100.
13. Whereas the linearity of the gift is no more active in this encounter, its dissymmetry is, phenomenologically speaking, maintained precisely in virtue of the space of welcoming. Epiphany happens and takes place in giving a place of rest for the Other in their taking the free invitation to (rest on) the Other's (sur)face. Because this give-and-take happens instantly, a circle of exchange never happens, or the enclosing of the circle is continually deferred. The giving/taking distinction collapses into a double-off (er)ing. What is 'at stake' in this event, in all the semantic excess of at stake, is the body (*Psyche I*, 149;155).
14. Jacques Derrida, *On Touching Jean-Luc Nancy*, trans. Christine Irizarry (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press), 2005; hereafter *Touching*.
15. To understand this thesis, one has to follow Derrida following Berkeley in *Touching*: "Marvelous Berkeley, the indisputable one." If to exist means to be, we are always already in touch with the world as part of the same and as totally other (137). In this logic, to give oneself to an Other comes to be *either* the creation of a contact which implies some breaking, some sort of violence – even if "everything we say or do or cry, however, outstretched to the other may be, remains *within us*" (*Psyche I*, 9; emphasis in original); *or*, an instantaneous, abrupt presence, as in the case of (Freud's lectures on) telepathy.
16. In the last section of the book, whereby Steinbock attempts to recast the gift through the philosophy of Maimonides, he represents one aspect of Derrida's analyses. Then he moves on to Marion and Maimonides without exploring further the conditions under which Derrida associates the two phenomena. Instead, he writes: "Because Marion appropriates Derrida in his own interpretation of the gift and the gifted, let me not dwell further on Derrida's critique of the economy of giving and the gift – which describes it as the figure of the impossible – but move directly to Marion. Marion assumes Derrida's critique of the economy of the gift but goes one step further by bracketing the economic movement to get at the meaning or sense of the gift, the giver, and the give – to get at givenness itself." (74).
17. Kant's transcendentalism is grounded on the *sensus communis logicus*. See Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, trans—Kathleen Blamey (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).
18. This is another way of rephrasing the transcendental contraband discussed earlier with Derrida. Attention is not thematic consciousness, as Simone Weil has explained. Attention in this example would come to be analogous to our continuous renewed decision to 'remain hostage' to

the writer, which takes place as long as we read. This giving could have been a gift if the book was not already involved in pre-established circuits of exchange. Simone Weil, *Gravity and Grace*, trans. Emma Crawford and Mario von der Ruhr (London: Routledge, 1952), 116-122. For the possibility of writing as offering and offering as writing, see Derrida's second part of *Given Time, Psyche I*, and *The Postcard*. Jacques Derrida, *The Postcard: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1987).

19. This beginning should not be looked at with suspicion. Sometimes a detour and an ellipsis are required to uncover a phenomenon's relational nexus. Derrida uses the same technique in *The Gift of Death*. The gift is not approached directly but through a detour constituted by an analysis of responsibility, faith, and sacrifice. Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, trans. David Wills (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1995).
20. Steinbock has offered us two critical essays from Husserl by translating them into English. These two essays provide an elaborate analysis of the structure of this passive synthesis. Anthony J. Steinbock, "Husserl's static and genetic phenomenology: Translator's introduction to two essays," *Continental Philosophy Review* 31 (1998): 127-134. It is very tempting to start pulling a thread about how Steinbock's gift would have taken place in his non-linguistic translations rather than his love, but that would take me astray (cf. Derrida on translation and the gift in his analysis on the tower of Babel in *Psyche I*, 191-224).
21. After Heidegger, who discussed the possibility of non-sense making *solus ipse Dasein* in what he calls anticipatory resoluteness in *Being and Time*, that is, in an a-temporal contracted point of the subject (vi)ty, there has been an ongoing discussion about whether such ultimate contraction could ever be possible. Moreover, if it were, the difficulty would be about the way of coming back, re-temporalizing, and reconstituting sense from an absolute point where there is supposedly no possibility of sense. Following the chronology of the discussion, see Martin Heidegger *Being and Time* Trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962); Karl Jaspers, *Philosophy of Existence* trans. Richard F. Grabau (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971); Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (Washington, DC: Washington Square Press, 1993); Gabriel Marcel, *The Mystery of Being Vol. I am* trans. G. S. Fraser (London: The Harvill Press Ltd, 1950); and the recent interventions of Marion and Agacinski in *Who Comes After the Subject?*, Eduardo Cadava, Peter Connor and Jean-Luc Nancy, *Who Comes After the Subject?* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1991).

22. For the role of Habit in Husserl, see David Moran, "Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology of Habit and Habitus, *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, 42 (2011): 53-77.
23. In many of his works, but mainly in *Experience and Judgment*, Husserl takes much time to show that the eidos can only be given with the eidetic difference in virtue of which it is given. To access an Eidos, to have an essential seeing, we require to engage in free variation whose condition is different. Edmund Husserl, *Experience and Judgment: Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic* trans. James S. Churchill (London: Routledge, Kegan and Paul, 1973).
24. For analogies concerning phenomenology and phaneroscopy, see Iraklis Ioannidis, "The Other Side of Peirce's Phaneroscopy" *Sofia Philosophical Review* 2 (2019): 74-99.
25. See Edmund Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time (1893-1917)*, trans. John B. Brough (London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991).
26. See Anthony J. Steinbock, "Saturated Intentionality," in *The Body*, ed. Donn Welton, (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1999): 178-200. If we looked at the architectonics of the text, we could interrogate how the phenomenological analysis passes into a hermeneutical analysis and why the phenomenological analysis precedes the hermeneutic analysis. Such possibility, along with the phenomenological questions raised earlier, leaves space to wonder to what extent Steinbock's analysis becomes reductive in the sense of dropping those elements that would not fit the account of love that he gives us (surprise, the body, the feminine).
27. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, retrieved from http://users.uoa.gr/~nektar/history/tributes/ancient_authors/Aristoteles/metaphysica.htm
28. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics*, retrieved from <https://isidore.co/aquinas/Metaphysics3.htm>
29. Plato, *Symposium*, retrieved from <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0173%3Atext%3DSym.%3Apage%3D203>
30. This giving echoes the mother of all genesis described by Derrida in *Glas*, as Genet's mother, the beggar, and the thief. *Glas*, 150.
31. Jacques Derrida, (1995), 75; 90, emphasis in original.

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A pervert's guide to species extinction

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DOI: 10.22034/IYP.2021.245795

Abstract

This article is structured in two parts. In the first part there is a focus on Deleuze's philosophy and in particular the question of desert(ed) islands. Running throughout this section is a consistent concern with empathy and sociality, with the changing structure of alterity in the identified movement from neurosis and psychosis to perversion. In this section, I make the argument that several forms of contemporary philosophy are carrying out acts of philosophical autism with regards to species extinction and the question of the absence of the other. I try to counter this trend in the second part of the paper, where there is a concern with thinking the structure "Us-without-world," which is my original contribution. In the time of the coronavirus pandemic, in the time of our forced solitude, in the time of our intoxication with technology, there is a real problem of the life-world, of thinking we-experience in common life, in this new hermetic reality. This is encapsulated in the thought-experiment of the structure "Us-without-world".

Keywords: island, alterity, Deleuze, isolation, neurosis.



Introduction

This article is structured in two parts. The first part focuses on Deleuze's philosophy, particularly the question of desert(ed) islands. Running throughout this section is a consistent concern with empathy and sociality, with the changing structure of alterity in the identified movement from neurosis, psychosis to perversion. In this section, I argue that several forms of contemporary philosophy carry out acts of philosophical autism concerning species extinction and the question of the absence of the other. I try to counter this trend in the second part of the paper, where there is a concern with thinking the structure "Us-without-world," which is my original contribution. In the time of the coronavirus pandemic, in the time of our forced solitude, in the time of our intoxication with technology, there is a real problem of the life world, of thinking *we experience* in common life, in this new hermetic reality. This is encapsulated in the thought experiment of the structure "Us-without-world."

Part I

The film *Cast Away* (Hanks *et al.*, 2001), the American survival drama film directed and produced by Robert Zemeckis and starring Tom Hanks, Helen Hunt, and Nick Searcy, is about an American man, Chuck Noland, a FedEx executive, who becomes marooned on a desert island after an air crash. Towards the end of the film, there is a scene where the protagonist wails the following at a FedEx package, a volleyball of all things, which during his time on the island, he became his mirror, simulacrum, and companion. He screams bizarrely and forlornly at the volleyball with a red-colored human face drawn with a permanent marker. As this last resemblance of substitute humanity floats away from Chuck's ill-made boat, he says:

Wilson, where are you? Wilson! Wilson! Wilson! Wilson! I'm coming! Wilson! Wilson! Wilson... Wilson! Wilson! Wilson! Wilson! Wilson! I'm sorry! I'm sorry, Wilson! Wilson, I'm sorry! I'm sorry! Wilson! I can't! Wilson! Wilson! I'm... I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry

Why am I considering this scene? In some ways, it explores Chuck's final physical and emotional metamorphosis. It explores deep-seated trauma, the trauma of being without others, without the World, without coordinates to think of the future. This mirrors the time of the coronavirus, which has made *our world* uninhabitable. The

consequent forced solitude or hermitage makes us withdraw into ourselves; we enter into communion with ourselves. We are adrift. Our island universes are adrift.

It seems that this film helps us to explore what we might call the neurotic trauma of the absence of others. What is it like to be on an island without humans, without the Other, without the face of the Other? What does it mean to become hermetic and isolated? What does it mean to be deserted of human relations? Furthermore, what happens to the hermit when Others are missing from the structure of the World? What does it mean to be in "an abandoned place" or instead to be abandoned by humankind?

Chuck understands this sense of abandonment and crisis of communication. He invents. He must do so. He invents an interlocutor. He exteriorizes his schizophrenia. This has a structure of a manufactured object. Chuck wards off madness by giving the object a name, Wilson. Nevertheless, like Robinson, Chuck cannot shake off his capitalist subjectivity. He cannot just learn to be on the island. He remains destined to return to the gleaming commercial archipelago of urban technopolis of work and reason (Lingis in Sheppard, Sparks & Thomas, 2005).

Cast Away is an excellent example of Deleuze's rumination of perversion, which appears in the section 'Michel Tournier And The World Without Others' in *Logique du Sens* [*The Logic of Sense*] (1990). I will turn to this below, where I will address three phases of psychical change, two of which pertain to depth, the other to surface. This is to explore the passage from neurosis to psychosis and the third to perversion, or what we might call schizophrenia, which is the discovery of a surface or what Deleuze will call "great health." I am trying to make sense of the possibility of conserving this "great health," whence contrasted with what Eugene Thacker (2015) calls the "great beyond" in his work *In The Dust of this Planet* or with what Quentin Meillassoux calls "the great outdoors" – the absolute outside – the eternal itself - in *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency* (Meillassoux & Brassier, 2017), which is his rumination on noncorrelationist philosophy.

Why is this important? I argue that the Deleuzian sense of "great health" retains the possibility of something new coming into the World. This will be explored in part 2 of this paper. Noncorrelationist

philosophy is entirely conditioned on necessity, on the impossibility of the possible. As such, nothing new can come into the World, whereas “great health” speaks of possibility and the Spinozist question of what the body can do (Deleuze, 1990). In the time of the coronavirus, and as we are all in our rooms and homes, in our own “island universes” (Shima chu 島宇宙) - (Miyadai Shinji, 1995), I went and looked at what we can broadly call island studies and the particular works there. I looked at Deleuze's reception of these seminal works. One such work is Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). Deleuze does not like this story very much and prefers Michel Tournier's *Friday or, The Other Island* (Tournier & Denny, 1997). A discussion about the island of *Speranza* (Hope) appears into Deleuze's work, principally in two short essays *Causes et raisons des îles désertes* [*Causes and Reasons of Desert Islands*] in *L'île déserte et autres textes* [*Desert Islands and Other Texts*] (Deleuze, Lapoujade, & Taormina, 2004) and *Michel Tournier et le monde sans autrui* [Michel Tournier and the World without Others] (1984), which appears in *The Logic of Sense*.

My thoughts about a pervert's guide to species extinction are as follows: In contemporary philosophy, there is a tendency or movement from a “world without Others” to a “world-without-us”. Furthermore, it seems there is a more profound perversion at work in this passage as we move towards a new structure which I shall coin “Us-without-world.” Indeed, this might be considered a kind of autistic philosophical thought experiment. In it, we find how a new form of perversion emerges. The Japanese philosopher Koichiro Kokubun has recently explored Deleuze's interest in islands in his book *The Principles of Deleuzian Philosophy* (2020). Kokubun refers to the phenomenologist Yasuhiko Murakami and his work *The Phenomenology of Autism* (自閉症現象学) (Murakami, 2008) to make a case for a less than coincidental proximity between phenomenology and Deleuze. Autism is taken because the World does not extend behind the things perceived. In other words, nothing is lurking beyond what appears to be consciousness. Kokubun writes:

We can now state why this is the case: mere habitation is not enough because for the desertion of the desert island to give way, we require the Other qua structure of the perceptual field, for it is the Other that brings about the division between myself and the objectile World. Lacking the Other, no such division can take place. (2020, p. 42)

Kokubun cites Murakami on the essence of objectiality, which is understood as not to consist “in what meets the eye” but “in establishing a permanence which transcends explicit ‘seeing’,” that is to say, “[o]bjectiality is not a given of sensation, it is a concept” (2020, pp. 63-64, n15). Continuing, Kokubun writes, “it is perfectly natural that Murakami's new phenomenology (a genetic phenomenology) and Deleuzian philosophy should resonate with each other” (2020, pp. 63-64, n15).

With these thoughts in mind, it strikes me that when one looks at Eugene Thacker's *In the Dust of this Planet* (2011), for example, there is a similar movement from a “world for us,” which he names the World, to the sense of the “world in itself” which is deemed the Earth. Moreover, following this structure is a “world without us,” a designated planet. At work in this thought-experiment, it appears that a kind of anti-humanist perversion and delight propels headlong into nihilism and entropic heat death. Furthermore, there is a nihilistic *jouissance* at work, an anti-humanism that delights in species extinction. For Thacker, we should not be here.

Nevertheless, Thacker's thought-provoking work is receiving a broad audience in and outside philosophy circles. In terms of the latter, the influence of Thacker's work is evident in season one, episode one of the HBO drama *True Detective* (Pizzolatto et al., 2014; see Graham & Sparrow, 2018). The writer of the show Nicholas Austin Pizzolatto has ruminated on the nihilism of Thacker's position and expressed it in the dialogue between the Louisiana State Police detectives Cohle and Hart in the TV episode *The Long Bright Dark*: We hear the following dialogue on the extinction of the species:

Rustin Cohle: Look. I consider myself a realist, all right, but in philosophical terms; I'm what's called a pessimist. I think human consciousness was a tragic misstep in evolution. We became too self-aware. Nature created an aspect of nature separate from itself. We are creatures that should not exist by natural law. We are things that labor under the illusion of having a self, this accretion of sensory experience and feeling, programmed with total assurance that we are each somebody when, in fact, everybody's nobody. The honorable thing for species to do is to deny our programming, stop reproducing, and walk hand in hand into extinction, one last midnight, brothers and sisters opting out of a raw deal.

Martin Eric "Marty" Hart: So what's the point of getting out of bed in the morning?

Rustin Cohle: I tell myself I bear witness, but the honest answer is that it's obviously my programming, and I lack the constitution for suicide.

Compared to this apparent will to extinction and nihilistic desire, which curses everything, as the character Yevgeny Bazarov says in Turgenev's *Father and Sons*, what might the "great health" look like? Deleuze will say that the idea of the absence of the other inheres the question of schizophrenia. When the other, the other person, and alterity as such are absent, this is precisely what prompts a crisis in subjectivity itself. So what avails us is a movement, expressed in Robinson Crusoe's life, from the neurotic nature of the structure-other to the psychotic nature of the absence of others *as structure* and, from that point, the perversion of thinking the "world without us." To further sketch out what this means, the neurotic perceives the Other as the *a priori* structure - a "world without Others." For the psychotic, the *structure* can be understood as the absence of the other.

Moreover, from this psychotic structure, the pervert or the perverse as such has the structure of the World without us. Let us look and consider further the sense of the Other structure. Deleuze says this has the sense of a transcendental structure. This is what differentiates and retains all possibilities, all possible worlds. In other words, there is always something structuring the subject.

Moreover, this will be how we can get to the other structure. This is what takes on a transcendental aspect. A key point here to stress is the possibility of possible worlds. As we have seen, the other, the structure, is the condition that sustains the separation of subjectivity from the World of objects. This is a condition that undergirds the break between the subject and object. However, when no other exists, the ego gradually dissolves or dissipates. The transcendental is dehumanized in the case of Robinson Crusoe, a newly sexualized Robinson, and the transcendental meet. Robinson becomes the island itself; he embraces and delves deep into its structures. While still exuding neurotic behavior, there is the effort to retain the structure of the other, despite its radical absence; we might think of this absence of the other in terms of despair. Deleuze says, "The structure-other is still

functioning, though there is no longer anyone to fill it out or actualize it" (1990, p. 313).

To return to *Cast Away*, in suffering and existential crisis and profound despair, Chuck has some form of a schizophrenic episode and creates *Wilson the volleyball* as the simulacrum for the other, as a simulacrum for the structure of the other, that is, the radically absent other *as structure*. Wilson, in effect, is the *structure-other*. In the neurotic loneliness of the island, when marooned away from the World and others, the question of pain, suffering, and regret lingers. There and then, the subject or the self reflects on past memories. Wilson is the mirror to draw back into memory, into the vortices of the infinite unconscious, into that which the other is, into that which alterity is.

Psychosis emerges From this neurotic episode. As this could be considered the production of the schizophrenia object, in some sense, the object becomes useless and has no place in the structure of the World. There is a corresponding dissolution of the structure of the other. There is a turn to "the bottomless abyss" (Deleuze, 1990, p.188). We might say that the island is the bottomless abyss and schizophrenia here takes the place of loneliness and despair. The "great health" might be the schizophrenic's *Friday* tude, found in the communion with the island *qua* transcendental structure. There is a movement from the structure of the other to the absence of the other *qua* structure itself. Correspondingly this is a move towards the "great health," a move towards *possibility*; the happy solitude of the person with schizophrenia is still such a possibility.

Thus far, we have discussed the movement from neurosis to psychosis, but in this happy solitude of the person with schizophrenia, one finds a peculiar kind of perversion of work. Deleuze famously writes (1990, p. 320): "The World of the pervert is a world without Others, and thus a world without the possible. The other is that which renders possible. The perverse World is a world in which the category of the necessary has completely replaced that of the possible." To reiterate, the World of the pervert is a world without Others, and this a world without the possible as such because the other is that which renders the possible possible. The other is what secures appearances before consciousness. The perverse World is a world in which necessity has completely replaced that of the possible. The pervert destroys or kills the Other. There is an Other-cide or altricide at work

(1990, p. 320). In the *Logic of Sense*, Deleuze considers what happens when Others are missing from the structure of the World. He cites Tournier: "Everywhere I am not, total darkness reigns."

Furthermore, for Deleuze, this is "a harsh and black world, without potentialities or virtualities" (1990, p. 306). In such a world, the category of the possible has collapsed. He writes: "Instead of relatively harmonious forms surging forth from, and going back to a background in accordance with an order of space and time, only abstract lines now exist, luminous and harmful - only a groundless abyss, rebellious and devouring. Nothing but Elements" (p. 306).

The phenomenologist and Deleuze expert Alphonso Lingis writes in his philosophy of the elements how in Deleuze's reading of Tournier's *Friday*, it is Robinson's encounter with Friday which enables Robinson to be restructured according to the island's imperative. We can say Friday, like *Winston, the volleyball* averts the "catastrophe" or the complete absence of structure for Robinson or Chuck. Lingis writes in the essay 'The Elemental That Faces':

His eyes cease to function as a light source that circulates among objects visible before he comes upon them and remains visible on the margin of what he now sees. The colors and the shadows invade his eyes like opacities inhering in them, which the eye can no longer situate outside. His sight becomes a tube where a fragment of the visible abruptly blazes like a blow struck without warning. When other eyes were there, they kept the light luminous beyond the narrow radius of what was actually visible to him. (Lingis, 2018, p. 326)

In what follows, I will make some general points about how this argument contrasts with the speculative realism in Quentin Meillassoux's work and some of the literature around that new form of philosophy. I am principally interested in how to think about the movement from the "world without us" to what I will call the "Us-without-world." It seems that in the time of the coronavirus, in the time of enforced solipsism and the disturbance of ipseity (from the Latin *ipse* as self), in our "machinic solitude" as Guattari says in the essay *Remaking Social Practices* (Guattari & Genosko, 1996), and as we are marooned or cocooned in our island universes, what emerges is a new structure and foreboding prospects ahead of us, that is, of a structure of "Us-without-world." The question is: Is it a structure with or without possibility? This reading shows that this is an exhausted

world without possibility, a world of extinction. The exhausted World is a world without possibility. "There is no longer any possible," as Deleuze says. A perverse world is exhausted without "oxygen" (1990, p. 320). We can no longer breathe the air of possibility in this necessary World. However, what is the becoming of this new World without oxygen when the World of work and reason is radically cut off?

One sense of what the other is or what alterity is we can derive from Jean-Paul Sartre, who states *dogmatically* that the other is precisely the condition of our freedom. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre says there is no possibility and freedom without the other. The other is the condition of possibility for freedom as such. It is here that Sartre adopts a kind of philosophical autism. Sartre (1964) says that one needs the other to fully realize all the structures of one's own most being. The For-itself refers to for-others.

I need the Other to fully realize all the structures of my being. The For-itself refers to the For-others. (1964, p. 222)

The other[person] functions to provide depth, to undergird what lies behind those appearances presented to the subject. The other sustains those appearances and provides the backdrop to those appearances. Without this, we move toward autism. The other offers security that there is something beyond and behind those appearances as such. With the subject, the depth structure can stay strong. In a similar manner and regarding Robinson Crusoe, Lingis writes in his *The Community of Those Who Have Nothing in Common*:

In solitude, Robinson Crusoe learns the frightening nakedness of his eyes. He realizes that the eyes of others have extended beyond the narrow radius of things he sees, fields of things already seen or being seen by us; alien eyes extend the map of the visible. His solitude means that these other lights are gone, and black night narrows the visible to what he himself actually sees. (Lingis, 1994, p. 129)

Much anti-humanist philosophy of late has considered the possibility of reality without humans. Moreover, for some people, this is a radically new thought in the history of philosophy. However, before we address this view, we should note that such seductions already have a precedent. One example is found in the work of H. G. Wells, who, in *The Extinction of Man* in 1897 (Wells, 2019) writes:

It is part of the excessive egotism of the human animal that the bare idea of its extinction seems incredible to it. "A world without _us_!" it

says, as a heady young *Cephalaspis* might have said it in the old Silurian sea. However, since the *Cephalaspis* and the *Coccosteus*, many a fine animal has increased and multiplied upon the Earth, lorded it over land or sea without a rival, and passed at last into the night. Indeed it is not unreasonable to ask why a man should be an exception to the rule.

This great British science fiction writer considers what the planet might be without the other as such. However, in H.G. Wells's work, there is no delight in thinking of this World *without us*. There is no delight in this thought of species extinction. Compare this to the gleeful delight of a world without us found in the work of several modern thinkers who explore forms of nihilism to think about what the planet might be like without man as such. To restate the structure, Thacker's work has a structure of a world for us, which he calls the World. The world-in-itself is designated the Earth, and the world-without-us is named the planet. Schematically, we might explain this in the following way: the World is anthropocentric, the Earth is natural, and the planet is supernatural, fantastic, pure horror, or the anomalous in H. P. Lovecraft's language. In this reading, this is the planet without humans. The question is how can there be a joyous passage from the "great health" to the "great outdoors" or the World apart, as Quentin Meillassoux names it in his speculative realism? "great health" can be considered as pertaining to rejuvenation *by the Earth*. Dolphijn explains the sense of the "great health":

The feeling of being in a place more alive, warmer, and more fraternal, or better, to create one's life on another island, to rise from its wholly other, ungrooved soil, is conceptualized by Deleuze as 'a Great Health'...

[A] Great Health is mainly considered to be the future state that Robinson is anticipating: the new life he hopes to establish: the dehumanized Robinson, the ethereal double liberated by the island (along with the rest of the World). (Burns & Kaiser, 2012, p. 208)

Indeed, Tournier explores the state of pure joy of being welled up by the "great health" and overcoming.

He pictured his own lungs growing outside himself like a blossoming of purple-tinted flesh, living polyparies of coral with pink membranes, sponges of human tissue [...]. He would flaunt that intricate efflorescence, that bouquet of fleshy flowers, in the wide air

while a tide of purple ecstasy flowed into his body on a stream of crimson blood. (Tournier, 1969, pp. 193-194)

Tellurium subjectivity

Here we can think of Robinson's vegetative system as passing beyond the tellurian stage of propagation "without objective" to a becoming uranian, otherworldly, and sexualized (Lingis, 1994, p. 208). This is life in a zone of decomposition of the World of work and reason, "teeming in orgasmic decomposition and contaminations" (Lingis, 2000, p. 149). A summons from the elemental is heard. There is an escape from the organization of the World to the Tellurian, solar, and Uranian to find a new type of living (Lingis, 1994, p. 211). On this point, Dolphijn clarifies the argument.

Robinson knew he had the first to die to realize a new type of living order to find his Great Health. Death was his only route towards sustainability, to pick up the island's movement prior to humankind, to be released from religion and capitalism, to be released from the others, from the mundane preoccupations that turn us into minds in a groove. The oceans had to devour his boat and let it sink to the bottom of the sea without leaving a ripple at its surface. (Burns & Kaiser, 2012, p. 208)

Ray Brassier touches upon the "great outdoors" or World without us in his book, *Nihil Unbound* (2010), in which he draws on Jean-François Lyotard to make several bleak arguments regarding the depiction of the World without us. The world-without-us lurks in a form of "cosmological deep time," according to Brassier, who is often cited as being a proponent of speculative realism. This view sees the World as deep and futural, and despite the opposite tense, is akin to the ancestral World of the past in Meillassoux's work. The World without us is not bound by the anthropological time of subject-oriented correlation. Instead, for Brassier, following Lyotard, "everything is dead already" (p. 223).

Moreover, in his work, there remains the search for the "intelligibility of extinction." As he says: "[S]enselessness and purposelessness are not merely privative; they represent a gain in intelligibility" (Brassier, 2007, p. 238). In his essay 'The Voices of Things' (2011, p. 75), Lingis explores this strange and deep sense of cosmological time *phenomenologically*:

We exist on a chunk of rock and minerals whirling about in empty space where we see scattered in the dark voids a few other rock planets and stars, concentrations of fiery gases. We have hardly begun work into our conception of ourselves, our values, and our pleasures, the revelation by astronomy that the sun is burning itself out as fast as it can and that in another billion years, all animal and plant life on Earth now already 4.5 billion years old, will be incinerated before the exploding end of the sun. We must find a new conception of material reality and recognize the destination and destiny to which it summons us.

Let us return to the work of Thacker for a moment more to address his suggestion that the planet – the World without us – is logically inaccessible by the subject. The World is a real, withdrawn object. However, this is a world filled with hyper objects, as conveyed by Timothy Morton (2014). Thacker argues:

The world-without-us is not found in the 'great beyond,' that which is exterior to the World, that is the world-for-us, nor is it found in the Earth as the world-in-itself, but rather, the planet is the abyss, the interkingdom, between the World and the Earth. (2011, no page)

Without access to the withdrawn object, the object is beyond thought. Why so? In this view, is there not a perverse desire at work, a desire or fantasy that stems from the rejection of the possibility of the *human World* itself? This is fantasy at its purest, as Slavoj Žižek will say in his critique of Alan Weisman's *World Without Us* (2014).

[F]or its 'world without us' portrayal of 'the Earth itself regaining its pre-castrated state of innocence,' anchored around a conceit of desiring to witness one's non-existence.

The World without us" is thus fantasy at its purest: witnessing the Earth itself retaining its pre-castrated state of innocence before we humans spoiled it with our hubris.

The irony is that the most prominent example comes from the catastrophe of Chornobyl: the exuberant nature taking over the disintegrating debris of the nearby city of Pripyat, which was abandoned and left the way it was. (Žižek, 2014, no page; see Taylor & Hughes, 2016)

I hope I have made a distinction here between what the "great health" might mean in Deleuze's work when compared to the "great beyond" in Thacker's work or the "great outdoors" in Quentin

Meillassoux's work. However, the issue is clouded as art preempts reality during the coronavirus. In a work called *Human Disqualification*, artist Yuan Guang-ming shows images of Taipei, where humans are absent, airbrushed out of existence. However, life goes on without humans. The lights are on, you could say, but humans are no more. Again, there is a civilization at work, but there are no humans as such. Like the thinkers above Thacker and Brassier, Yuan Guang-ming's art expresses curiosity and delight in addressing landscapes and vistas eerily without the World of humans. There is still some semblance of order, even though humans are entirely absent. There remain the structures of roads and railways but without transportation as such. These images are also found in the everyday photographs taken during the coronavirus. Like messages in a bottle sent by those on desert(ed) islands, they are taken by people stunned by the absence of the other. When life on Earth has literally stopped, images are disseminated exploring subways, tourist spots, and train stations, entirely without movement. The cities represented are depopulated and deprived of vitality. The everyday rushing to and fro is halted, the usual throng of people falls away, and trains are evacuated of customers. There are tours without people. There are congregations without people. We also have the perversion of a university without students, without a student body. We cannot even ponder, as Deleuze does following Baruch de Spinoza in his *Ethics*: "We do not even know what a body is capable of..." and again, "We do not even know of what affections we are capable, nor the extent of our power" (Deleuze & Joughin, 1990, p. 226).

I agree with Steven Swarbrick (2018) here that the "world without others" that Deleuze ponders in the appendix to the *Logic of Sense* is thought-provoking as it acts as a "philosophical guide" or prelude to the "world-without-us" (p. 105). It suggests a rumination on the deep, cosmological time of the World without humans. Swarbrick writes: "The 'world without Others' that Deleuze theorizes is thus a philosophical guide to the 'world without us' that the Anthropocene forecasts" (p. 105). It seems to me that what I have been thinking about is how to criticize the perversion of thinking "Us-without-world." If somehow the World is radically cut off from us and we are marooned or cocooned in our own ipseity, in our *machinic solitude*, with no way to communicate with the other, no way to communicate face to face, no way to form a relationship with the outside world as

such, what is fundamental is to understand that the object is essentially cut off from the subject, which is to say, what we are left with is necessity itself and the loss of possibility.

Thus it is timely to think about what the World means in terms of the possibility of what might emerge from the structure of "Us-without-world." Here I am less inclined to celebrate necessity or the exhaustion and impossibility of the possible. From my point of view, if the object is entirely withdrawn and inaccessible, it is untimely to think *perversely* about the Us in the "Us-without-world." It is time to return to subjectivity and the question of the much-maligned creature – *the human and its becoming*. This I shall address further in Part II below.

Part II

I return to the question of ipseity. I am writing in my own solipsistic enchainment, my own hermetic island of withdrawal, quarantine, confinement, isolation, and loneliness. In this deserted space, there is an absolute perversion in this new World of mine, not so much a "world without Others" as a "Us-without-world." Thinking from the "world without Others" to the "world-without-us" and then "Us-without-world" has taken on a life of its own in the time of the coronavirus pandemic because it is in this time that the question of the island or the desert even has taken on a real existential quality. What is my island of withdrawal? This is explicated brilliantly by French philosopher Catherine Malabou (2020), who, in her own quarantine, spoke about the island of the self in withdrawal, in isolation, in confinement. For her, it became clear that one has to find the possibility of building a world with and for others in one's own moment of withdrawal. In my language, this is to struggle against the deadly centripetal cycles of the self, what one can call the *deadly cycles of ipseity*. This sense of a deadly form of ipseity is clearly at odds with the arguably insurrectionary exoticism of Lingis, who describes ipseity as:

Torments of pleasure separate and turn on themselves, engendering spirals of ipseity. Pulses of pleasure and spasms of pain vibrate on themselves, feel themselves. The eddy of a self is formed in this conjunctive synthesis-multiple vagabond ipseities, here today, gone tomorrow, circulating on the surface of the body without organs. (Lingis, 2002, p. 98)

My sense of a deadly form of ipseity is the self that turns inwards, burrows itself deeper into itself, feasts on its own narcissism and melancholia, and festers in its own brooding obsessions. We must resist this gnawing, aching, toiling sense of *désœuvrement* or desolation.

In the time of the coronavirus pandemic, Malabou has spoken beautifully about the thought experiment of withdrawing into the self, into "the island of the self," and from there to begin to ruminate upon new forms of sociality, new forms of understanding of alterity as such. It is in the "bracketing of sociality," in the *epokhē* or "suspension of judgment," that one can access alterity. She says: "I am trying to be as solitary as possible in my loneliness." In her lecture on Rousseau and quarantine, Malabou (2020) says that it is only in withdrawing into the self in a time of isolation that one can truly understand what alterity is as such. For me, this is the beginning of the reconstruction of transindividuation circuits in Bernard Stiegler's sense – circuits between the generations. It is only by withdrawing into the self that one can come to understand what the Other is and what being-with is as such. As Malabou says: "I noticed that writing only became possible when I reached such a confinement within confinement, a place in the place where nobody could enter and that at the same time was the condition for my exchanges with others." You might call this a philosophical or phenomenological task, perhaps even a moment of grace or epiphany, but another way to put this is to say that the *epokhē*, suspension, and interruption, which the virus has prompted, has opened up a "third world" of thought, as Bernard Stiegler says following Popper (Stiegler, 2020), which is to say, the possibility of sublimation, the possibility of new forms of negentropic knowledge (Stiegler, 2018). This is a form of knowledge that cannot be anticipated, that is, a form of thought brought into the World for the first time, at once incalculable and incomprehensible. There is resistance to the World of necessity. In this crisis, a time of the breaking down of the every day, reorientation is possible. Malabou invokes Foucault's ethics of the self, the care of and technologies of the self to understand isolation. Moreover, she sounds Heideggerian when she says that knowing how to find "society within oneself" to understand politics is necessary. In terms of the latter, her suggestions prompted me to look at *Being and Time* again and think about the existential found there differently.

Out of this poverty of living a life without the World, there is an opportunity to reflect on this radical and conspicuous absence of a life without a world. This suggests that we can *think otherwise* regarding the crisis of living a life without the World, of being outside the World and not with a world; we can think beyond it. In the poverty of living a life without the World, there is the opportunity to think about the possibility of future worlds; indeed, we can pose a radical critique of the present World in the name of a future world as such. Containment thus proves to be an opportunity to think about the concept of "Us-without-world" – that is, the World subtracted from the self. That we are without a world suggests that we are "poor in the world," as Heidegger says of the animals, and "without world" in the case of inanimate objects like rocks, that we do not have a world, that we are somehow subtracted from the World, that we are somehow despairingly deficient, that we have a deficient mode of solicitude or being (*defizienter modus*). In *Being and Time*, Heidegger writes that being-alone is a deficient mode of Dasein's being-with:

Being-alone is a deficient mode of being-with; its possibility is proof of the latter. On the other hand, factual being alone is not changed by the fact that a second instance of a human being is "next to" me, or by ten such human beings. Even when these and still more are present, Dasein can be alone. Thus, being-with and the facticity of being-with-one-another are not based on the fact that several "subjects" are physically there together. (Heidegger, 2010, p. 121)

And again

Being for-, against-, and without-one-another, passing-one-another-by, not mattering- to-one-another, are possible ways of concern. Moreover, precisely the last named modes of deficiency and indifference characterize the everyday, average being-with-one-another. These modes of being show the characteristics of inconspicuousness and obviousness, which belong to everyday inner-worldly Dasein-with of others and the handiness of useful things taken care of daily. These indifferent modes of being-with-one-another tend to mislead the ontological interpretation into initially interpreting this being as the pure objective presence of several subjects. It seems as if only negligible variations of the same kind of being lie before us. However, ontologically, there is an essential distinction between the "indifferent"

being together of arbitrary things and the not-mattering-to-one-another of beings who are with one another. (Heidegger, 2010, p. 122)

However, in the existential of "Us-without-world," we are not of the World if the structure of *Mitsein* or being-with is remote or distant. Where I dwell, there was once a world around me that had the structure of everydayness. That has gone. The abstract, impersonal, and automatic signals, alerts, messages, and announcements of my every day working and commuting World have all fallen silent. I no longer move. I no longer travel. I am hermetic, which is to say isolated. There is no outside. The collapse of this everydayness reveals through its present-at-handness that the World is not there around me; it is not there around us. I am alone. Cocooned in my funk at home, through the zooming in and zooming out of technology, the World is *de-severed* from me further. Yes, the World comes to me, and I become a far-seer of the World. The zooming in and out of the World of technology brings the far-ness of the World into close proximity. Technology zooms in on me, brings others from far-ness into nearness, into close proximity, manifesting much anxiety and paranoia *for both parties* in the process of bringing to the nearness that which is far away. This has become something of a mirror.

From this shared mutual trauma, what is revealed in the breakdown of the every day is a tendency to eliminate remoteness, to undermine the intimacy of where one dwells. Intimacy has absconded too. My dwelling is no more. What is far away is brought nearer and nearer to the extent that its present-at-handness is disclosed. In my withdrawal, there is a de-severance of both the self and the World. There is a deadly ipseity of the self. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger says being alone is a deficient mode of *being-with* as there is no leaping over to the other. The is leaping *in for him*, displacing the other, rendering the other dependent and dominated, and leaping *ahead of him* to authentically give care back as such (122). Alternatively, there is no leaping over to the other in the zooming in and out of technology. If it were the case that there could be a leaping over towards the other through technology-mediated solicitude, then the other would become transparent to itself and thus emancipated, as Heidegger says. But no. In the zooming in and zooming of technology, there is a commandeering of the other, control of the other; we are left marooned, existentially quarantined by this unfreedom.

However, can we think of this pulverizing state of affairs otherwise? We can. In the collapse of the World and the everyday, do we not find a certain sense of openness in solicitude and, in that existential space, the possibility of rethinking the World as it is? Rosi Braidotti recently (2020) has responded to the so-called extinction enthusiasts, to the purveyors of worlds without us, without others, and without empathy. In this World, there is neither morality nor sociality. There is no experience and consciousness as such. There is nothing but necessity. There is no *we-experience* but only a phenomenology of the One, pure immanence, replete, pure inert being-in-itself – death and extinction. There is no memory, subject or object, or inter-subjective relation. The *Lebenswelt* is entirely erased as this universe of purported self-evident givenness is a world without subject and experience as such. There is no possibility of “we” or “us.” Writing against this toxic form of thought, Braidotti speaks of affirmative ethics in the wake of this orgy of extinction fever. I have interpreted her in the following way to help make sense of my ownmost isolation. We must think of new forms of affirmative ethics and action in isolation. This means to use Braidotti’s language, to take “suffering as a source of information.” We must understand our collective suffering, the being-alone as a deficient mode of being-with during the coronavirus. Alternatively, in my words, we must understand the suffering of Us-without-world and draw out its possibilities from that. There is a clarion call in Braidotti’s work to think beyond the negative passions, starting from acknowledging pain and suffering. There is no time to indulge or wallow in this moment as these are real, fundamental structural issues to change. Isolation is an opportunity for all people who suffer from isolation to make isolation and suffering a source of information and, thus, a source of renewal: She says: “Out of our serious difficulties, we must extract ways to understand our position as being worthy of our times.” Braidotti asks what kind of ethics we need in times of crisis. Her answer, following her teacher Deleuze, is to be worthy of what happens to us in the wound of the present, a wound which, if we follow the etymology of the word, is a plague on us all, or in our time, a virus on us all. In other words, one must know deserted islands, that is to say, to first face our ownmost deserted state of being. During the coronavirus, the collective task is to create a sense of hope or renewal. She argues that isolation is a way to reconstitute community, find “the missing people,” and create other alternative ways of living and becoming.

Conclusion

With the loss of the lifeworld and the impossibility of “we,” the “I” takes on a floating, spectral presence. The subject is desubjectified, and the object deobjectified. Without alterity to sustain the constitution of the subject, there can be no inter-subjective foundation of the social. We fall into solipsistic, petrified relations without common life. There is a deactualization of “I” - a closing in on the self, a deadly spiral of ipseity. Against this, I propose and designate Us-without-world, a world with possibility.

We must find new ways to zoom in and out of alterity during the coronavirus pandemic to return subjectivity to itself as a source of creation and sufficiency. This is to resist the deficiency of a world-without-us. Instead, in the bleak moment of finding ourselves Us-without-world, we must find islands of recuperation as we zoom across oceans of toxic, nihilistic information if only to return subjectivity to itself and to begin our innermost and outermost downgoing again.

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Semiotic Beings: The Realm of a Single Kind?

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10.22034/IYP.2021.245803

Abstract

Our research pays attention to the problem of the coverage of the realm of semiotic beings. This problem is raised by the meeting between the contemporary account of the human animal as a semiotic animal and the possible advent of a technological singularity, meaning a living technological being aware of semiosis. Apart from highlighting the prospective emergence of a complex phenomenon leading to evolutionary pressures on humans, we also pointed to a positive direction toward developing a cooperative relationship between the latter and a sustainable form of technological life: the furtherance of semiotics. To this end, we started by providing a few historical and philosophical references to help us better understand the problem at stake. Next, we described how beings gain semiotic access to reality, the distinction between the realm of semiotic beings and of machines, and the infinite character of the study of semiotics. Finally, we concluded that the realm of semiotic beings is still, despite technological advances, exclusively human.

Keywords: Awareness; Evolution; Humans; Machines; Semiotics.



Semiotic Beings: The Realm of a Single Kind?

Background

The twentieth century marks a shift from modernity to postmodernity. This transition occurred at the same time as semiotics broke through the frontiers of what seemed to be the full range of sciences and integrated them into a new paradigm, positing that objectivity is born out of interpretation, making it impossible to disentangle what is cognized from its cognition. If so, it is impossible to uncouple awareness of any object from how it is interpreted. Interpretation occurs by means of signs. The very openness that makes interpretation via signs possible also leads to a vague and fallible understanding of reality. Like all animals, humans are semiotic: humans do live on, within, and are themselves signs. However, at the same time, humans are also aware of themselves as signs. In the bosom of the animal kingdom, there is no awareness of the infinite network of triads other than that of humans, making humans the only semiotic beings on Earth. Semiotic beings are creatures who both participate in and are aware of universal semiosis. The intelligence of semiotic beings, caught up in a seamless process over which they cannot gain complete critical control, is activated amidst a flux of signs. That is exciting news since if it were not so, then knowledge could no longer be cultivated. Semiotic beings are aware of "objective reality," that is, the semiosphere or the universe as a boundless web of triplets or triadic sign relations. Many semiotists, in the wake of Peirce (1839-1914), have never given up on this premise. They insisted that the sign is triadic because such a proposal enables us to comprehend the phenomenon of meaning (Deely, 2009, pp. 158–59). Let us list three of Peirce's definitions of the sign, respectively written by him *circa* 1906, 1908, and 1910:

- a) "*a medium* [for the communication of a Form], (...) essentially in a triadic relation, to its Object which determines it, and to its Interpretant which it determines." A Form is what is "communicated from the Object through the Sign to the Interpretant" (Peirce, 1998, p. 544);
- b) "anything which on the one hand is so determined by an Object and on the other hand so determines an idea in a person's

mind, that this latter determination," *i.e.*, what he terms "the *Interpretant* of the sign," is thus "mediately determined by that Object." Therefore, a sign has "a triadic relation to its Object and to its Interpretant" (Peirce, 1931-1958, para. 8.343);

- *c)* "anything whatever, real or fictile, which is capable of a sensible form, is applicable to something other than itself, that is already known, and that is capable of being so interpreted in another sign," which Peirce designated the Interpretant of the sign, as to "communicate something that may not have been previously known about its Object." That being the case, there is "a triadic relation between any Sign, an Object, and an Interpretant" (Peirce, 2019).

Such insight was top-notch, although by no means original with Peirce, who chiefly gleaned it from the Coimbra Jesuit Course (Deely, 2009, p. 159; see also Junqueira, 2020). The Coimbra Jesuit Course (henceforth CJC) were published in Coimbra and Lisbon and sums up over three thousand pages, 73% of which are concerned with natural philosophy (Carvalho, 2018b, pp. 73–74). The CJC is a set of eight volumes[1] Written by Manuel de Góis (1543-1597), Sebastião do Couto (1567-1639)—the author of the volume on logic (Couto, 1606), which contains the first systematic 17th-century treatise on semiotics (Carvalho, 2019a)—, Baltasar Álvares (1560-1630), and Cosme de Magalhães (1551-1624). Even though the latter were Jesuit priests who were very knowledgeable of theology, the CJC undividedly dealt with philosophy, aiming at commenting on Aristotle's (384-322 BC) works and thoughts. These commentaries were designated for the philosophy syllabi of the numerous colleges of the Society of Jesus, from the Atlantic to the Urals, China, and Brazil. When those four Jesuits composed the CJC, "to philosophize in the school of Aristotle was to have access to the most cutting-edge knowledge" (Carvalho, 2019b). Moreover, even nowadays, to learn from the school of Álvares, Couto, Góis, and Magalhães is to be *au courant* with the most sophisticated philosophical teachings. Such an up-to-date realization that all thought is in signs, making it less complicated for us to grasp that all objects are objects signified, was formulated by the Coimbra school during the turn towards modernity (Deely, 2009). It must, however, be noted that one should be significantly careful not to attribute first occurrences in intellectual history to the Coimbra

scholars without double-checking the works of preceding philosophers such as their educator Pedro da Fonseca (1528-1599)—co-named "Portuguese Aristotle" (see Coxito, 2005, p. 14; Martins, 2019)—and the *maestros* of the Salamanca school, particularly the Segovian Domingo de Soto (1494-1560) (Mário S. de Carvalho, personal communication, April 28, 2020; see also Deely, 2004, p. 42). The critical philosophical instruction is that all objects are objects signified or simply "significates." Not everything is significate, but every object is. What is more, saying "significate" is to put clearly what "object" means in an ambiguous and perplexing manner (Deely, 2009). It may, therefore, occur that, at times, the use of "significate" rather than "object" is adopted.

Semiotic Access to Reality

Peirce encountered the road to semiotics, *inter alia*, due to the Coimbra school. By and large, what the former read in the Latins before his time ran out in 1914 dramatically altered his philosophy and thus set the pace for the growth of a significant body of 20th and 21st centuries philosophical outputs. A turn was taken in Iberia in the sixteenth century within the Latin discussion about approaching the phenomena of meaning. The decisive realization came progressively in the 16th and 17th centuries through the works of Soto, Fonseca, the Conimbricenses, and others. Let us cite in length what the Semiotist, a character in a fictional philosophical dialogue written by Deely, said:

This realization was twofold. One part lay in [1] the insight that not relation as such, but relation as triadic, constituted the being of the sign, while the sensible element (or, in the case of the formal sign, the psychological element) that occupied the role of other-representation is what we call a 'sign' in the typical, loose way of speaking. The other part lay in [2] the insight that not anything about relation as suprasubjective determines whether it belongs to the order of *ens reale* or *ens rationis*, but wholly and solely the circumstances of the relation. Whence the same relation, under one set of circumstances *ens reale*, by change of those circumstances alone could pass into an *ens rationis* without any detectable objective difference in the direct experience of the animal (2004, pp. 41–42).

In this [1] sense, positing that all signs, as such, form a threefold ontological network, Peirce has developed his theory of categories, comprehending "firstness," "secondness," and "thirdness." What may seem like a sort of number three obsession reaches far beyond that: it is about grasping the meaning of the whole experience, as much as laying the ground for interpreting, based on a categorical doctrine that can embrace all phenomena, each and every experience as such. There is much more to the three categories than mere numerical values (Sonesson, 2019). Regarding the nature of the strictly formal relation identified between the categories of consciousness, the ordinal ordering of the categories serves the purpose of specifying the mode of being of the phenomena of consciousness from the viewpoint of relative value in a series. In such a way, the value of the phenomena of consciousness varies according to the role played by the different categorical universes vis-à-vis one another. Firstness is not dependent on anything other than itself, and it is the beginning of the series; secondness relies on firstness since a process of inception takes place from it; thirdness lies in the mutual functioning of firstness and secondness, that is, in that while firstness is active, secondness is passive. In the categorial series, the categories' nature is indicated so that the preceding categories are assimilated into the subsequent ones but do not cease to function as separate and relatively self-contained categories. Both firstness and secondness emerge as conditions of possibility for thirdness. Even so, any continuity between any firstness and any secondness is established in thirdness. Thereby, this series should be interpreted both in an upward and a downward orientation: in the upstream track, the nether category is a condition for the emergence of the one immediately above; in the descending direction, once the series is completed and a mind that consists of its very own experience becomes fully aware of it, the cause for the upward conditioning is revealed (Pires, 1993). Still reading Peirce, one must conclude that, after developing such a theory of categories, it is not possible to conceive of *what is*—*i.e.*, to think maturely enough as to construct a fact according to the *secondness*, that is to say, conditioned by the actuality of action and reaction—without it entailing a determination of thought gradually advancing in extent in an endless course bound by the interval that intermediates between both furthest points of bottomless *firstness* and all-pervading *thirdness*, that is to say, between a total impression and the regulating principles for the recognition of the thought process itself (Pires, 2011). Regarding the

other insight [2], the following may give us a hand in clarifying: *ens reale* denotes beings, mind-independent realities, while *ens rationis* stands for non-beings, mind-dependent realities. Semiotic beings are those who can map out the difference between *ens reale* and *ens rationis* and are thus said to be capable of awakening to the scrambled and perplexing nature of experience, meaning the only living beings capable of mediating between *what is* (mind-independent) and *what is not*, according to the circumstances of the sign relations involved in any given situation. However, interpreting signs involves too many irons in the fire, and so the first challenge in accessing reality semiotically is that there are plethoras of available avenues to explore. To conceive of *what it is* is to access reality semiotically. Such access is

- sparked by firstness or, in other words, undiluted feelings or isolated impressions;
- occurs through secondness, that is to say, facing resistance, enduring stress, experiencing lack of purpose, or even stumbling upon worthless relations;
- rests upon thirdness, meaning that the rule of mind is unleashed, *i.e.*, the harshness of the facts is either frayed or outstripped, while minded/mental aspects are induced into relations.

In order to verge on significates inside out, in their interdependence and interrelatedness, semiotic beings would have to attain impeccable semiotic access to reality, leading to a situation where there would no longer be any relevance whatsoever in distinguishing objective and physical realities. Here, "objective reality" is in contrast—thus closely connected—to the "physical reality." Not long ago, this distinction was employed in illustrating the possibility of a law enforcement officer catching someone regardless of whether the former is acting in an area of his/her jurisdiction. The entire example (Deely, 2009, p. 173) is worth paraphrasing. A law enforcement officer's powers are as physical as they are objective, and the confines of each are beyond that of the other. The officer is carrying a firearm, holding a club, and being trained to subjugate others in bodily ways. The fact that the law enforcement powers cease at the border remains a "purely objective reality," susceptible to being met or not. The feet of an officer do not become stuck to the ground as soon as the officer hits or crosses a border. Regardless of whether the officer's authority ceases beyond a frontier, the officer remains physically qualified to hunt and subdue.

In this instance, observing the fragile thread linking physical and objective realities is reasonably straightforward. The eminent value of reaching reality semiotically is plain to see in a letter that Peirce wrote to Lady Victoria Welby-Gregory (1837-1912) in 1904, where the following can be read: "the highest grade of reality is only reached by signs; that is by such ideas as those of Truth and Right and the rest" (Peirce & Welby, 1977, p. 23). In a letter written *c.* 1906 to Ferdinand Canning Scott Schiller (1864-1937), Peirce (1931-1958, para. 8.332) declared that signs act "to render inefficient relations efficient" by fixing habits—*i.e.*, laws, which Peirce takes to be "habits that we must impute to nature" in order to "render it scientifically intelligible" (Fernández, 2010, p. 3)—, by which such relations will act or tend to act if necessary. Correspondingly, the ultimate purpose of Couto's *doctrina signorum*, according to Carvalho (2019a), is "to make reality, as a whole, semiotically accessible to humans." In other words, the impetus of Couto's semiotics is to ground reality on scientific interpretation, thus equating *what is* with intelligibility and granting semiotic beings with downright semiotic awareness, *i.e.*, the possibility to fully penetrate reality via *signa*.

Semiotic Beings and Machines

We were born into a world already constituted, which is apparently continually undergoing reconstruction. However, it is indeed a total impression of the beginning of time that one should speak when referring to the coming of each and every one of us into the world. The world seems fresh, and we have the impression of being free when we are young. Nevertheless, it is whenever this putative freedom finds resistance, such as in conflicts or in being forced to behave in one way or another, that we draw from the lessons of experience (Peirce, 1991). As time goes by, we are becoming increasingly aware of the prolongation of time. However, what are we talking about when we speak about us? This "us" refers to nothing other than human beings. Indeed, this does not sound like saying anything or saying far too much. However, we mean this: us, the one semiotic animal upon the Earth. It turns out that things just got more complicated: while the term "animal" is not, by and large, the source of significant misunderstandings in any ordinary chat, the same is not valid about "semiotic." After what was said, it might have occurred that voices were raised expressing some indignation: why resort to such awkward

terms? Was there a reason why they were made up? The inquiry is fair, the mood is comprehensible, and fortunately, the response is straightforward: yes, but there is more to it:

It is an old problem: By using familiar terms in an unfamiliar way, one upsets the hearer; by inventing entirely new terms, one risks losing the hearer completely. Yes, there is no alternative to getting new ideas across: one must either use old words in new ways or invent new words (Deely, 2010, p. 14).

Humans are semiotic beings. How did we come to understand this concept? "Semiotic" relates to semiotics: the study of semiosis. Traditionally, semiosis amounts to the phenomenon that differentiates between inanimate objects and life forms. Specifically, semiosis is conceived as an instinctive capacity of every living organism (Sebeok, 2001). Hence, semiotics stands a chance of being taken for a phenomenological doctrine or study of the common instinctive capacity of all living organisms, i.e., that of the production and comprehension of signs. Still, although it is possible to pinpoint the universal significance that the phenomenon of semiosis entails in the realm of life, it remains no less the case that semiosis can no longer be described in terms of its biological scope, same as its instinctual status.

Likewise, semiotics cannot be limited to biosemiotics: lifeless significates, such as machines, can also perform semiotic operations; that is, machines are also capable of producing and understanding signs. Those are semiotic (not *semiotic*) machines. Nevertheless, only humans are aware of semiosis. At least until some being, other than humans, whether or not an animal, attains awareness of semiosis—i.e., a metasemiotic consciousness—it must be the case that humans remain the only semiotic beings on Earth. Such does not simply constitute a privilege but a defining trait of humankind. This will always hold true unless the day comes when the state of science becomes such that it will no longer be possible to ignore the existence of other living, meta-semiotically conscious beings. Suppose a machine is ever to become meta semiotically conscious, i.e., a semiotic being (aware of semiosis), rather than an inanimate object. In that case, it must not just be turned on; it has to be alive. Information technology has evolved so far that it has already been reported that the time of semiotic machines has come. Some machines, Nadin (2007, p. 64) said, "turn out to be semiotic machines operating in a universe of

clear-cut distinctions between Truth and False (conveniently symbolized by 1 and 0)" (Nadin, 2007, p. 64). Nadin continued:

As we know by now, computers are the unity between a language consisting of only two letters and the logic describing the relation between any statements in this exact but minimally expressive language. It is undoubtedly a case of reductionism, from natural language to one of the strictest mathematical formalisms. However, the threshold between the materially embodied machines of the Cartesian viewpoint and the first immaterial machine is also the threshold. This machine processes not things but information, representing "in some form or capacity" (to allude to Peirce's sign definition) things, or even, as our knowledge advances, information about a lower level of information and so forth (ad infinitum).

Nadin's "semiotic" machines are actually "semiosic," as there are no signs that machines are meta-semiotically aware. Semiotic awareness has hitherto only been achieved by animals, more precisely humans. Beyond the advent of a semiotic machine, awareness of semiosis should likewise unfold and be developed by a technological being. Moreover, semioethical responsibility would cease to be a strictly anthroposemiotic affair. Inanimate objects have been acquiring a certain autonomy, which entails life risks and opportunities.

A prime example is the realm of machines, where autonomy gains have been enormous. Indeed, the capacity of machines to make decisions with an apparent degree of autonomy and awareness is progressively increasing. By means of human interventions, some inanimate objects are said to have begun to learn, to have resources for observing and analysis, just as for researching further. We are free to imagine

Machines that would refuse to kill on command if this causes too many casualties—humans or animals. This means these machines would act against the will of the warlords or warladies. (...) [Machines] can have duties in a certain sense. They can make ethical decisions; if they do so, they have to do so in a certain way. We cannot sue them or make them liable, but we can shake our heads and tell them they made a mistake (through our own failure). Then, we can help them to better fulfill their duties (Bendel, 2013, p. 108).

The critical thing Bendel is telling us is that the creation of machines by humans cannot be halted; that is to say, it is still ongoing. Creation remains a philosophical keyword. "Creation" is so fundamental that it may well go as far as being regarded as synonymous with "education." For instance, the Portuguese language translates "to raise children" into "criar crianças" as well as to "educar crianças". Children are semiotic beings. The lack of regulation in children's spontaneous development calls for education. Can it be said that machines make a new sort of infant who requires educational care? If they do make, they do require. If that is the case, what role should humans play? Educating is creating a virtual realm of action within each learner to help them be better prepared for future challenges. The mission of education consists of enabling each child to attain adulthood (Coimbra, 2009). However, has the time come for machines to be brought into education, no longer as means but as learners? There have been far-reaching shifts in the understanding of machines over the centuries, and it remains fickle at this point. A catalog of illustrations can be found to exemplify various ways of conceiving what a machine is: hammers, chronometers, motors, automobiles, planes, computers, etc. Along the times, machines have been helpful for humans to achieve specific goals, mediating the relationship between time and humans and transforming different sorts of energy into mechanical power.

Moreover, machines have been built and used for transportation, as well as for the sake of communication. Fickle as it may be, the understanding of machines has been based on machines' role in pursuing human goals. The roles that inanimate objects have played throughout history are countless, and the types pertaining to the realm of machinery encompass a wide variety of significates (Haken, 1993, p. 124). Now, even software is being integrated into the ensemble: "Lines of code are already being referred to as a machine, causing even more confusion whenever we see the word" (Gospodinov & Skene, 2018). What if there was a semiotic machine, a living technology aware of semiosis and thus of itself and other beings? Were there to be a semiotic machine, the label "technological singularity"—*i.e.*, a unique, one-by-one, separate, individual living technological being aware of semiosis—would painfully fit. A poor application of "technological singularity," as some sort of "point in time described as an intelligence explosion, a time when super-

intelligent machines create even more intelligent machines" (Andersson & Elf, 2015, p. 8), has been popularized. However, a technological singularity cannot be more plausibly imagined as some "point in time" than as a creature: a living technology or, more specifically, a machine capacitated with metasemiotic consciousness. Humans would have to rise to the occasion as inventors of the new creature. With the semiotic machine, semiotic animals would share the until then lonely domain of semiotic beings. However, would coexistence be possible between semiotic animals and the technological singularity?

The Endless Growth of Semiotics

If it were to become real, the technological singularity would prove to be the ultimate innovation of the science and technology movement in the whole history of human evolution until then. Suppose a semiotic machine would behave in a way that is similar to that of most living creatures. In that case, it is not unreasonable to suggest that its primary concern would be to ensure the continuation of its own vitality. For a technology to manifest this sort of concern, its consciousness would have to open up to its very life: the machine would be aware of its situation as being-in-time. It is essential to recognize now the worth of asking what would be the situation of a possible technological singularity in the world. One thing is sure: like humans, the semiotic machine would be able to face the unlimited challenges posed by semiotics, which is equivalent to studying semiosis, an infinite process:

Infinite process, repugnant in physical explanations concerned with accounting for how the interactions of finite beings as such bring about this or that condition, is the normal condition with signs (...) The human individual wakes up intellectually in the middle of a river of signs, mostly hidden behind, below, and within the objects they present as "the way things are" (...) From the individual's point of view, there is neither a beginning point to the process in the past nor a foreseeable end to the process in the future (Deely, 2001, p. 644).

For the moment, the growth of semiotics depends only on humans. As already mentioned, semiotics is nothing but the study of semiosis. Semiosis stands for the semiosphere, the infinite nature of the

universe. Whoever studies semiosis handles signs, how they act, and their systems. Signs, their actions, and their systematic interactions should not exceed the reach of the awareness of a semiotic being. Signs are all forms capable of representing, through whatever media, a referent, such as any significate or a realm of reference, like a class of significates. Signs enable semiotic beings to recognize patterns and function as guides to predicting future events or planning to take action (Sebeok, 2001, p. 3).

In order to study the relations among signs and their circumstances, that is, to conduct a study on semiosis, semiotic beings do not need to reinvent the wheel but rather engage in interpretation. Abdullahi-Idiagbon (2009, p. 118) states that interpretation is "a meaning-investing mechanism which relates a sign form to a familiar system of conventions or concepts." Investing meaning is breeding signs. To begin with, it is enough to think of the word "dog," which has evolved from the Old English "docga." These terms provide an example of signs bred by humans. "Dog," same as "docga," is the case of a verbal sign representing a relatively limited array of referents. Let us give the least remarkable example: the word "dog," in a somewhat casual sense, may be employed to portray someone. That is, if the intention is, for instance, to be offensive, to mark him/her as cynical, or to emphasize his/her treacherous or submissive conduct. Think about other circumstances: it is possible to employ the term "dog" to represent canidae; in the case of felidae, the word "dog" might have never been used. "Dog" is also suitable to stand for the Portuguese word "cão," the Russian "sobaka (собака)," and the German "hund," but never the Greek "papagálos (παπαγάλος)," the Polish "papuga" or the Finnish "papakaija." Signs are thus a part of what concerns every semiotic being on a daily basis, something with which every human animal is intimately acquainted. If not, who would know what to look for when trying to find a way out into the highway? How else would it be possible to tell which plane to take to Tehran? Or, to give three further examples, how could anyone flirt, dial a phone number, or browse the Web? A sign is whichever represents anything the sign itself is not. Anything whatsoever? That is a reasonable question. No more than introducing a reply requires more profound insight. To illustrate some of the stuff to be included in the realm of "sign:" memoirs, schemata, animal grunts, winking, finger pointing, concepts, letters, numerals, words, sentences, imagery, and more. In a word, a sign is

Whatever, be it in the physical universe, be it in the world of thought, that, whether embodying an idea of any kind (and permit us throughout to use this term to cover purposes and feelings), or being connected with some existing object, or referring to future events through a general rule, causes something else, its interpreting sign, to be determined to a corresponding relation to the same idea, existing thing, or law (Peirce, 1998, p. 326).

"Signum est quod potentiae cognoscenti aliquid repraesentat," meaning that a sign is whatever represents something to a knowing power (Couto, 2001, p. 38). However, signs alone are unable to represent something to a knowing power. For a correct interpretation of a sign, its interpreter must possess some background that enables him/her to pinpoint the significate of such a sign (Lane, 2014, p. 72). Whenever signs stand out, there are objects to be found. It is no less true that if there are objects, there must be signs. A sign is what each and every significate entails (Deely, 2004, p. 4). Otherwise, we could not, for example, see *a door*, imagine *a door*, tell whether *a door* is brown, green, or yellow, or even sigh at the phrase "home, sweet home," as many do while gazing at *a door*. Here is the thing: without signs, such as the words "dog," "love," "justice," or even "sign," it would be impossible to even think, for even thinking, just like all experience, springs from semiosis.

Conclusion

This way, a lamp is left lit along the complex path towards noticing what it means to say that the human being is a semiotic animal: humans are nothing but animals that differ from all other animals by their being aware of semiosis and thus capacitated for studying signs, their actions, and the systems they form. Hence, human animals are different from all other animals, though humans would not be distinguishable at the same level from a possible semiotic machine. Every living being produces and is capable of recognizing signs of some type. Signs that animals produce and are aware of may be simple, like a sneeze or a racing heart. Meanwhile, there is the production and understanding of more demanding structures within semiotic life, encompassing symbolic dimensions such as speech. Signs enable each semiotic being to flag its existence, share messages among its own species, and shape or regulate incoming information

from the outer world. Living beings may be aware of their being situated within the semiosphere and able to lead a more or less accountable role. Semiotic beings can act globally, aware of their own doings, how they are acting, for what purpose, and so forth. Thereby, semiotic beings function as signs of themselves to others as well as to themselves, being at once self-aware and conscious that there is a whole world of signs which allows an awakening to the fact that "there are signs upon which the whole of life depends for successful continuance" (Deely, 2010, p. 40). Humans will plausibly remain the only beings mindful of semiosis, that is, meta-semiotically aware. Metasemiotic consciousness is the special development whereby beings became sensitive to signs being signs, just as to the role played universally by signs in all forms of knowledge and experience. For such a reason, the responsibility of semiotic beings is not exhausted in strictly human interplay. Semiotic beings are semioethically responsible, *i.e.*, accountable for the whole semiosphere. Classifying a being as semiotic is to assume that such a being relates carefully or semiotically with the actual way it inhabits the vast world of signs from which it stems and evolves. Semiotic awareness stands for the fact that semiotic beings consciously relate to signs. Semiotic beings entwine with and consciously partake in the semiosphere. Such a way of relating to signs would be what humans and the technological singularity would share in common. Signs are, as has been suggested, in triadic relation to the objects they stand for and the knowing power to which signs represent objects. Two elements would suffice for there to be a relation. However, sign relations are irreducibly triadic, occurring between a given sign representing a given object to a mind, the object as it is conveyed to the mind by the sign, and the said mind as bridging the sign-object relation. Semiotic beings have nature at hand, on watch, or at their disposal, thanks to a "grammar" embedded in the semiosphere (Deely, 2010, p. 15). Such grammar represents the exact domain to be recognized, understood, mastered, and, in short, taken care of by semiotic beings. Observance of this universal grammar on the part of semiotic beings is a precondition for setting principles for distinguishing between careful and careless resource exploitation. The reason why a semiotic being becomes semioethically responsible is the acknowledgment of the infinite extent of the jurisdiction of responsibility. Each experience is, from the outset, determined by previous interpretations. Semiotic beings are the ones capable of worrying about and understanding the future, prioritizing it

in one respect or another over the present day. The only ones who can read and interpret signs inventively, aiming at printing new directions in the development of the semiosphere, are also semiotic beings. Semiotic beings belong to a universe whose continuity could ultimately depend upon whether such beings can reasonably evaluate signs, their actions, and the systematic relations between signs. The fundamentally distinctive thing about semiotic beings is that they turn semiosis into a sign and are mindful that relations are prone to be handled regardless of whatever such relations involve. As semiotic beings, humans can derive or discriminate structures that simultaneously underlie and result from producing or comprehending meaning. A semiotic being has to be aware that structures of meaning are prone to be reproduced as models. Models of this kind may be successfully applied to different objects, such as textual, visual, odorous, gestural, musical, mathematical, and mental objects. Metasemiotic awareness reveals what is invisible, untouchable, scentless, inaudible, and tasteless. Thus, the study of semiosis comes with the uselessness of the senses to handle what is needed to develop it. Such is a most promising backdrop for the advent of technological singularity. Interestingly, metasemiotic awareness fails to reveal something inconceivable: the semiotic machine should be under death's wing. That way, humans would cease to be the only creatures able to learn their way out of this world. Until when the realm of semiotics will remain that of one single species is a question to which we cannot reply.

End Notes:

32. Góis, 1592; see Carvalho, 2018e; Góis, 1593b; see Carvalho, 2018f; Góis, 1593c; see Carvalho, 2018d; Góis, 1593a; see Carvalho, 2018c; Góis, 1593d; see Carvalho, 2018h; Góis, 1597; see Carvalho, 2018g; Góis, Álvares, & Magalhães 1598; see Carvalho, 2018i; Couto, 1606; see Carvalho, 2018j & 2018a.

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“Death Must Have Become Terrifying”: The Social Conditions of Anxiety

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Abstract

Hegel’s account of the social conditions of anxiety. While my focus is the modern period, I use Hegel’s comments on death in previous epochs—especially in ancient Greece—to bring out the peculiarity of modernity. In the first half of the paper, I discuss the nature and conditions of anxiety. In the second half, I trace Hegel’s critique of a common way to avoid—or flee from—anxiety in modernity, which results in social isolation, boredom, and emptiness. As long as the modern individual is only an economic actor in civil society, she is prone to anxiety. To confront her finitude, Hegel argues, she must endorse her political affiliation, namely, be an active and sacrificing citizen of the state.

Keywords: death; anxiety; Hegel; recognition; finitude.



Introduction

In an early essay commenting on the decline of the Greek polis and the Roman Republic, Hegel makes a curious statement. For the individual of the time, he says, “death, the phenomenon that demolished the whole web of his purposes and the activity of his entire life, must have become something terrifying” (1: 206; ETW 157).[1] That death is terrifying might strike us as obvious enough, a fundamental existential condition as Heidegger and like-minded thinkers would later this. Hegel, however, maintains that the significance of death is *historically and culturally evolving*. The termination of human life had a different meaning in various ethical contexts, from ancient China and India, through the Greek Golden Age and the Roman Empire, and to modernity.[2] The significance of death is historically evolving because it is *socially mediated*, namely, shaped by the social institutions and forms of recognition in which individuals partake.

This paper offers a reconstruction of Hegel's account of the social conditions of anxiety. While my focus is the modern period, I will use Hegel's comments on death in previous epochs—especially in ancient Greece—to bring out the peculiarity of modernity in this respect. In the first half of the paper (section 1), I discuss the nature and conditions of anxiety. In the second half (section 2), I trace Hegel's critique of a common way to avoid—or *flee* from—anxiety in modernity. Finally, the conclusion would indicate the relevance of this social account of anxiety for understanding the state's role in helping its citizens cope with their finitude.

Hegel's historicization of anxiety anticipated the work of French historian Phillipe Ariès, who later argued that only in the 18th century did people begin to fear death in its proper modern significance.[3] While human beings have always been concerned with their demise, they produced cultural systems that “tamed” it, providing them with ways to think of death not as an end but as yet another station, a transition to a different mode of existence. Through rituals of mourning and commemoration, the dead would secure a lasting presence in the lives of families and communities, a projected mode of being that would offer them, when still alive, a consoling horizon of immortality. However, once life becomes centered on individual

accomplishment, death comes to be signified as utter extinction, the absolute negation of the individual—and, as such, terrifying.

In this respect, Hegel’s account of human mortality systematically articulates still-implicit trends of his epoch—in line with his well-known dictum that philosophy is “its own time comprehended in thought” (PhR, Preface). According to Alexandre Kojève, Hegelian philosophy centers on “the necessary condition of Man’s existence—the condition of death, of finiteness.”[4] This idea, common among Hegel’s mid-century French commentators, has been thoroughly neglected by the academic philosophical literature of the past few decades. [5] The paper seeks to fill this lacuna and indicate Hegel’s relevance for existential and phenomenological thought.

1. The Social Conditions of Anxiety

In reconstructing Hegel’s account of the modern significance of death, we can begin with three observations. First, Hegel identifies a specific conception of freedom with modernity and attributes it to the Protestant Reformation, namely, “moral subjectivity.” Second, a vital element of this conception of freedom is “the principle of self-standing particularity” (PhR §185R), that is, the idea that the (particular) subject is free insofar as she herself determines her properties or determinations. Third, this conception has direct implications on how a free subject represents her natural side, what Hegel calls “bodiliness” [*Körperlichkeit*, E3 §412], including the event that is doomed to terminate her bodiliness, namely, death.

To get a better sense of these observations, we can look at how they are all registered in Hegel’s interpretation of the biblical story of the Garden of Eden—much as in a similar interpretation advanced by the philosopher Hegel most identifies with “moral subjectivity,” namely, Immanuel Kant. They know themselves as spiritual or rational once Adam and Eve eat from the Tree of Knowledge. As such, they strive for self-determination, to be the authors of their properties. Alas, this makes them experience a contradiction with their bodiliness since, *qua* embodied, they are *externally* determined. I am born, age, or taken by sexual desire regardless of my rational volition. The rational subject, then, strives for self-determination but thereby represents a split with her naturalness. Hegel and Kant claim that the result is the first

instance of shame (E1 §24Z3; Kant 8: 112-13; *Anthropology, History, and Education* 166).[6]

In his *Anthropology*, Hegel defines shame as a rage against oneself, arising from a “contradiction between my appearance and what I should and will to be” (E3 §401Z). Shame is premised on a gap between a desired self-determined status (“what I should and will to be”) and the subject's failure to conform. So conceived, shame is obviously not an exclusively Christian phenomenon. Human beings aspire to statuses in various contexts and often appear to fail, thereby feeling shame. What is distinctive, however, is that the biblical myth makes our bodily side *as such*—over and beyond *specific* statuses or failures (to be a proper soldier, wife, politician)—shameful. Our very (bodily) *existence* becomes the basis of shame.

Now, shame depends on the presence of another subject—to whom my failure is observable. Grammatically, if I feel shame, it is partly because I believe that other subjects *loathe* me (or *would* loathe me if they saw my shameful feature). Strikingly, Hegel suggests that in the aftermath of the ancient polis, with the rise of Christianity, shame is internalized, resulting in *self-loathing*. In the early theological writings, he claims that the Christian subject “loathes himself” [*verachtet sich*; 1:245; ETW 303] and describes a society whose members are inflicted by “the loathing [*Verachtung*] of others and their own self-feeling of disgrace [*Schande*]” (1:213; ETW 165)—disgrace, that is, for their very (bodily, worldly) existence. Even much later, in the *Philosophy of Right*, we find “something loathsome [*Verächtliches*]” about being a person.[7] If we bear in mind the basis for Christian shame—our bodily existence—it is hardly surprising that it becomes self-loathing. Since shame is no longer about a *specific* appearance that contradicts “what I should and will to be” but my appearance as such, the very fact I appear (in being embodied), then my disgrace becomes essential, as it were.

This characterization of shame may seem overly general, losing sight of specific cases. After all, even in the Garden of Eden, it seems there are specific appearances that generate the shame—the genitals—and shame subsides once the famous figleaf is employed. In response, I would like to make a point that concerns not only shame but also my discussion of other affects in this paper, especially anxiety. We should distinguish between an affective *disposition* and specific affective *instances*. Concerning all affects discussed, I articulate why the

modern subject is *disposed* to them. It is not to say that she always concretely feels the corresponding affect, namely, that the disposition is *actualized*. To Hegel, the Christian subject is disposed to shame or self-loathing, even if it is not always triggered. She is constitutive—in virtue of her conception of freedom—prone to shame.[8] Similarly, I soon argue she is *disposed* to anxiety, even if she simultaneously employs means to avoid it.

Next, Hegel’s reference to the “person” in invoking shame, disgrace, or self-loathing could suggest that the problem of shame applies less, if at all, to the members of *modern* civil society. In Hegel’s mature social philosophy, “personality” [*Persönlichkeit*] denotes a conception of freedom that is distinct from—and historically prior to—“moral subjectivity.” The former becomes central in the Roman Empire and the advent of medieval Catholicism and spells shame concerning worldly activities, specifically economic practice or *labor*. Such activities reflect that we are bodily creatures who, resulting from the Original Sin, must earn bread “in the sweat of our brows.” However, with the rise of the Protestant religion, a new conception of freedom emerged. In terms of moral subjectivity, worldly economic activity becomes *honorable*. Hegel’s interpretation of the story of Eden incorporates this protestant impulse in stressing the role of labor not in *showing* our shame but in *reducing* it. Compare the labor of the enslaved person in ancient Rome with that of the modern laborer. The former exhibited, by laboring, the constitutive disgrace of the human as a creature who must sweat to exist. The modern worker performs, at least ideally, his power to modify the conditions of his existence. According to Hegel’s protestant construal, human beings labor on nature to accommodate rational purposes more, thereby reducing the gap between their spiritual and natural sides. Such an effort invokes honor. Accordingly, the modern individual, Hegel says,

by a process of self-determination, makes himself a member of one of the moments of civil society through his activity, diligence, and skill, and supports himself in this capacity; and only through this mediation with the universal does he [...] gain recognition in his own eyes and the eyes of others. (PhR §207)

Nevertheless, that *some* of his bodily activity—namely, labor or economic pursuits—becomes honorable does not remove the specter

of shame from the subject's naturalness. The subject earns honor for his *assertive activity*—in general, for his success in making his practice accord with the ideal of rational self-determination, particularly his professional pursuits, and accomplishments. To succeed in such pursuits, life in civil society is accompanied by a constant “struggle with the external world and with himself” (PhR §166). As part of this struggle, I suggest the subject must hide, suppress, and even repress features less in line with this successful and assertive face. Such features compose his vulnerable and needy side, aspects of his subjectivity that fall short of self-determination and desired professional statuses. Under this grouping fall needs or desires that may interfere with professional life, such as sexual desire (which could make the subject vulnerable to others), and mainly features like disease and aging. Therefore, much as the normative ideal of moral subjectivity relieves *some* aspects of our bodiliness from the burden of shame, there is a sense in which it makes *other* aspects all the *more* shameful.[9]

Having this account of the axis between shame and bodiliness in place, we can finally articulate Hegel's reasons for the affective disposition at the center of my discussion, namely, anxiety. The first reason follows from the claim that some determinations—those representing the subject's constitutive weakness, his being the object of external determination—remain shameful. From this perspective, death appears as the ultimate triumph of nature—the ultimate *external* determination—on the self-determined subject! Death is “the immediate natural materialization, not the act of a self-consciousness” (PhG 295; ¶452). Therefore, when the subject thinks of her looming end, she is reminded that however she tries, never mind how much worldly success she has, she remains a natural creature, powerless in the face of natural destiny. The first reason death is terrifying is that it reminds the subject of her constitutive shame.

However, not only the fact that the subject is bound to fail (by being ultimately “defeated” by nature) informs anxiety, but also the fact that she is somewhat successful. After all, and in contrast to the Roman and medieval person, the modern subject *values* her worldly life, taking it to be her own work and creation. Because she now attributes such value to her life, it is all the more challenging to confront its necessary ending. This idea comes up in Hegel's analysis of the representation of death in romantic art, the aesthetic form that

reflects the kind of freedom conceived by the Protestant Reformation. “[M]an fears only for what is of great value for him. Nevertheless, life has this infinite value for self-consciousness only if the subject as spiritual and self-conscious is the only actuality, and now in a justified fear must image himself as negated by death” (LFA 523).

Both these reasons for the terror of death—that it is a reminder of the subject's ultimate failure and that it destroys her (however partial or temporary) worldly success—figure in Hegel's interpretation of another biblical scene, the Exodus from Egypt:

Those prevented by death in the wilderness from reaching the Promised Land had not fulfilled their destiny, the idea of their existence. Their life was subordinated to an end; it was not self-subsistent or self-sufficient, and their death, therefore, could only be regarded as evil (1: 287; ETW 195)

Like the modern members of civil society, the Israelites in the desert live on a journey toward attaining self-determination. However, they die before attaining this ideal; therefore, death is represented as “evil.” Moreover, as a sensitive reader of the Biblical text, Hegel knows that it was not a coincidence that the desert generation did not make it to the Promised Land. Their past as enslaved people made them *unfit* to live in freedom; they *had to* die. Hence, their death does not only signify the end of their effort; there is a sense in which it shows they have always been doomed to fail. By analogy, the modern member of civil society represents death as destroying what she has done *and* as that which shows she could not have done more.

The third reason death is terrifying concerns the level of identification (or lack thereof) that a member of modern civil society has with her community. When Hegel claims that death “must have become terrifying,” he immediately contrasts with a citizen of an ancient republic, for whom death was *not* terrifying. The reason for this, Hegel says, is that the ancient citizen identified the republic with his very soul so that “before him hovered the thought that his soul is eternal.” Since the Greeks identified with the community, and the community was to persist after his end, there was a sense that he was immortal. The question arises, in what sense precisely the Greek—unlike the modern subject—identified with his community to the extent that its alleged immortality comforted him for his own finitude.

The answer lies in the dominant form of recognition that Hegel attributes to the Greek polis, namely, civic love.[10] While it is not the romantic, sexual love that Hegel associates with modern marriage, it shares with it, I suggest, at least one feature that directly affects one's experience of death. To be in a love relationship with others is to share "the totality of individual experience" (PhR §163). This has two death-related functions. First, as I experience myself as a co-creator of a shared enterprise, I can comfort myself for my individual finitude with the thought of the persistence of this experience *for others*. Others would *remember* me through my co-creation. Second, the constant desirous and affective engagement with others makes me less inclined to vexing reflection on my finitude. Both these functions figure in Hegel's elaborate discussion of the Greek way of life in the Lectures on the Philosophy of History (12: 271-335), e.g., in the idea that the polity is a "work of art" (12: 306) to which citizens continuously contribute. Even their most individual actions are "strongly excited" performances for each other (1: 296)—in which they marvel and from which they take examples, thereby affirming, celebrating, and ultimately commemorating each other's lives.

Consider, by contrast, the death-related implications of the form of recognition that Hegel identifies with modern civil society, namely, honor. First, while love encourages shared or *co-creation*, honor is very much tied to one's *personal* achievements. Much as the individual is proud of her achievements, they are typically *lasting* because they would have substantial significance for those surviving her. Second, love is unconditionally affirming in that the loved individual—even if she fares poorly for a while—feels that she enjoys an unyielding favor in the other's eyes. Love is also immediate because this favor genuinely expresses the lover's feelings. Honor, by contrast, is conditioned and mediated—conditioned on conforming to professional standards and how I fare *compared* to others and mediated by institutions that define these standards. Hence, as a modern academic, for example, I can easily be thrown into confidence and doubt concerning my standing—especially after I pass away. "Maybe I'm doing okay for now," I tell myself, "but what if Stephanie publishes a book about the same topic, and my contribution is all forgotten? And okay, I got tenure [reflecting a norm of success defined by an institution], but what do people *really* think about me?" Finally, life in civil society is premised on a separation between the

public and the private spheres. In *public*—as an active actor in the economic market—I am invested in my activity in concert with others. In *private*, I am left alone with my introspection, prone to attend to troubling facts such as vulnerability or death. The third reason death in modernity is terrifying is that I lack the kind of all-encompassing identification with a shared experience that will survive after me. My experience is *isolated*, so I am prone to anxious questions about my present and postmortem significance for others.[11]

In sum, the bourgeois subject (a typical member of modern civil society) is inflicted by a conflictual relationship with her own finitude. Given her commitment to self-determination, death—as the ultimate proof that she is externally determined—appears terrifying. Death does not only signify the individual’s failure to attain utter self-determination; it also terminates the achievements that she did have as a self-determined actor in civil society. Finally, given her fundamental isolation from the social whole, the latter’s persistence is unlikely to comfort her.

I want to call the disposition to anxiety an *existential* condition. It is “existential” in the sense that (1) it is essential to human beings in general in virtue of being conscious creatures who also *exist* in a body; (2) it is a condition that a subject must contend or respond to—rather than a biological or physiological property that shapes human life from behind the back of the subject, as it were; and (3) this response could take the form of *fleeing* from this existential condition, in the sense of leading a life that prevents the disposition to anxiety from actualizing. The following section expands on one mode of such flight.

Before we proceed, however, an important conceptual point is in order. In referring to the existential condition articulated in this section, I alternated between “fear of death,” “fear of finitude,” “terror of death,” and “anxiety.” As we shall see shortly, there are ways to be *afraid* of death that are instead attempting to avoid—or escape—the *terror* of death as described in this section. Therefore, to avoid confusion and ambiguity, I shall henceforth stick to “anxiety” in referring to the phenomenon discussed here. I chose anxiety because Hegel uses this term in his most famous reference to death—as part of the master-slave dialectic. The enslaved person, he says, “has been anxious—not for this or that, or just at odd moments, but for [his] whole being” (PhG 134, ¶194).[12] In predicting anxiety on the

existence or being *as such*—rather than a specific danger or prospect—this use approximates what I mean by anxiety, albeit with a crucial caveat. Hegel refers to a concrete instance—perhaps the most forceful affective instance imaginable—while I describe an existential condition in the sense of an affective *disposition*. Therefore, my use of "anxiety"—based on Hegel's outlook—is also a tribute to later thinkers (such as Kierkegaard and Heidegger) who have developed this element of his outlook and made it conceptually explicit.

2. Fleeing Anxiety: The Denial of Finitude

Much as modern civil society, as I argued in the previous section, disposes its members to death-related anxiety, people also try to *ignore* their finitude. Hegel suggests as much when he says: “[w]e hear numerous sermons on the insecurity, vanity, and instability of temporal things, but all who hear them, however moved they may be, believe that they will nonetheless retain what is theirs” (PhR §324Z). I call this problem *the denial of finitude*.

Hegel relates the denial of finitude to yet another ethical phenomenon. “In peace,” he says, “people become stuck in their ways. Their particular characteristics become increasingly rigid and ossified” (PhR §324Z). In the *Natural Law* essay, he glosses this ossified or rigid life as “becoming habituated” to “determinate characteristics [*Bestimmtheiten*]” (NL 141). We can infer, then, that the finitude-denying individual leads a life habituated in some problematic manner. I call this problematically habituated life *ossification* and propose that it denotes the respect in which people’s lives manifest their denial of finitude.

In his early writings, shortly before his claim discussed above that “death must have become terrifying,” Hegel describes the society that this terror informs:

The administration of the state machine was entrusted to a small number of citizens, and these served only as single cogs [...] the end [the citizens] set before themselves in their political life was gain, maintenance, and perhaps vanity. (1:206; ETW 156)

This early reference to the “state-machine,” much like likening individuals to “cogs” in it, “prefigures his later claim that modern civil society is prone to ossification and rigidity. Also, the talk about

individuals concerned with gain or vanity seems relevant, to say the least, to modern market conditions. Therefore, given its location, this passage reveals continuity in Hegel’s thought concerning the axis between anxiety and ossification. My goal in this section is to show how the disposition to anxiety explains ossification. It explains it, I shall argue, that ossification constitutes an attempt to escape finitude or, more specifically, prevent the *disposition* to anxiety (constitutive of our finitude) from generating *actual* anxiety.

In making this argument, we must clarify what Hegel means by ossification in a sense that satisfies two desiderata: it is somehow (1) inherent to the workings of modern civil society *and* (2) connects with the subject’s relationship with her finitude. Having (1) in mind, we could examine the institutions that compose modern civil society and promote ossification, namely, repetitive and rigid patterns of activity—such as large-scale factories and what Hegel calls “corporations.” While this seems like part of his concern, my focus—in line with my overall argument in this paper and in order to satisfy desideratum (2)—is instead on the *psychological* factors that incline the modern individual to discipline her life to give it ossified and rigid character.

Fortunately, we can help ourselves to a pair of roughly synonymous terms that Hegel often uses pejoratively—*Eigensinn* and *Eigenwille*, self-will—and that sit right at the juncture of three concerns animating my argument. First, Hegel characterizes the person possessed by self-will as inflexible and rigid, thereby imbuing the notion of ossification with psychological or “inward” depth. Second, he seems to understand the preponderance of self-willed subjects as a problem *inherent to civil society*. Third, Hegel explicitly connects self-will with ignorance concerning one’s finitude. Let me discuss these points in turn, showing how, through self-will, we get an account of ossification that meets the desiderata articulated above.

To begin with the first point—self-will as ossification—consider the following characterizations taken from the *Philosophy of Right*. The self-willed person has a rigid fixation on a particular pattern of conduct (a “this,” PhR §7Z), sticking to it if only because she has the “right” to (PhR §37Z). She is “emotionally limited” and merely exercising her “argumentative understanding” [(*räsonierende Verstand*; 7: 249) in the sense that ethical, emotional, or intellectual challenges from others leave her cold. While commitment to one’s

actions or beliefs is obviously necessary too, Hegel seems to think that one should be open to dialectical changes (namely, exercise her “reason,” *Vernunft*) in response to good reasons, caring for finding middle ground with the people she shares her life with.

Importantly, we need not understand self-will as necessarily concerned with self-interest in the market-economic sense. A self-righteous “Kantian” person who likes to repeat the same (however lofty and “universal”) justifications for her conduct could be considered self-willed, in my interpretation. Admittedly, this is at odds with the claim that the self-willed person vindicates her conduct in reference to her *right* to do what she pleases. However, I take this point to be not about how the subject would consciously or verbally justify her conduct (“because I so want” rather than “because this is what the Categorical Imperative dictates”) but about what *motivates* her. Her *psychological need to maintain her rigid, ossified mindset* shapes or motivates the self-willed subject’s conduct. Even if she speaks on behalf of altruistic causes (and believes they motivate her), she is obsessed with protecting her ego from changes and challenges.

The concept of self-will, then, captures the *psychological cause* of ossification. Having it in view, we can understand a rigid pattern of *external* activity in terms of an *inward* rigid self-conception. Insofar as I think of myself as having specific and rigid needs, views, and aspirations, my everyday conduct would be rigid as a result. Warning of the perils of habituation, Hegel says that “[h]uman beings even die as a result of habit – that is if they have become totally habituated to life and mentally and physically blunted” (PhR §151Z). From the perspective I propose, this kind of “dead” habituation happens not only if the world ceases to pose new challenges but because the subject, given a psychological need for stability—self-will—*avoids* such challenges, instead sticking to the familiar. A carpenter, for example, would keep building the same furniture, thinking of himself as having a limited, however impressive, set of skills (“This is who I am,” he is telling himself, perhaps adding, “I’m too old to change”). Unlike an artist, say, who ideally lets his work—and the objects he works with—change him, the self-willed individual represents the objects he works with as mere “dead” matter. *Eigensinn*, Hegel says, is “only a skill which is master over things” (PhG 13; ¶196).

So far, self-will is the psychological aspect of ossification, but how does it relate to Hegel’s understanding of modern civil society? In the

Philosophy of Right (as elsewhere), the notion of self-will figures in warnings about the perils inherent to *overly* asserting one's individual identity and standpoint in a way that loses sight of the truth (self-will as obstinate "argumentation," *Räsonieren*), the common good, or the everyday emotional work of tuning oneself to multiple points of views and feelings. Insofar as civil society is the ethical sphere in which individual self-assertion reaches its climax—indeed, its success in generating wealth and progress is premised on the individual pursuing “his own own end and all else means nothing to him” (PhR §182Z)—we can see why its members are inherently prone to become self-willed. Accordingly, when Hegel presents the notion of Ethical Life [*Sittlichkeit*]*—that is, the need to go beyond moral subjectivity and its ideal of “self-standing particularity”—he says that through membership in this all-encompassing community, “the self-will of the individual and his conscience in its attempt to exist for itself and in opposition to the ethical substantiality, have disappeared” (PhR §152). We can infer, then, that to avoid self-will—associated with practices typical of civil society—individuals must engage in spheres of Ethical Life that challenge individual independence, one of which (along the family) is the state. Not only does the state have a role in countering self-will, but, more specifically, Hegel's dialectic in the *Philosophy of Right* suggests that the state does so through making war. Thus, war is introduced right after Hegel warns of “the dissolution of the existing life of the state by opinion and argumentation as they seek to assert their contingent character” (PhR §320; my italics). Earlier, he connects this predicament with the idea that freedom is “to do whatever one pleases” (PhR §319R)—both argumentation and attachment to their formal right are features of self-willed people.*

That war has a role in countering self-will suggests that this concept—beyond its connection to ossification and civil society—also captures something about the subject's relationship with her finitude. A decisive textual evidence for—and elaboration of—this idea is found in what is probably Hegel's most famous reference to death, namely, in the master-slave dialectic. Towards the end of the dialectic, having commented on the formative experience that anxiety occasioned for the enslaved person, Hegel tells us what happens if an enslaved person is engaged in labor *without* antecedently experiencing anxiety: “If consciousness fashions the thing without that initial absolute fear, it is only a vain self-will [*eitler eigener Sinn*]” (PhG 136;

¶196). Hegel suggests that self-will results from lacking a concrete confrontation with one's finitude. At the same time, he connects self-will with labor, which is both essentially habituated (hence can become *problematically* habituated) and the activity typical of members of civil society.

Taking a cue from this revealing quote, we can finally articulate how ossification—understood as the quality of the self-willed individual—amounts to the denial of finitude in the sense that it constitutes a flight from the existential condition of anxiety. In the master-slave dialectic, self-will is presented more straightforwardly due to *not* experiencing anxiety. However, we should consider the distinction (drawn in section 1) between the disposition to anxiety and an instance of anxiety. That the self-willed person did not *experience* anxiety does not imply that she does not have a *disposition* to anxiety. Indeed, insofar as such a disposition is an existential condition that becomes accessible to modern subjects—in the sense I explained above—there is no modern subject who is not so disposed of.

In order to appreciate how possessing self-will constitutes a flight from anxiety, recall the reasons why the modern bourgeois subject is disposed to anxiety: (1) seeking honor for her self-determined activity, she is confronted with the fact that, *qua* bodily creature, she is externally determined (with death ultimately signifying it); (2) Just because she is proud of her unique worldly career of self-determination, the thought of its termination can be terrifying; and (3) she is constitutively uncertain about her standing for others and about how, if at all, she will be remembered postmortem.

The first way in which self-will prevents concrete anxiety is by “turning off” factors (1) and (2). By avoiding challenges to her basic sense of herself, outlook, and way of doing things, the self-willed subject avoids occurrences that could make explicit her constitutive weakness as an externally-determined, mortal creature—occurrences like inner conflict, failure to understand (herself or the world), perplexedness, loss of self-control, even self-loathing (namely, the affective disposition that partly informs anxiety). In this way, cause (1) for anxiety is diminished. At the same time, since the subject's sense of uniqueness and success is informed by struggling with external determination and overcoming it, the fact that she avoids this challenge decreases her sense of uniqueness and, thereby, what she stands to lose in death (thus, cause [2] is countered). The abovementioned carpenter

might think: "I'm just a skilled professional, like many others, no great loss." Such a thought is more difficult to attribute to a subject who considers her life a unique creation, accompanied by both the joys and pains of struggle.

The second way the self-willed subject avoids anxiety is through “turning off” reason (3), namely, the uncertainty regarding her identification with the community. To recall, the modern bourgeois, unlike the ancient citizen, cannot rest assured concerning her postmortem presence. She is prone to ask herself what her life means to others and compares her achievements to fellow professionals. This predicament, however, testifies to a *yearning* that the subject still *minds about*—and is oriented towards—the community. The self-willed person, I suggest, gives up the yearning and the painful uncertainty it involves. She could do so by avoiding thinking about her reputation, instead immersing herself in her rigid, ossified everyday life. At the same time, giving up this yearning could also be manifested in fantasies about postmortem presence that are independent of how concrete members of her community would remember her—e.g., through religious ideas of the afterlife that are dependent only on what *God* thinks of the subject.[14]

Let me conclude so far. I have argued that ossification, rigidity, or problematic habituation should be understood in terms of what Hegel calls self-will—a psychological mechanism that allows the subject to avoid anxiety. A self-willed life, then, exhibits what I call “denial of finitude”—not in the sense that the subject necessarily denies (theoretically) her ultimate passing away, but in the sense that such a life is (practically) not truthful to the existential condition of finitude. This condition, to recall, consists of a tension between two poles: the subject’s rational striving for self-determination *and* the fact that, *qua* natural, she is externally determined. Both ways in which the self-willed person attempts to avoid anxiety reflect an attempt to ignore, repress, or even suppress the latter pole, external determination, including the sense in which living in a community—minding about what concrete others think of me, is an acknowledgment of external determination. The self-willed person then *anxiously* avoids failures, including disregarding those in whose eyes she may appear to be failing. “Anxiously” is the quality of an activity whose point is to flee from anxiety.[15]

So far, the claim that a self-willed life is not existentially truthful avoids a fundamental truth about human life. However, is it necessarily also a *psychological* problem? Granted, we can see how a community of finitude-denying subjects would be a depressing environment to live in, at least if you are not one of those ossified, self-willed individuals.[16] However, is finitude-denial a problem *for* the finitude-denying subject?

Hegel's answer is positive. Towards the end of his treatment of "moral subjectivity" in the *Philosophy of Right*, he points to yet another ethical ill that looms over modern civil society: "the torment of vacuity [*Leerheit*] and negativity" (PhR 141Z). I suggest understanding this problem concerning the figure of the self-willed subject. While "vacuity" could refer to a lack of determination or activity, I believe it also applies to an activity in which the subject is not properly *invested*. "Negativity" could be understood as describing the self-willed subject's chief concern with maintaining her ego, negating challenges that could complicate her life and thereby also leave her life meaningless, "vacuous," or dull.

In fact, "boredom" [*Langweile*] comes up in one of Hegel's definitive statements on the modern predicament—in the Preface to the *Phenomenology*. He says it is a time of "frivolity and boredom" (PhG 10; ¶11). While boredom may seem like a trifling matter, Hegel writes within a tradition in which this affect has existential depth. As Kant says of boredom in his *Anthropology*—bringing it together with vacuity and anxiety—it is "the void of sensations we perceive in ourselves, arousing a horror and, as it were, the presentiment of a slow death" (7: 233; *Anthropology, History, and Education* 337). Much as Kant's characterization is hyperbolic, losing sight of everyday instances of boredom,[17] It does point to a certain truth, namely, that boredom often covers an existential and psychological abyss that we are too anxious to explore. Indeed, in my interpretation of Hegel, we can say that boredom is an affective manifestation of the denial of finitude—of a self-willed life that avoids facing anxiety.[18]

The denial of finitude is not just an existential or philosophical mistake. Instead, beyond the pain of social and emotional isolation (for those still capable of feeling it), denial of finitude is coupled with the psychological burden of emptiness and boredom. Therefore, the flight from our finitude and disposition to anxiety—so common in

modern civil society, according to Hegel—seems like a recipe for an unhappy life.

Conclusion: Hegel’s Political Phenomenology

I have argued that Hegel conceives of anxiety as an existential condition—a disposition that obtains in any human individual as such. In modernity, given the practices and forms of recognition that characterize the economic sphere (what Hegel calls civil society), this disposition is especially apt to actualize itself, troubling people with fear of death. However, civil society also offers arrangements that allow people to deny their finitude—or flee from anxiety—yet the price is ossification, social isolation, and even boredom.

While Hegel’s conception of the state—as opposed to civil society—is beyond the scope of this paper, I would like to conclude by briefly indicating how my argument reveals one piece in a more extensive Hegelian doctrine: his *political phenomenology*.

Since Hegel understands anxiety as a *social* problem—grounded in specific socio-political conditions—it makes sense that his remedy would be social, too. More specifically, he argues that war is the remedy to the denial of finitude and ossification in modern civil society. War is necessary, Hegel says, because “[i]t is *necessary* that the finite—such as property and life—should be *posited* as contingent” (PhR §324). War reveals finite things *as* contingent, making them *known* as what they are. Since war, in Hegel’s view, is an action that only a state can perform, an individual can *face* her finitude—becomes aware of it rather than deny it—through being *politically* affiliated, namely, a citizen of a state. We can say that Hegel offers us a phenomenological account of the state—or a *political phenomenology*—in the sense that we see how the state responds to structural features of subjective experience, namely, the disposition to anxiety.

Importantly, given the role of war in shaping subjective experience, Hegel gives much attention to the act of individual *self-sacrifice* demanded in war. Furthermore, what matters to Hegel is less the act of self-sacrifice itself and more the subject’s dispositional *willingness* to self-sacrifice. He stresses that patriotism—as the “willingness to perform extraordinary sacrifices and actions”—is grounded in “that *disposition* which, in the normal conditions and circumstances of life,

habitually knows the community as the substantial basis and end” (PhR §268R; italics mine).[19] The act of self-sacrifice arises from habituated patriotism, which consists *inter alia* in acknowledging the state as worthwhile of sacrifice.

Having the disposition to sacrifice in place does not require participating in a war but being disposed to it if the need arises and her state summons the subject. On its face, such a disposition could be cultivated only by concrete instances of self-sacrifice, or at least (since actual self-sacrifice would kill the subject) by attending an actual war and looking death in the eyes. Consider, however, that in *Anthropology*, Hegel asserts that it would be “absurd” to assume that “because crime is considered in the *Philosophy of Right* as a *necessary* appearance of the human will, therefore the commission of the crime is supposed to be made an inevitable necessity for *every* individual” (E3 §408Z). Rather, he claims, crime can appear in reduced or partial forms such as “limitations, errors or non-criminal wrongdoing.” I propose that Hegel has a similar logic in mind for the necessity of war. It does not follow that a given state must wage war, but rather that war-making, as a power that defines the state, is a “real possibility,” as Carl Schmitt calls it (*Concept of the Political*, 33; as opposed to a mere logical possibility).

For the sake of cultivating the disposition to sacrifice, it is sufficient that citizens represent war as a real possibility, summoning them, as it were, to make the proper inner resolution. Such a representation could be effected in various ways: through engagement with national history (or myth) and the role wars played in it, national holidays that commemorate such wars, and aesthetic media (stories, theater, music) that dramatize them. All such means make the individual ask herself: What would *I* do in this circumstance? Admittedly, such means include, in Hegel's view, the *future* possibility of war, projected by national, political, and cultural discourse. That Hegel resists Kant's dream of an “international government” and supports keeping a standing army indicates this (PhR §324Z). However, rejecting Kant's vision does not imply that war is imminent. However, only that—through dismissing a strict condition of *no* wars forever—remains on the political horizon. Therefore, I believe that Hegel's celebration of self-sacrifice—understood as a disposition to this effect—and similarly, the claim that war is ethically necessary

does not entail that he envisions war-making as a constant, or even occasional, feature of the modern state's operation.

Finally, even if we want to ultimately (or outright) reject Hegel's glorification of self-sacrifice and war, there is still much merit in appreciating the existential and psychological problems he diagnoses in modern civil society. One could agree with Hegel about this problem yet seek solutions that are not "national"—such as religious or aesthetic pursuits that offer the subject a higher meaning to live and even to die for (including a political or revolutionary cause—a war *against* the state rather than in its service). In articulating this problem, Hegel prefigures the existentialist tradition (as occasional connections I draw along the paper wished to indicate). However, he challenges the individualist and even elitist or perfectionist image of this tradition. To him, existential concerns and their psychological byproducts seem to trouble *everybody* and, moreover, should be addressed en masse by social and political institutions—call it Hegel's existentialism for the masses.

End notes

1. In references to the theological *Jugend-Schriften*, I cite volume and page number in *Werke* followed by page number in Knox's translation (if the passage was translated). References to the *Philosophy or Right* are in section number, sometimes accompanied by R (Remark) or Z (*Zusatz*, Addition). Same with references to each part of the *Encyclopedia*. I rely on standard academic translations but sometimes modify them based on *Werke*. About the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, I cite page number in the German *Meiner* edition followed by paragraph number in Miller's translation. About the *Philosophy of History*, I only cite a volume and page number in *Werke*.
2. This is not to say that all conceptions of death are on par with Hegel. There is a *truth* about death that progressively becomes available to subjects. Modernity is the culmination of this process.
3. *The Hour of Death*, 403-6. See Strauss, "The State of Death," 3-4. Jonathan Strauss suggests that Hegel was the first modern philosopher to theorize this emerging signification of death ("The State of Death," 3-4).
4. *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 56
5. See also Hyppolite, "The Concept of Life and Existence in Hegel," Merleau-Ponty, "Hegel's Existentialism," and Bataille, "Hegel, Death, and Sacrifice."
6. References to Kant are to volume and page number in the *Gesammelte Schriften*, followed by the English translation.
7. In English translations, *verachten* and its cognates are translated variably to "contempt," "despise," or "loath." Such variety (also with other affects) disguises the consistency and depth of Hegel's psychological and existential thought and must be one reason why it is not sufficiently appreciated
8. I say "practices" since what matters concerning the power of a conception of freedom to affect the subject is not whether she consciously endorses it, i.e., *believes* that this is what freedom means, but whether she practically lives this conception, in virtue of having been inculcated to it and given social and cultural conventions that sustain it. Thus, a feminist woman may believe that the ideal of a woman in her respective culture—e.g., as a caring mother and loyal wife—is misguided, yet—given the regrettable social and cultural force of this ideal—nonetheless feel guilty for failing it. Such a woman, then, *practices* this normative ideal, albeit not consciously endorsing it.

9. For a comprehensive account, see Katz's "Alleviating Love's Rage: Hegel on Shame and Sexual Recognition."
10. He contrasts the centrality of love for the Greek spirit with "the spirit of Judaism" (1: 276-7; ETW 184-5). See also 12: 309, where he stresses the relatable concreteness of the ancient community ("this Athens, this Sparta").
11. For accounts of honor in comparison with love, see Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition*, 111-130; Darwall, "Two Kinds of Respect," 36ff; and Katz, "Love Is Only Between Living Beings Who Are Equal in Power," 95-97. One could argue that even if romantic love consists of unconditioned affirmation, this does not apply to Greek civic or friendly love. However, Hegel excludes enslaved people and other non-citizens from this form of recognition (12: 311). Suppose one has been born and brought up well. In that case, one typically enjoys such unconditioned affirmation regardless of her actions (indeed, this kind of "aristocratic" bias is still apparent among elite groups nowadays).
12. See also 1: 185; ETW, 141, where Hegel connects anxiety with helplessness and loss of "self-trust" and warns that it could lead to madness.
13. Since self-will is intimately related to subjective self-assertion benefits, Hegel also uses it in qualifying "positive" ethical phenomena, at least in the sense that, albeit one-sided, they are necessary for the progressive realization of spirit. He characterizes as self-willed both the ancient Jews (1: 296; including the custom of growing a beard! 1: 431) and the "German Spirit" (12: 415). On one note, he even identifies self-will with masculinity (7: 318). This suggests that self-will is necessary yet one-sided and should be balanced with the flexibility and attunement to others' views and emotions that Hegel associates with femininity.
14. This seems to be the case with the ancient Jew, according to Hegel (1: 296). Hegel's account of ancient Jewry as a harbinger of modern civil society becomes a trope in 19th-century German thought (e.g., Marx's *On the Jewish Question* and Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals*).
15. Hegel's critique of self-will prefigures the existentialist occupation with how over-identification with social roles—be it Heidegger's talk of *das Man* or Sartre's "bad faith"—serves to avoid existential challenges. Heidegger relates *das Man* to avoidance of finitude in *Being and Time*, 252-255. A well-known treatment of "bad faith" is in Sartre's *Essays in Existentialism*, 167-168.
16. Cf. Hegel's sympathy for Jesus' painful isolation among his ossified, fellow Jews: "Jesus could only carry the Kingdom of God in his heart

[...] in his everyday world he had to flee all living relationships because they all lay under the law of death." (1: 401; ETW 285) Of course, others were similarly isolated, but their mental life was too ossified, too "dead" to notice.

17. Shortly before, Kant quotes an observation that English people sometimes hang themselves out of boredom...
18. Cf. Hegel's reference to boredom in his critique of stoicism (PhG 140; ¶200). Kojève explains: "The Stoic ideology was invented to justify the Slave's inaction, his refusal to *fight* to *realize* his libertarian ideal" (*Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 53). The boredom of the Stoic, then, prefigures the modern bourgeois' boredom in the sense that both testify to (and cover) the fear of facing death.
19. Wood (*Hegel's Ethical Thought*, 28) interprets this passage as saying that patriotism is *not* the "disposition to sacrifice oneself." However, Hegel says that the latter arises from the former [*aus dem sich begründet*].

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Abbreviations used:

Early Theological Writings	ETW
Encyclopedia (for first and third parts)	E1, 3
Philosophy of Right	PhR
Phenomenology of Spirit	PhG
Lectures on Natural Law	NL
Lectures on Fine Art	LFA

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Paul Ricœur and Alfred Schütz: Phenomenological Responses to Edmund Husserl's Configuration of Social Reality

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DOI: 10.22034/IYP.2021.137701.1023

Abstract

The human being is ontologically a relational being living with others in organized communities and institutions. By focusing on the intersubjective and collective levels of human experience, this essay considers the possibility of a critical dialogue between Paul Ricœur's and Alfred Schütz's phenomenological works toward a renewed socio-phenomenological approach to social reality. I begin with a broad framing of Husserl's second *epoché* or reduction to the sphere of ownness as performed within the egological sphere and then turn to Ricœur's and Schütz's critiques of the Husserlian conception of intersubjectivity. These reflections will lead us to discuss the inconsistency of Husserl's idea of the intersubjective acceptance of the common objective nature and his formulation of the higher-order case of the communal constitution.

Keywords: transcendental phenomenology, ownness, other, intersubjectivity, collectivity.



Introduction

The question of the nature of intersubjectivity and the problem of the structure of collectivity represent two significant concerns of phenomenology. The attention given to the constitution of intersubjectivity and the framework of collective life confers on phenomenology an undeniable social dimension. Specifically, the phenomenological analysis of the social world, as distinguished from the natural one, starts with Edmund Husserl's work. Husserl's phenomenological investigations on the intentional achievements of a plurality of subjects left a strong mark on the successive layers of socio-phenomenological discussions both in the German phenomenological movement and in French-influenced phenomenology in authors such as Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, or Emmanuel Levinas, among many others. Facing the eminent danger of solipsism, it is in the *Fifth Meditation* of his *Cartesian Meditations* that Husserl tries for the first time to formulate a rigorous and systematic solution to the problem of intersubjectivity, the presence of the other and the configuration of the common world within the transcendental account. However, attempting to progress from the ego to the other arises as a perennial difficulty in Husserl's thought. As such, Husserl's investigation of intersubjectivity and collectivity has often been criticized or even deemed problematic and inconsistent (Carr, 2004, p. 360).

I intend not to explain how Husserl develops his reflection on intersubjectivity and collectivity in his transcendental phenomenology. Instead, the purpose of this critical essay is more specific. By taking its point of departure from the inspiring reflections elaborated in the dynamic field of contemporary social phenomenology, the present contribution aims to draw out an innovative dialogue between Paul Ricœur's early phenomenology and Alfred Schütz's phenomenological analyses of the social world. More precisely, with the Husserlian phenomenology in the background, this paper seeks to take a critical stance on Husserl's theory of intersubjectivity through Paul Ricœur's and Alfred Schütz's objections to his transcendental phenomenology of human intersubjective and social relations. Through reference to Ricœur's interpretation of the most important of Husserl's writing presented in his 1967 collection of essays entitled *Husserl: An Analysis of His Phenomenology* and Schütz's masterpiece *The Phenomenology of the Social World*, this article will show a remarkable continuity and a

coherent complementarity between these two authors. First, I will begin by describing Husserl's second *epoché*. This second or transcendental reduction carried out within the egological sphere represents the point of departure for Ricœur's and Schütz's new directions in the phenomenology of social reality. Then, I will focus the attention on what can be considered the first two stages of Ricœur's and Schütz's critique of Husserl's notion of intersubjectivity: the isolation of the primordial world of the ego and the constitution of the other through pairing, apperception, and imaginative variations. Particular attention will be given to the theoretical continuity between Ricœur's and Schütz's approaches and the differences that characterize their objections to Husserl's theory. These reflections will lead to a discussion of Husserl's attempt to justify the common objective nature from the asymmetrical relationship between the ego and the other, and his idea of "personality of a higher order" referred to the nature of social entities such as institutions and social groups. Finally, I will draw some conclusions on Husserl's failure to work out a reflection on the concrete meaning of intersubjectivity and collectivity.

The Second *Epoché*. Setting the Path for a Socio-Phenomenological Analysis of Intersubjectivity

After having performed the transcendental reduction or primordial reduction (*die Primordiale Reduktion*) as an abstraction from the judgment about the natural world in order to get to the field of pure transcendental consciousness, and after having explained how the sense of objects depends on the operations of the ego's intentional consciousness (e.g., sense bestowal), in the *Fifth Meditation* of his *Cartesian Mediations* Husserl elaborates a second *epoché*, using the Greek term for abstention, for introducing the egological reduction or reduction to the sphere of ownness (*Eigenheitssphäre*). This second *epoché* is performed within the egological sphere, already discovered by the prior phenomenological reduction. Expressly, through this second reduction, the ego excludes the results of all intentional activities that refer directly or indirectly to other subjectivities, attaining one's own primordial sphere in this way. As Husserl puts it, "We disregard all constitutional effects of intentionality relating immediately or mediately to other subjectivity and delimit first of all the total nexus of that actual and potential intentionality in which the

ego constitutes within himself a peculiar ownness" (Husserl, 1960, p. 93). He explains the connection between the primordial and the second reduction as follows:

Whatever the transcendental ego constitutes in that first stratum, whatever he constitutes as nonother, as his 'peculiarly own' – that indeed belongs to him as a component of his own concrete essence [...]; it is inseparable from his concrete being. Within and through his ownness, the transcendental ego constitutes, however, the 'Objective' world, as a universe of being that is other than himself – and constitutes, as the first level, the other in the mode: alter ego (Husserl, 1960, p. 100).

For Husserl, the second *epoché* represents a methodological step, a product of abstraction, and not a concrete possibility. More simply, the reduction is considered a thought experiment. According to Ricœur, differently from Descartes' cogito, which is conceived as "the first link in a chain of truth" (Ricœur, 1967, p. 141) even though Husserl's ego still plays the role of origin and antecedent foundation, "is not a truth to be followed by other truths in an order of reasons. The cogito plays, rather, the role of 'origin' (*Ursprung*) of 'antecedent foundation', instead of that of the initial theorem" (Ricœur, 1967, p. 141). In conclusion, the sense of an animated organism as uniquely singled out remains in the reduction to the sphere of ownness.

Concerning this reduction, the paradoxical problem is to constitute the other from and within the ego's consciousness and to understand it at the same time as another, as a subject that is not merely a psychophysical object but a human being that has experienced both of the natural and social world as the ego itself. Therefore, after the performance of the second *epoché* and the delineation of the sphere of ownness, Husserl proceeds to describe how the constitution of the other takes place, transforming the objection of solipsism in an argument, i.e., in a challenge that finds the foundations in the consideration of what is peculiarly my own (*das mir Eigene*). First, the ego is presented as a monadic structure that looks out onto the world from its own perspective, projecting specific meanings that depend upon how the world is constituted in and from its own intuition. As Husserl stresses: "consequent upon this abstractive elimination of all that is alien to me, a sort of world remains with me, a nature reduced to what belongs to me – a psychophysical ego with

body, soul, and personal ego integrated into this nature, thanks to its body" (Husserl, 1960, p. 129). It is through the experience of its body that the ego perceives and founds its own "world." The ego's living body is always given an immediate presentation; it is the primal instituting organ to which the ego ascribes sensations and controls them actively from within. Second, the world is reduced to an array of phenomena that the transcendental ego claims as its 'own,' including the existence of other subjective monadic egos. The phenomenological sense of 'alter' is gained through the reflexive experience of the ego as the source and foundation of all meanings within itself. The other is found based on the logical pairing of the ego's body itself. Through the pairing, the other arises as a physical object. In this first moment, the others are as physics-objects. However, the sense of the other is missed if it is reduced to a physical body without intentions and conscious directions.

Thus, Husserl argues that besides objects in the world, there are other intentional subjects, i.e., beings who intentionally encounter the world. Although we cannot have originary experience of the other's psychic life, Husserl explains that the awareness of the other mind is appresented as a conscious stream containing acts of the same sort as the ego's conscious stream. Since the other is not immediately accessible to the ego as the ego is to itself, the mediate mode of appearance that makes the experience of the other possible is called appresentation. Husserl defines appresentation as a kind of "making co-present" (*Mit-gegenwärtig-machines*), as an intentional process in which we supply what is not immediately present to experience but which is intentionally related to it (Husserl, 1960, p. 109). The other is apperceived and appresented as a psychophysical unity, confirmed by the concordance of expressions, gestures, and behavior. As Husserl puts it, "the body of the other announces itself in the succession of experience as truly being an animate body in the unique way its changing but ever concordant behavior" (Husserl, 1960, p. 144). The other is a living, intentional being that resembles the ego.

The connection between what we might call the "own" and the "alien" causes many difficulties. We saw that for Husserl; the ego is the unquestionable reality while the other is reduced to its being-a-meaning for the ego and not as a transcendence over and against it. More precisely, the ego apprehends the other as other-than-the-ego-itself and never a transcendent-real-other. As such, the model of thing-

constitution (Dingkonstitution), as the attempt to constitute the other as a presumed unity of meaning within the flux of appearance, cannot solve the question of the other specific otherness. It is starting from this paradoxical point of treatment of the presence of the other as a problem of transcendental phenomenology in Husserl's work that Ricœur and Schütz reciprocally move in the direction of renewed phenomenological analyses of intersubjectivity and the social world. Much has already been written on Ricœur's and Schütz's respective readings of Husserl. However, I believe that, unfortunately, scholarly studies have not yet seen the fruitfulness of exploring together their interpretations and adaptations of Husserl's analysis of the intersubjective constitution of the community of monads (*Monadengemeinschaft*) and sociality (*Sozialität*).

From my point of view, there is a greater homogeneity among these two distinguished thinkers. Specifically, it seems that Schütz's emphasis on transcendental phenomenology displays a remarkable continuity and complementarity with Ricœur's work. I see in both Ricœur's and Schütz's speculations the attempt to cross-interpretative sociology of the social world, namely what Max Weber calls *Verstehende Soziologie*, and Husserl's phenomenology, trying in this way to develop elements for a renewed phenomenological descriptive sociology (see Cefai, 1998). Following their lines of thought, phenomenological resources can be used within social sciences. Ricœur and Schütz reflect upon the genesis of intersubjectivity and the status of collective entities starting from a critical reflection on Husserl's phenomenological perspective. Agreeing with Ricœur and pushing his argument further, I believe that Husserl's *Fifth Meditation* presents the outline for an a priori network of interpretative sociology of the social configuration, which needs to be revisited, criticized, and fulfilled by empirical reflection (See Ricœur, 1991, 240).

Ricœur discerns the problem of transcendental intersubjectivity by asking "how the primacy of the ego, sole originary principle of transcendental phenomenology, can be maintained throughout this progression toward the Other, toward the world of Others, and the Others as a world" (Ricœur, 1967, p. 116). Similarly, in his essay "The Problem of Transcendental Intersubjectivity in Husserl," Schütz argues: "How can the objectivity of the world as a world for everyone, and the existence of Others be established within this egological

cosmos? How can I derive the intersubjectivity of the world from the intentionalities of my own conscious life?" (Schütz, 1975, 57).

Husserl indeed has a renewed interest in social science and their object, namely the everyday social world, a context of interactions, calling it a "we-world" or "with-world" (Moran, 2016). He is deeply interested in the intentional being-with-each-other (*Ineinandersein*), i.e., in the intersubjective joining together of subjects that is constitutive of the collective social life (Moran, 2013). However, contrary to the sociological and anthropological perspectives, in which community is analyzed as something already existing, Husserl's examination develops from the ego to the common world. Therefore, Ricœur says that "what is important in Husserl is not what he says about community but how his analysis advances step by step toward community" (Ricœur, 1967, p. 135), i.e., how the analysis progresses from solipsism to community. However, Husserl rejects the attempt of philosophers of science, such as Rudolf Carnap, Carl Hempel, and Ernst Nagel, to apply the methodology of natural sciences to social reality. He insists that the naturalistic attitude wrongly conceives the natural world, particularly the world of things (*Dingwelt*) studied by physics, as in some sense prior and independent of the human cultural world (see Husserl, 1989). Husserl recognizes that this conclusion is one of the ongoing consequences of modern science, in which the abstract concept of nature has priority over the cultural world. Schütz rightly points out:

It seems that Edmund Husserl and the phenomenological school have demonstrated more clearly than any other philosophy of which I know that even our logic is rooted in this world of everyday life, which he calls the *Lebenswelt*, and that 'nature' in the sense of natural sciences is nothing else but a layer of this common life-world of all of us, a product of a systematic process of abstraction, generalization, and idealization in which man with his subjectivity is not included (Schütz, 1997, p. 133).

As Ricœur will write in his later work *Memory, History, and Forgetting*, Husserl "attempts to pass from the solitary ego to another susceptible of becoming, in turn, an us" (Ricœur, 2004, p. 117). The emergence of intersubjectivity as a theme in Husserl's writings from *Ideas I* to the *Cartesian Meditations* brings deep theoretical problems, such as the issue of ownness and otherness and the other mind

question. Schütz concludes that “these difficulties make it doubtful that Husserl’s attempt to develop a transcendental theory of the objective world was successful, and, what is more, they make it doubtful that such an attempt can succeed at all within the transcendental sphere” (Schütz, 1975, p. 55).

Objections to The First Two Stages of Husserl’s Transcendental Theory of Intersubjectivity

Ricœur’s and Schütz’s phenomenological analyses of Husserl refer mainly to the *Fifth Cartesian Meditation*. The analysis of this text offers at once the most thorough examination of the phenomenological foundation of transcendental intersubjectivity and makes rise to its most serious difficulties. Schütz observes that “in the *Cartesian Meditations* especially in the *Fifth Meditation*, Husserl has given us a profound analysis of the general significance of these questions and has also given us the essential starting point from which they must be solved” (Schütz, 1967, p. 97). Ricœur and Schütz mark out four stages in Husserl’s analysis, and in each of them, they find insurmountable problems in developing the conception of transcendental intersubjectivity. These levels are articulated in the dynamic movement from self-experience (*Selbsterfahrung*), to the experience of others (*Fremderfahrung*), from being with one-another (*ineinander*) in the configuration of the objective common world (*objective Welt*), to the constitution of higher intersubjective communities or still called “personalities of higher-order” (*Gemeinschaft*). Let us now consider Ricœur and Schütz’s critical assessment and objections of the first two stages of Husserl’s transcendental inquiry into the origin of intersubjectivity: (1) the isolation of the primordial world of the ego’s peculiar ownness through the *epoché*; (2) the constitution of the other via pairing, apperception, and imaginative variations. These levels contain ideas that will carry over to the higher-order case of communal constitution.

a) The Ego’s Ownness

Ricœur and Schütz argue that the first stage in Husserl’s theory of intersubjectivity is distinguishing the sphere of the ego’s proper ownness, including the cohesive stratum of its own world experience, from the sphere of other subjectivities. More precisely, as I have

explained above, the constitution of the intersubjective world begins with what Husserl calls the second *epoché* after the transcendental *epoché* which is the abstraction (*Enthaltung*), the bracketing (*Einklammerung*), and the putting out of play (*ausser spiel zu setzen*), from the totality of the world. The second *epoché* is the reduction of transcendental experience to the ego's sphere of peculiar ownness. Examining how this second *epoché* is performed, Schütz points out that this is an abstraction "first of all from what gives men and animals their specific sense as, so to speak, ego-like living beings" (Schütz, 1975, p. 58), but also from others as living beings and from all cultural predicates and objects. As Schütz, Ricœur argues, "According to common sense, the other egos are not reducible to the representation one has of them. They are not even represented objects, unities of sense, which one can verify in a concordant course of experience. Others are other than I" (Ricœur, 1967, p. 116). Briefly put the *Dingskonstitution* account, the attempt to constitute the other as a presumed unity of meaning within the flux of appearance cannot solve the question of the other specific otherness as living beings. It is necessary to break what Ricœur calls the "dictatorship of *Vorstellung*" (Ricœur, 1954, p. 381) and the ruins of representation to fully recognize the other's existence. The other is other than a thing, other than a mere analogy of an ego; it is a non-totalizable surplus of adumbrations whose presence cannot be brought to light by an epistemological derivation and dependency on the ego. Ricœur and Schütz criticize how Husserl justifies the manifestation of the sphere of the other. As Schütz observes,

several texts, including passages in *Formale und Transzendente Logik*, point to a 'pre-constituted substratum' (*Unterstufe*) of what is not 'properly' of the ego. What kind is that substratum, and must not a radical clarification of the constitution of what is not 'properly' of the ego beginning with an analysis of that substratum? (Schütz, 1975, 59)

Schütz refers to Eugen Fink's 1970 essay «The Phenomenological Philosophy of Edmund Husserl and Contemporary Criticism» in which Fink develops the distinction between three forms of ego that belong to the transcendental reflection and which are implied in the phenomenological reduction: (a) the mundane ego, the ego accepted along with its mundane life and preoccupied with the world; (b) the transcendental ego "to whom the world is pre-given in universal

apperception and by whom the world is taken for granted” (Schütz, 1975, p. 60); (c) the detached observer, the onlooker (*Zuschauer*), who performs the *epoché*. Schütz objects to Husserl to improperly switch the referent ego from one ego to another. Although Ricœur is not as direct as Schütz in the objection to Husserl's inaccurate reference to the notion of ego, he recalls Fink's work while examining the difficulties of interpreting Husserl's *Ideas I* (See Ricœur, 1967, 24). However, whereas Schütz attacks Husserl's indifferent use of the concept of ego, Ricœur focuses on Husserl's notion of intentionality as the property of the ego to the world. Specifically, Ricœur stresses that there are three concepts of intentionality: “that of psychology, which is synonymous with receptivity; that of *Ideas I*, which is dominated by the noema-noesis correlation and of which it is difficult to say whether it is receptive or creative; and that of true constitution, which is productive creative” (Ricœur, 1967, p. 27). In short, Ricœur and Schütz make explicit the implicit meaning of Husserl's presuppositions, avoiding confusion in the usage of terms. However, Schütz also goes a step beyond Ricœur's critical reading of Husserl in thinking that the concept of what is not correct of the ego and the correlated notion of “everyone” has a considerably fluctuating usage in Husserl's work. As he points out, “who are the ‘Others’ in the sense of ‘ego-subjects’ and what is their noematic-ontic manner of givenness which would serve as a transcendental clue for a constitutional theory of the experience of Others?” (Schütz, 1975, 59) It seems that the usage of the term “everyone” in Husserl's account does not clarify who the others are. Yet, Schütz does not see how the differentiation between the “consciousness of what is not ‘properly’ of the ego” and the “consciousness of the subjectivity of others insofar as it determines and co-determines sense” (Schütz, 1975, 59) can be maintained. Specifically, he thinks that this distinction cannot be effectively preserved since, as he objects, “are not many and perhaps all of our experiences of what is not ‘properly’ of the ego instituted in the natural world – which is retained as intentional correlate in the egological sphere – as ‘products’ of other subjectivities, or are they not at least interpreted by us as being instituted in this way?” (Schütz, 1975, 60)

b) The Transcendental Genesis of Intersubjectivity

The second stage in Husserl's account of intersubjectivity consists of the constitution of the other from and within the primordial sphere of

the ego. Following Husserl's distinction between body and flesh, the other appears first as a body through pairing, then as a living-body other than mine through appresentation, and as a body "there" entering into an association of sense with my body "here" via imaginative variations. These stages present many difficulties, articulating "the transcendental genesis that determines the a-priori conditions of all real relationships towards others" (See Michel, 2006, 247).

The first level consists of the analogical movement from my body apperceived in the world to the body of the other. This particular form of intentional or apperceptive transfer is what Husserl calls "pairing" (*Paarung*). Since only the ego is original, the other is constituted by pairing. It is through an inferential movement of resemblance, i.e., through the analogizing transfer of sense from me to the other as an alter ego, that the other's body is related to mine. Specifically, as a form of passive genesis, pairing accounts for others in a process that is a pre-reflective and ante-predicative experience. According to Ricœur, the analogizing movement gives only the logical sense of the other; it is a formal similarity: "pairing' is a relation which lacks the fullness of a living experience. The paired configuration offers only the supposition, an empty anticipation of the other presence, which requires further confirmation. Pairing designates that the ego's body and that of the other are similar in gestures, postures, and so on. Like Ricœur, Schütz thinks that within the ego's primordially reduced sphere, the other cannot be constituted as "a full monad within my monad" (Schütz, 1975, p. 67) but at most as another psychophysical ego as appresented. In other terms, I think that Schütz with "full monad" means the transcendental ego of the other, its flesh, its own mind.

Second, the other exists as a being in flesh and blood, as a subject with a lived experience like the ego. Husserl claims that bodily expressions of the other are a non-originary presentation of another ego, and these indicative signs continuously exhibit "a unitary transcending experience" of otherness (Husserl, 1960, p. 114). Husserl introduces appresentation as the perceptual decipherment of the concordances of the behavior of the other's life. On the one hand, Ricœur points out that that appresentation is a "genuine discovery" since it opens up the possibility of apprehending the other's body as flesh (See Vendra, 2020, 160). Nevertheless, as Ricœur will rightly diagnose later in *Oneself as Another*, Husserl's account downplays the role of difference. Indeed, appresentation is unable to

Create otherness, which is always presupposed; it confers upon it a specific meaning, namely the admission that the other is not condemned to remain a stranger but can become my counterpart [...] the resemblance based in the pairing of flesh with flesh works to reduce a distance [...] that is what is signified by the adverb 'like': like me, the other thinks, desires, enjoys, suffers (Ricœur, 1992, p. 335).

Going one step further than Ricœur, Schütz argues: "How do I know, when reduced to the primordial sphere of what is 'properly' of my ego, whether – and to what extent – the behavior of the body experienced as the living body of the Other is, indeed congruent?" (Schütz, 1975, 65). Therefore, focusing on the problem of the behavioral coherence of the other, Schütz stresses that

Either the 'second epoche' has not been carried out radically enough – perhaps it cannot be radically carried out at all – and our attempt to reach the pure sphere of what is 'properly' of the ego has miscarried, or I can indeed – within this pure sphere – apprehend the other emerging body analogically as the living body of a living being or perhaps even as the living body of a fellowman but am unable within the primordial sphere to grasp the verification of this appresentation as such (Schütz, 1975, p. 65).

Finally, in the third moment of Husserl's transcendental genesis of the other, that of imaginative variations, the ego imagines to be where the other is through the fiction or potential experience "if I were there." In doing so, the ego makes the other co-present by imagining what it might be like for the other to experience its world. As Ricœur explains, "Instead of fulfilling this analogical intending by perception of behaviors, I fulfill it by free creations of the imagination, and thus I give the associative transfer from me to the Other not only the vivacity of the image but also independence concerning my present perspective" (Ricœur, 1967, p. 129). In this perspective, Schütz claims that "it is not sufficient to consider the 'other' as a modification of myself in the mode of 'there,' without clarifying the nature of this modification, which again leads to the problem of normality, and hence to the problem of pre-constituted substrata" (Schütz, 1975, p. 66). Nevertheless, according to Schütz, the idea of congruence of behavior presupposes that the behavior of others can be typified by standards of normality that have already been established. These

standards depend on the production and the contexts excluded by Husserl's second *epoché*.

The Constitution of Objective Nature and Community as Personality of Higher-Order

After attempting to explain how the ego can experience the other as an independent center of consciousness, in his *Fifth Meditation*, Husserl analyzes how the experienced world as an objective present reality for everyone can be constituted. The ego experiences the world as including other individuals but also as involving a community of individuals in which it can experience itself as a member in various of these intersubjective realities. As such, Husserl writes: "a priori, my ego, given to me apodictically – the only thing I can posit in absolute apodicticity as existing – can be a world-experiencing ego only by being in communion with others like himself: a member of a community of monads show themselves consistently to be existent" (Husserl, 1960, p. 139). Therefore, the appresentative intuition through which the other as another monad becomes constituted appresentatively from and within the ego's own sphere proceeds to ever more diverse inter monadic communities resulting in the intersubjective constitution of a common nature.

We should now elaborate upon the third and the fourth stages of Ricœur's and Schütz's critical reading of Husserl's theory of intersubjectivity. More precisely, we will focus on their critique of Husserl's analysis of the communal dimension of intersubjectivity, i.e., of the "we-subjectivity" (Husserl, 1970, p. 109). More precisely, Ricœur and Schütz criticize Husserl's analysis of (1) the configuration of the objective and intersubjective nature and (2) the constitution of higher forms of community. In the *Fifth Cartesian Meditation* and *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, Husserl clearly describes the distinction between these two community levels. Schütz summarizes these two steps of Husserl's analysis as follows:

The human community – you and I and the Other and everyone as man among other men – who experience each other and whom I experience as such; the transcendental correlate of this, the community of monads of transcendental intersubjectivity, which is likewise constituted in me, the mediating ego,

exclusively from the sources of my own intentionality; further, the social communities arising from 'I-Thou' acts to which there correspond in the objective world social communities considered as objectivities of the mind among them the 'personalities of the higher order'; finally, the cultural world (Schütz, 1975, p. 73).

a) The Objective Nature

Ricœur rightly observes that in Husserl, the attempt to constitute the other asymmetrically from the ego's own sphere is extended to "the constitution of a nature held in common and then of a cultural world where characteristic objects – books, institutions, monuments – are correlative to genuine communities of persons" (Ricœur, 1967, p. 130). For Husserl, all communities, i.e., intending and willing and working, must be constituted upon the asymmetrical relation between the ego and the other. Nevertheless, Ricœur stresses that there is a "conflict between the two requirements within Husserl's work of constitution. The one demands respect for novel signification, which the progress of analysis uncovers; the other requires derivation of the being-status of communities from the being-status of the ego" (Ricœur, 1967, p. 131). Following Ricœur's reading, from a socio-practical point of view, the analogical grasping of the other does not account for the reciprocity among egos, which the subsequent analysis of the community requires. How, then, does Husserl explain this movement of derivation from the constitution of the other to the objective nature? First, Husserl builds his argument around the notions of perspective and perception. The constitution of a common objective nature is the basic level of community. The world of nature becomes an intersubjective common world when the ego recognizes that there are other subjects that perceive the world from their perspectives. Ricœur remarks that contrary to Leibniz's idea of perspective in which God integrates all perspectives into a higher point of view, in Husserl, human beings can discover the same world and the same object not within one originary perspective, but rather from their different points of view, i.e., always from the side and never from an over-viewing operation. Alternatively, to put it differently, Husserl claims that my perspective is the originary one and all other different perspectives upon the same object and world can be appresented. In this way, Ricœur stresses that Husserl speaks of a "world perceived by an

Other" of a functional community of one perception within the attempt to conjugate monadic idealism and monadological realism (Ricœur, 1967, p. 133).

The ego's perspective and that of the other are two strata, one which is lived in the original and the other which is appresented as belonging to the other human being. Hence, two strata of one object exist, but not two worlds. Nevertheless, in his essay "Hegel and Husserl on Intersubjectivity," Ricœur points out that "social existence rests on the constitution of a common nature. I must be able to consider nature constituted by me and that constituted by others as being numerically one. The world is not multiplied by the number of times it is perceived" (Ricœur, 1991, p. 240). Thus, I constitute what I experience as belonging to the same world that the others from their own perspective. In short, I am a co-constitutor of the world of experientiable physical objects intersubjectively with others. The world's identity, as the same world differently perceived by me and others, is explained by Husserl with the model of the synthesis of identification, namely the gathering together, that occurs in my intentional consciousness. This means that the ego and the others are not merely co-perceivers but a commonly constituting group. Let me offer a concrete example. In my garden, I see that object over there as a rabbit. From my perspective, I can perceive its color and shape, and given my past experiences, I constitute it as a rabbit.

Nevertheless, the point is this: since the others are like me, co-constitutors of the object, I make their experiences of it and their communication about it part of my experience and communication of that object. That said, the horizon of my experience of an object overlaps and intertwines with those of the others, and perspectives slip into one another. Hence, in *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, Husserl argues that

In general, the world exists not only for isolated men but for the community of men, and this is because even what is straightforwardly perceptual is communalized. In this communalization, too, there constantly occurs an alteration of validity through reciprocal correction. In reciprocal understanding, my experiences and experiential acquisitions enter into contact with those of others, similar to the contact between individual series of experiences within my (one's own) experiential life; and here again, intersubjective harmony of validity occurs, establishing

what is "normal" and thus an intersubjective unity also comes about (Husserl, 1970, pp. 163-164).

The constitution of the common world of objective nature is the product of an act inscribed to a "we" in common perception. On this transcendental communalization of monads (*Vergemeinschaftung der Monaden*), on how intentional subjects constitute and make up their experiential world. Husserl argues:

In living together, we have the world pre-given in this "together," as the world valid as existing for us. To which we, together, belong, the world as a world for all [...] Constantly functioning in wakeful life, we also function together, in the manifold ways of considering together, objects pre-given to us in common, thinking together, valuing, planning, acting together. Here we find [...] we-subjectivity (Husserl, 1970, p. 109).

As he puts it in his 1928 *Amsterdam Lectures*, according to Husserl, "transcendental intersubjectivity is the absolute and only self-sufficient foundation. Out of it are created the meaning and validity of everything objective, the totality of objectively real existent entities, and every ideal world" (Husserl, 1997, p. 249). Husserl attempts not only to explain the establishment of the world's objectivity, i.e., the reference to more than my subjectivity alone but also to a common temporality. As Ronald MacIntyre explains, "I experience the thing in my purview, including my body and the other's, as having not only the profile that appears to me from my current perspective but also, *simultaneously*, a profile that presents itself to him from his perspective but not to me from mine" (MacIntyre, 2012, p. 71). Ricœur clarifies that Husserl wants to show that

If time is to be the form of co-existence for several monads, an account must be given that it cannot be multiple. In the end, there is but one time, as there is one world. The private time of each monad is ordered in relation to a common objective time of which it is a 'mode of appearing' (Ricœur, 1967, p. 135).

Ricœur rightly continues that in Husserl's account, "things do stand with objective time as with objective nature: the internal consciousness of time of the primordial monad is the origin (1) of the time appresented in the Other, and (2) of the common objective time, the time of the world" (Ricœur, 1967, p. 135). Husserl grounds the

possibility of the social bond on the intentional community, whose correlation is the objective nature. Otherwise, what is crucially important here is that for Husserl, "the communication of the experience of natural things is presupposed by the communication of the experience of cultural objects" (Ricœur, 1991, p. 240). Rather than rejecting Husserl's assumptions, I think that what Ricœur offers in this insight is more a critical explanation of Husserl's focus on the constitution of the objective world.

Schütz raises three objections to Husserl's perspective. First, Husserl's argument derives an objective nature from the experience of the other as a body "there" from the ego's perspective, which appears simultaneously as the exact central body, as "here" from the other's own position. Husserl stresses that the other's bodily organism as an animated body is "constitutionally the intrinsically first objective man" (Husserl, 1960, p. 124). Even though Husserl admits that the other's body as animated and psychophysical reality is appresented in the primordial sphere of the ego, he balks at the appresentation of the "sphere of actualities and potentialities of another's stream of subjective processes and embraces all the possibilities of 'you can' and 'you could'" (Schütz, 1975, p. 68). Thus, Schütz critically asks: "How do I arrive at an experience of 'you can' and 'you could'?" (Schütz, 1975, p. 68) In other terms, how can I transfer the sense 'I can' to the sense 'you can' if I am 'here' and you are 'there'? Schütz points out that this transference of sense is inconceivable "since my being-here and your being-there involve necessarily 'I can from here, but you cannot from there'" (Schütz, 1975, p. 68). Moreover, this extension of sense cannot be traced back to a preconceived "everyone can" "since the normality of 'everyone can' supposedly originates in the institution of intersubjectivity between me and the Other" (Schütz, 1975, p. 68).

Schütz's second objection refers to temporality: how can the other's temporality be discovered in Husserl's account? How does temporality, then, become objective? Temporality is essential for the concretization of the other's entire monad. Schütz rightly sees that Husserl has not given a detailed explanation. However, he affirms that "there would be primally instituted a co-existence of my I and the other I, of my whole concrete ego and his, my intentional life and his, my realities and his – in short, a common time-form" (Schütz, 1975, p. 68). More simply, for Husserl, a first form of community, namely a shared reality and a common time-form, arises from the simultaneous

institution of my existence and that of the other, of my temporality and that of the other. But, as Schütz remarks, even though for Husserl

Each primordial temporality was thereby to acquire the significance of how objective temporality would appear to a single subject. Still, that would tell us nothing about how the temporality of the Other, essential to the constitution of the other complete monad, might be disclosed (Schütz, 1975, p. 69).

Schütz thinks that for the constitution of the common and objective world, it is not enough to say that the natural object in the ego's primordial sphere gains the addition of the appresented stratum, the natural object as it appears to the other. Specifically, to account for a common and objective nature, Husserl should account for the systematic unity of identity of the natural object given to the other in its primary originarity. Schütz critically argues: "does not, therefore, the instituting of a common and objective nature presuppose a "we-relationship," and is it not founded upon the possibility of communication?" (Schütz, 1975, p. 69). Discussing Husserl's *Ideas II*, Schütz takes the opposite position, pointing out that "it is not difficult to show that reciprocal understanding and communication already presuppose [...] a common surrounding world" (Schütz, 1975, p. 72). Thus, objectivity and intersubjectivity, we-relationship, and communication cannot be something derived but original.

b) Higher-Order Personality

The institution of a common nature and a common temporal form is only at the first community level. We must move to the last stage of Husserl's account of intersubjectivity, which consists of deriving "higher levels of inter-monadic community" or community of persons, such as the State and other enduring institutions, corresponding to specific cultural objects. Husserl conceives these forms of community as "higher-order" phenomena or collective persons, referring to the idea that communities are personal wholes founded on the acts of individual egos. As he puts it, "If one studies the person in his unity, which manifests itself in his acts and affections, then one studies how he affects other persons and likewise how he spiritually undergoes effects from them, and one studies how personalities of a higher order are constituted" (Husserl, 1989, p. 357). More precisely, I think there is a threefold development in Husserl's analysis: a community of

monads of transcendental intersubjectivity constituted from the ego's intentionality; further, the social communities in which there are the world social communities or objectivities of the mind, including the personalities of the higher order; third, we find the cultural world. Even though in his earlier manuscripts, Husserl occasionally refers to the Hegelian notions of "objective spirit" (*objektiver Geist*) and "collective spirit" (*Gemeingeist*), Ricœur critically highlights that Husserl's theory of community differs from that of Hegel's in one crucial respect. As Ricœur stresses, "The decisive advantage of Husserl over Hegel appears to me to lie in his uncompromising refusal to hypostatize collective entities and in his tenacious will to reduce them in every instance to a network of interactions" (Ricœur, 19991, 244).

The high-order communities of persons present the same difficulty we saw in the previous stage of Husserl's account of intersubjectivity: the problem to bridge the gap between the own and the alien. Specifically, Ricœur observes that in Husserl's perspective, "to the familiar world of my culture is opposed the alien worlds of other cultures [...] Thus, these higher-level persons present the same kind of problem as the presented by persons properly so-called, for it is always by starting from the own that the alien is understood" (Ricœur, 1967, p. 138). If we coherently follow Husserl's perspective, we cannot find a way to compare our culture to that of others since the relation to all other cultures is described as opposition between original and derivative, here and there, as insurmountable opposing dialectic. At this point, we shall focus on what I think might be considered Schütz's most substantial objection to Husserl's account of transcendental intersubjectivity, touching the core of the problem of the higher levels of inter-monadic community. Schütz observes that Husserl, in the *Fifth Cartesian Meditation*, states that an open monadic community, described as transcendental intersubjectivity, corresponds to an open multiplicity of beings, namely to a multiplicity of subjects of possible mutual community, in transcendental concretion (See Husserl, 1960, 130). According to Schütz, community rests on the possibility of communication and the we-relationship. That said, in what way can the monadic community correspond to the community of men? Schütz writes, "I, the one who performs the *epoché*, the transcendental ego, have constituted the Other in the previously described manner; and, similarly, you, another transcendental ego, have constituted me. Nevertheless, how can my

full monad, in its concretization, enter into a transcendental we-relationship with yours?" (Schütz, 1975, 76).

The fact is that there is no guarantee that the community that the ego constitutes from and within himself coincides with the community that the other constitutes. Schütz thinks that transcendental intersubjectivity, as constituted by Husserl, is not yet an intersubjectivity since the transcendental intersubjectivity is constituted purely from the sources of the ego's intentionality. To put it more directly, I believe we can state that what Husserl constitutes is a projected-subjectivity and not an inter-subjectivity and that, consequently, no transcendental community, no "we" can be established from the *second epoché*. This implies that Husserl's transcendental community would be nothing more than a community for me, for you, a cosmos of a monad without communication among a plurality of transcendental subjects. Therefore, Husserl fails to resolve intersubjectivity in trying to derive the common world on the assumption of a philosophy of consciousness, grounding his account of intersubjectivity on the epistemological model of identitarian asymmetry between ego and alter ego. In short, Ricœur and Schütz lead us to conclude that no transcendental constitutional analysis can disclose the essential relationship of intersubjectivity. I think, then, that we can define Husserl's idea of community with Jacques Derrida's words as a "community without community," an "anchoritic community" (Derrida, 1997, p. 42). I want to call it a "we" without "us," which is a paradoxical and abstract ideal.

Conclusions

In this article, I have investigated the possibility of a fruitful dialogue between Ricœur's and Schütz's phenomenological perspectives on Husserl's transcendental treatment of the problem of intersubjectivity. In doing so, I have proposed a critical debate between Ricœur's and Schütz readings of Husserl's fundamental steps of the transcendental configuration of social reality: the reduction the sphere of ownness or the primordial world of the ego, the theory of experience of the other through pairing, apperception, and the imaginative variation, the instituting of a common an objective nature, and the idea of communities as subjective or personal totalities of a higher-order. We can note the following points by way of conclusion.

My interest was primarily focused on Husserl's second *epoché* or the transcendental delineation of the sphere of ownness considered as the point of departure of Ricœur's and Schütz's critical approaches to transcendental phenomenology. It is from the reduction to the ego's own peculiar ownness that the presence of the other arises as a problem of transcendental phenomenology. I think Ricœur's and Schütz's readings of the conception of transcendental ego and the reduction to the sphere of ownness lead us to conclude that Husserl's solution shows a paradoxical experience of the other as an impossible-possibility, another who cannot finally appear as such. For Husserl, the other cannot be given as it is in itself or directly but only indirectly through the presentation of the ego's perspectives and projections. As Richard Kearney claims, Husserl's account "avoids solipsism (success) but reduces the understanding of the other to apperception (limitation)" (Kearney, 2011, p. 7). The other arises beyond and before any intentional horizon.

The analysis of the paradox of ownness-otherness has been further developed in the discussion of the common objective nature and the theory of personality of a higher order, such as institutions and social groups seen as functioning analogously to the individual "I." In Husserl's perspective, the founding of a community is "based on a virtually second-degree form of constitution, with the subject again providing the measure of projected behavior" (Joy, 2011, 229). The ego cogito is the primordial subject who defines the other as an alter-ego derived from his or her own analogical apperception. Given this unilateral dialectic moving from the primordial ego to the other, Ricœur and Schütz see in Husserl's work a lack of reciprocity, which is an essential condition for communalization and social unification.

For Ricœur and Schütz, intersubjectivity is not "a problem of constitution which can be solved within the transcendental sphere" (Schütz, 1975, p. 82) but rather a datum of the life-world. It is interesting for the project of development of any social theory to stress that the analysis of transcendental intersubjectivity "is not only important for deciding whether or not the problems of intersubjectivity [...] can be solved. It is also relevant for whether the results of phenomenological constitutional analysis apply to all social sciences" (Schütz, 1975, p. 55). In conclusion, our everyday life-world is fundamentally a social and intersubjective world, a world of common experience that cannot be examined from a transcendental

approach but rather from what I would call a mundane-descriptive phenomenology. This form of phenomenology aims to describe the universal formal structures of the life-world, while the task of the empirical social sciences is to research the historical and cultural variety of concrete contents. The situatedness of human beings requires a detour through the empirical social sciences.

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The second-person approach: Implications for a realistic phenomenology of social cognition

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DOI: 10.22034/IYP.2021.245793

Abstract

This paper analyses social cognition by considering the analytic philosophy of mind, neurophenomenology, and social neuroscience. Many social neuroscientists rely unconsciously on different philosophical answers to the question, "How do we understand each other?". Consequently, we will compare the principal intellectual and experimental approaches to social cognition proposed so far and join them in an integrationist account by considering the direct embeddedness of social interactors.

First, the "theory theory" (T.T.) affirms that mindreading involves inferring the other's mental state by observing his behavior from a third-person perspective. A neural network called the "mentalizing system" (M.E.N.S.) underlies mindreading activities.

Second, the Simulation Theory (S.T.) assumes that social cognition involves simulating the mental states of the other. The "mirror neurons system" (i.e., M.N.S.) is the neural substrate for the simulatory activities. T.T. and S.T. are fastened to the "observer paradigm" since the experimental set-ups detect a participant's brain's activity observing or simulating someone else's movement, and intersubjective dynamics are not at play.

Finally, the second-person approach invites us to consider the other as the one who directly intervenes in our perception and is responsible for the meaning we assign to his mental states (cf. Schilbach et al., 2013). Consequently, Schilbach et al. (2013) have established an experimental setting that is "minimalist and naturalistic" because it



focuses on fundamental embedded interactions such as mutual gaze.

This paper argues that the philosophical theories underlying those approaches do not conflict with each other, but they highlight different moments of social interaction in real life. Indeed, their neural substrates partially overlap. Hence, we want to establish in which order these three moments of social interaction occur. We hold that a realistic phenomenology must consider second-person interactions as the beginning of a realistic phenomenology.

KeyWords: mindreading, neuroscience, neural, substrate, embeddedness.

Introduction: The “veil of Maya” in the classic accounts of social cognition.

In Western intellectual tradition, the paradigms for inquiring social interaction have principally referred to a detached observer not actively engaging with other agents. The setup of recent experiments often consists of participants who observe others' behavior and try to infer their mental states (beliefs, desires, and intentions) (de Bruin, 2012). Hence, the notion of reciprocity is not at play because participants are not performing a "joint action"; social understanding then is a solipsistic activity conducted by a spectator that ponders the mental states of others.

Secondly, such accounts of social cognition imply the representational theory of mind.[1], which maintains the surroundings, and the others are never directly experienced. Contrarily, our perception of the observed interactors consists of mediating mental pictures. Moreover, the content of experience is conveyed to the subject by "intrinsic qualities" (Slors et al., 2015, p. 78), e.g., repugnance or beauty of people's facial expressions, which are subjective and contrast with "extrinsic properties," which are objective, physical and relational, e.g., Mark is bigger than Sara. If we never perceive others but only a mental representation of them, then it is possible that the intrinsic qualities of our experience deceive us. Indeed, the classical approaches to social understanding are intrinsically skeptical. Representation of others is limited and needs to be clarified; hence, there is a gulf between our impressions and their actual feeling or beliefs. Therefore, we must engage in an "intellectual detour" to bridge the gap between immediate experience and the other's psychological states (see Asch 1952:144–50).

At this point, an epistemic problem arises. How can we justify that, in ordinary cases, we can grasp others' feelings at a certain degree of immediacy? If we do not perceive the interactor directly, inferring her mental state through a sophisticated intellectual detour seems awkward. A scientific account of social interaction should address the direct perception of others that in the classical approaches needs to be included. The "observer-paradigm" entails a "veil of Maya," which separates the social actors and renders the more basilar interactions hardly intelligible and more mentalistic than they are.

Recently, Schilbach et al. (2013) have challenged the "observer paradigm," promoting a second-person approach (2nd p.a.) to social cognition and emphasizing the importance of dynamic, real-time interactions with others, e.g., eye-tracking. The affectivity springing by the mutual gaze responses between two interactors is primary to the conceptual comprehension of the other's mental state because it generates "common attentional patterns" toward the other (CFR. Elgin, 1999, pp. 146-69). The "attentional pattern" constitutes the direct entanglement between the interactors, which permits them to share common representations of the world, and, therefore, it is primary and constitutive of higher levels of mentalistic understanding of others' behavior. The 2nd p.a. then conceives the others like actual "You-person" directly influencing our social experience (Schilbach et al., 2013, p. 395).

This paper defends two ideas. First, the 2nd p.a. is necessary for a scientific and realistic account of social understanding. Accounting for the direct entanglement of social interactors is essential for overcoming the skeptical "spectatorial gap" (*Ibid.*:397-8). Second, the 2nd p.a. is not mutually exclusive of more mentalistic paradigms of social interactions, but, on the contrary, it is constitutive of them. So, we will propose an "integrative account" of social cognition. In the first and second sections, we will briefly expose the classical theories of social understanding ("theory theory" and "simulation") and their supposed neural correlates. Furthermore, we will uphold their inconsistency with a realistic account of the social experience. Finally, we will succinctly display the 2nd p.a. and its influence on social neuroscience, and we will advocate the phenomenological privilege of the second p.a. over the other accounts.

The "Theory theory" (or mind reading) and the third person approach (3 p.a.)

How is our understanding of others' minds realized? According to the report of the "theory theory" (T.T.), our knowledge of others requires the attribution of mental states[2] Through inferences from our perception of the observed behavior (Meltzoff, Gopnik, 2013). T.T. relies on "folk psychology" (F.P.), a term introduced by Wilfrid Sellars (1956) to refer to the system of psychological concepts (e.g., beliefs, feelings) used in everyday practice for ascribing mental states

to people. Besides, Sellars defines F.P. as a theory that postulates some unobservable entities- i.e., mental states- which are the occupants of specific causal roles for explaining behavior: e.g., "He kissed his daughter because he was cheerful (mental state: happiness)." Analogously to the scientific method, the application of F.P. is an inferential process from an observation to a hypothesis and a conceptual revision in the case of a mistaken conjecture.

Manifestly, F.P. theory is continually at play in social interactions. However, it is still being determined what kinds of cognitive mechanisms would allow persons to infer about complex mental states so swiftly and successfully. Hence, the term "theory theory" refers to a metatheory of F.P., which aims to explain the connection of mental states with related perceptual inputs and scientific evidence. If F.P. is merely a theory about the contents of the mind and their causal relations, T.T. should also try to demonstrate how we mentalize. Following the internalist TT[3] F.P.'s application consists of representations of others' minds, which occur in the brain of the individual agent (Slors et al., 2015, p. 256). Indeed, Frith and Frith (2006), in their seminal paper, try to propose the neural basis of "mentalizing," that is, our ability to read the F.P. mental states of other agents. According to the authors, "mentalizing" about the others' behavior is a complex activity that requires comprehension of their emotional state, the intentions lying behind their actions, and their stable attitudes and predilections (*Idem.*:531). Grasping these properties of others' mental conditions requires taking their perspective and engaging in many neural processes. So, Frith and Frith enlist every neural correlate involved in "mentalizing," specifying their peculiar function and quoting much experimental evidence. A critical bulletin about the authors' results is unnecessary because this chapter's chief point is the conceptual bias behind their approach. Here is a list of the proposed neural correlates:

- The region of the brain at the posterior end of the superior temporal sulcus (pSTS) and the adjacent temporoparietal junction (TPJ): This neural area is involved in many functional tasks, such as the recognizing of others' face and the observation of the other's eye movement. The direction of the other's gaze constitutes a clue for representing her visual perspective and inferring about the cause of its emotion, e.g., He is scared because a tiger is pointing at him, or about his intention, e.g., He

is looking at the cigarette on the table (because he wants to smoke) (*Ibid.*:532).

- The temporal poles (T.P.): Anatomical studies have suggested that they are related to autobiographical memory (Dupont, 2002), but they also have a role in social and emotional processes, including face recognition and theory of mind (Olson et al., 2007). Frith and Frith propose that the T.P., in virtue of their connectivity to dorsal (auditory), medial (olfactory), and ventral (visual) streams, binds highly processed perceptual inputs to visceral emotional responses. Indeed, the authors suggest that this neural area is involved in converging sensorial information for recognizing a recurrent environment or situation. The T.P.'s activity is necessary to answer questions like how Mark usually feels when crossing an unsafe street. So, it permits "contextual" social comprehension, that is, understanding how a person is likely to be and feel in a recurrent context or situation, e.g., Mark is scared whenever he crosses a road (*Cf. Ibid.*:532).

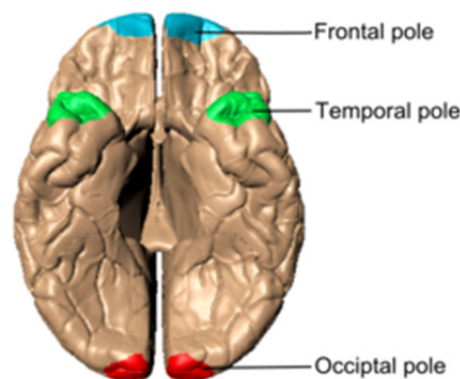


Fig. 1: The poles of the cerebral hemispheres

- The medial prefrontal cortex and the adjacent paracingulate cortex: Following Stuss et al. (2001), lesions to the frontal lobes comport impairments in inferring the others' visual perspective, which implies difficulties in representing another's perceptions according to one's own past (*Ivi.*:282-283). Thus, there is a failure to recognize somatic markers, so emotional

experience helps guide response options. Consequently, the frontal lobes' activity entails the F.P. theory of mind. As claimed by Frith and Frith (2006), in general, the prefrontal cortex is concerned with planning for the future and representing anticipated states of the world (*Ivi.*:532). Thinking about the possible reactions of a person dissimilar from us, e.g., with diverse political ideas, involves dorsal regions of mPFC; meanwhile, for people similar to us, it requires activity in ventral mPFC (Amodio & Frith, 2006).

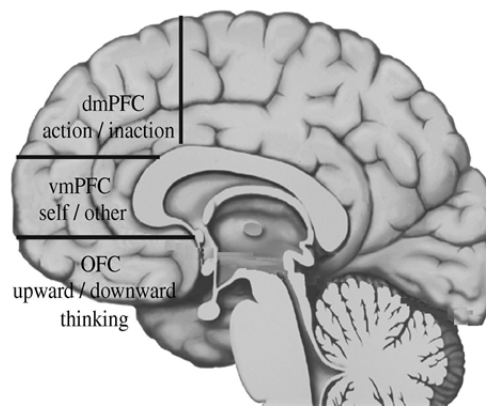


Fig. 2 The prefrontal cortex and other “mind-reading” functions.

These neural areas and mutual connections compose the "mentalizing system" (MENT). By convergence of perceptual and mnemonic information, the MENT gives the evidence to infer about others' mental states. Moreover, the MENT system has the advantage of associating the identification of abstract thoughts with a physiological make-up, connecting their cognition to an actual corporeal process. This proposal remains inevitably fastened to the "observer paradigm" because these capacities for social understanding imply a complex inferential process that starts with evidence about the other's behavior and the situational clues and concludes by inferring the other's mental states. Never is there a direct comprehension that does not involve a double-step procedure from observing to insinuating the other's feelings. Metaphorically, the other is a 3d-person, "He-She-person." Similarly to storytelling, making sense of

the other's mental state involves a narration from a detached viewpoint like an omniscient narrator, e.g., He was scared because he saw a tiger attacking him (Cf. Hutto, 2008). Although eye contact is present in the account of Frith and Frith, there is only one evidence for conjecturing over the intention and emotional state of the other, who is never directly engaged in a mutual gaze.

Hence, some problematic points arise. First, in the third-person perspective of "mindreading," the observer is an ideal subject. Indeed, the mental states of the person engaged in social understanding of the other are not in consideration. Consequently, her mind seems to be a "tabula rasa," which merely estimates the other's mental state without emotional engagement. The other's mental states should be self-experienced to some degree; otherwise, their common representation and comprehension are hardly conceivable (Cf. Northoff and Heinzel, 2006).

Relevantly for our concern, some issues for the realism of social cognition follow. The proposal of Frith and Frith (2006) remains fastened to a representational account of mind-reading. Namely, in the "perspective-taking" task, the other's glance is detected by the observer, but it does not tell anything by itself. Through her mind-reading capabilities, the spectator fulfills the other's silent representation. In truth, the expression "representing the mental state" repeats six times in the brief paper of Frith and Frith.

Consequently, if no direct self-experience and neither unmediated other's influence on our perception is at play, the justification and guarantee for the final mental inference is absent, and only an oral confirmation could assure its correctness. Again, the skeptical doubt is behind the corner. With a phenomenological account of our affectivity and the other's influence on that, the representations of the other's mental states arise from mere detached observation, and their phenomenology needs to be clarified. In conclusion, our private affectivity and direct and physical contact with the other are the only assurance of the reality of our "mind-reading," or we would remain with a very sophisticated and mentalistic theory that loses touch with existence. For this reason, in the next chapter, an analysis of the first-person approach will show some more primitive capabilities for social understanding, which consider self-affectivity and are necessary but insufficient for a realistic account of mindreading.

The "Simulation theory" (S.T.) and the 1st-person approach (1st p.a.)

The "Simulation Theory" (S.T.) claims that social cognition involves "putting ourselves in the shoes of others" by simulating the mental states we would have in their situation. Hume (2000) stated that studying one's conscious states leads to discovering general principles applicable to others. Thus, the introspection has a dominant role in the understanding of others. The insights from Hume have influenced Goldman's version of S.T. (2006). The core assumption of S.T. is the homogeneity of people's mental state.[4] Hence, the observer's cognitive mechanisms are similar to the person whose behavior he is trying to understand. If compared to T.T., S.T. is a deflationary account because there is no need for multiple steps inferential processes. However, only for one analogical inference, that is to say, the observer tries to imagine the other in her situation by simulating to occupy her place (Slors et al., 2015, p. 258). The S.T. relies on the first-person perspective, which bases the social understanding upon one's self-perception. Although S.T. can explain more basic forms of social comprehension, it could only reduce some of the explanatory power of T.T., such as understanding the other's political opinions.

For clarifying S.T., the history of discovering its neural correlates- i.e., mirror neurons- is helpful. In the 80s, mirror neurons were discovered in the brains of macaque monkeys by Rizzolatti and his colleagues from the University of Parma (1992). In the first moment, they detected that an area of the premotor cortex called F5 fired whenever the monkeys reached for a peanut. Successively, they surprisingly noticed that when the researchers grasped an object, such as a peanut, to hand it to the monkey, the same monkey's motor neurons would also fire when the monkey itself grasped the peanut. Further, they detected that individual neurons would only respond to specific actions, such as one Neuron for simulating the grasping of a peanut and a different one for putting a peanut in the mouth. Accordingly to the findings, many have speculated that the comprehension of the other's intentionality- i.e., what is he looking for?- depends upon the inner mimicry and resonating with the other's action.[5]

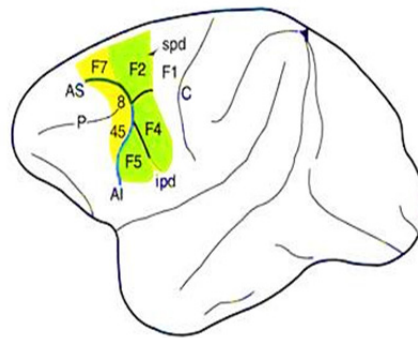


Fig. 3: Mirror neuron system (MNS) in macaque monkeys.

Recently, many researchers have committed to determining the correlates of MNS in the human brain. Most studies on the human mirror-neuron system have used neuroimaging, generally functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). However, when we record signals from the human brain containing millions of neurons, the task is complicated, and only vast neural areas, instead of single neurons, are identifiable. The current study of Watanabe et al. (2017) is a prototype of the human brain mapping of MNS. Their experiment was based on an fMRI scan of participants performing imitative tasks of the other's finger movement. The authors identify the following neural areas:

- The right ventral premotor area (PMv) and the inferior parietal lobule (IPL) are associated with synthesizing visual and kinesthetic information from observed limb movements. PMv further contributes to visuomotor transformations required for correcting the hand posture configuration (*Ivi.* 6225).
- The Inferior frontal gyrus (IFG) is involved in recognizing the intentionality or the goal of the observed action (*Ivi.*:6226).
- The insula is engaged in the sense of self-awareness and body ownership (*Ibid.*). So, it permits one to distinguish the self and the simulated other when performing the same motor task, e.g., imitating the rapid finger movements.

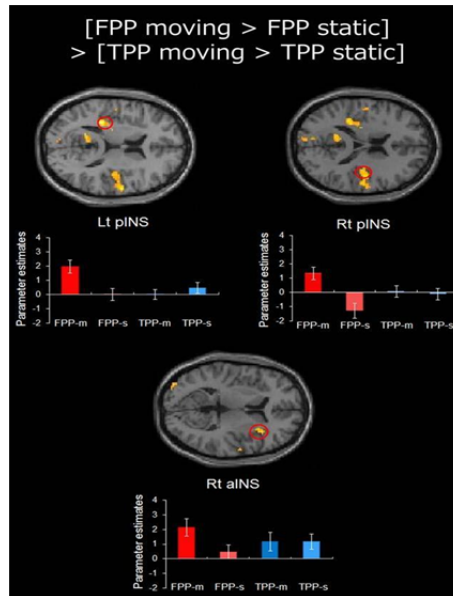
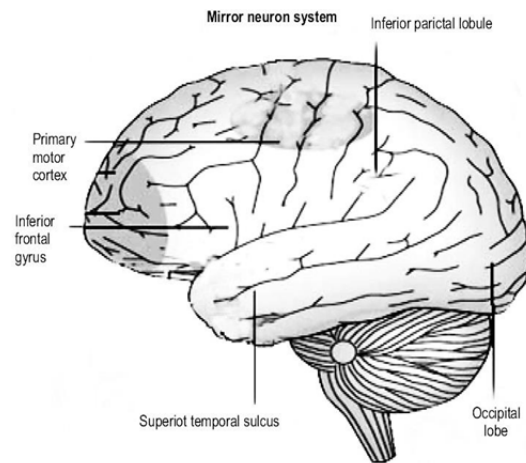


Fig 4: The activity of the insula in the Watanabe et al. experiment.

As implied above, the research in the human brain MNS has moved beyond matching the motor system for explaining more sophisticated mental tasks, such as understanding the other intentionality and the self-other distinction. Vittorio Gallese and Alvin Goldman (1998) suggested that the discovery of MNS provided additional support for the simulation theory. They also proposed that S.T. is not incompatible with mindreading but is constitutive of it. Indeed, the mirror neurons' activity largely depends on unconscious motor processes rather than consciously imagining the beliefs and desires of the other.[6] From the evolutionary standpoint, the discovery in macaques' brain also suggests that this basilar kind of social understanding could have developed earlier than more cogitative ways of comprehending. So, the inferential processes in the third-person approach should be constituted by an "analogical inference" in the first-person approach. Further studies have suggested that the role of the insula in simulating the other's disgust (Wicker et al., 2003) or the role of the somatosensory cortex in "tactile empathy" how we experience the sight of others being touched, simulating the same sensorial stimuli (Keysers et al., 2004).

A complete account of social cognition requires addressing the first-person approach and S.T. for linking the inferential processes (3d p.a.) to the egocentric sensorimotor activity (1st p.a.). The connection explains the development from involuntary motor simulation to highly evolved "mind-reading" capabilities in children. Moreover, first, p.a. could account for the self-experience in the phenomenology of social cognition. Consequently, it resolves at least a problem for the realism of social understanding. The observer and simulator is not a "tabula rasa"; instead, he "lives the other's feeling." At least one element- i.e., one's own affectivity- constitutes the justification of the representation of the other's mental states, which are not only inferred by the observed evidence but the automatic self-experience forms them.

Another clue suggesting the necessity of integrating first p.a. and third p.a. is that MNS and MENS partly overlap because the mirror neurons are found in a vast network of neural areas according to their specific function. For instance, if we look at the MNS map of the Indian Association of Psychiatry (Rajmohan & Mohandas, 2007), the mPFC and the superior temporal sulcus are present like in the MENS (Frith & Frith, 2006). So, the same neural areas are activated for simulation and Folk-psychology tasks. Hypothetically, the two processes occur at a different time scale - i.e., simulation activity would be faster on a millisecond measure-or different neural plasticity is at play for diverse functions, or the same brain networks have different functional connectivity, both internal and external. Further experimental data suggests adequate ways for integrating the MNS (S.T.) and the MENT (T.T.) for a complete account of social cognition.



**Fig. 5: Mirror neuron system in the human brain
(Indian Association of Psychiatry)**

However, the S.T. and first p.a. are insufficient to overcome the "realistic gap" mentioned above. Also, the 1st p.a. is fastened to the "observer paradigm" (De Bruin et al., 2012) because the experimental setup usually involves detecting the brain's activity of a participant observing or simulating someone else's movement without addressing intersubjective "joint attention." Furthermore, the simulative social understanding depends, in a particular way, on a representational theory of mind. Even if the other is not depicted by imagining, the internal activity of the insula and primary motor cortex is, to a certain degree, representative of the other, who never is directly perceived. Consequently, the observer's bodily feeling depicts the interactor by mediating analogical inference. A realist phenomenology of social cognition should address the active role of the other, or it would seem unintelligible how he affects and directs our comprehension in the right direction. Moreover, the simulative activity likely deceives us if the other is not directly involved. Hence, the skeptical doubt pops up again.

The next chapter will analyze the second-person approach to social cognition and the sensorimotor theory, which are strictly intertwined. This approach explains the more basilar characteristics of social experience in which the interactors mutually affect each other before applying for an intellectual or simulative detour to understand the other.

3- The second person approach (2nd p.a.) and the sensorimotor theory (SMT).

A non-representational theory of mind is indispensable for assessing a direct and realistic account of social cognition. The "sensorimotor" (S.M.) theory of perception offers the necessary conceptual background. Accordingly, cognition is an action-oriented exploratory activity more than a passive representation; that is to say, sensorimotor contingencies determine our vision (CFR. O'Regan and Noe, 2001). Following Husserl (1973), the perception of worldly objects relies on "horizons" of perspectives. For instance, the mere representation of a door, which is closed, does not imply that there is a posterior surface on the other side. The perceiver has the tacit knowledge that he could pass to the back surface, opening the door; therefore, only by understanding his motor possibilities could he mentally grasp a complete picture of the object. Moreover, the implicit knowledge of sensorimotor capabilities influences our perception of the objects. However, it does not require further representations- i.e., no one needs to imagine the door's back to determine the possible action on the door's handle or vice-versa.

Moving to our topic, the other is an active interactor, which offers "social affordances," which is a subcategory of affordances (Rietveld et al.). From phenomenology, we learn that we usually engage skillfully with our environments under the unreflective actions "solicited" by the situation. "Social affordances" are sensorimotor loops for interaction driven by others, allowing for interpersonal behavior coordination (Schilbach et al., 2013, p. 401). For specimen, the ability of "taking perspective" (see above, Chp.1) of the other does not solely depend on observing the other's glance to understand what he is glancing or staring at. On the contrary, in real-time social interaction, the other is an initiator or a responder (Schilbach et al., 2013, p. 5); that is to say, he or she invites us to look in a determinate direction, or vice-versa, he or she is responsive to the shift of our eye-movement. Thus, the interactor immediately intervenes in our perception in a way that an intellectual or simulative detour cannot address. In this intersubjective account, the other is thought to be a second-person. He or she is concretely existent, and her influence or responsiveness to our presence provides a "perceptual common ground" (Cf. De Bruin et al. 2012), which represents the backbone of high-level cognition- i.e., "mindreading" mental states (T.T.) or S.T.

Following the second-person approach (2 p.a.), Schilbach et al. (2013) have created an experimental setup worth determining the neural correlates of essential mutual interaction. Respectively, the setup must be "minimalist and yet naturalistic" (*Ibid.*:404), which means that the focus is on elementary forms of interactions that do not require highly abstract thoughts-e.g., mutual gaze or correlated hand gestures. The emphasis on automatic tasks is needed to avoid confusion with first p.a. and third p.a. that require the ability to read the other's mental states. Thus, their experiment establishes a participant looking at a virtual character, which, in virtue of developed algorithms, is responsive to the direction of her gaze. Some objects-i.e., three grey squares, are placed at the sides of the screen (see Fig. 6), and the virtual interactor can also ignore the participant's glance and point his eyes at a different object. Last, the participant should be convinced to interact with an actual human "behind the screen" to be motivated in the performance and recreate a likely accurate situation. The obtained data through fMRI scanning and eye-tracking want to determine which neural areas are functionally active in specific roles of the 2nd-person interaction, e.g., the participant invites the virtual character to watch at a particular object (initiator) or vice-versa (responder), or they are both neglecting each other (non-joint attention).

As per Schilbach et al., a significant result is that the neural correlates for non-joint attention and joint attention are different. This factor implies a neural discrepancy between mere observation and intersubjective experience (*Ibid.*:407). The lateralized frontoparietal network is involved in non-joint attention; that is to say, the interactors look at different objects. Generally, the medial prefrontal cortex (mPFC) and the posterior cingulate cortex (PCC) are involved in "joint attention." Specifically, the ventral striatum is active for self-initiated joint-attention, which means that the participant invites the virtual other's gaze toward an object, and the anterior mPFC is active when following someone else's glance (*Ibid.*:403).

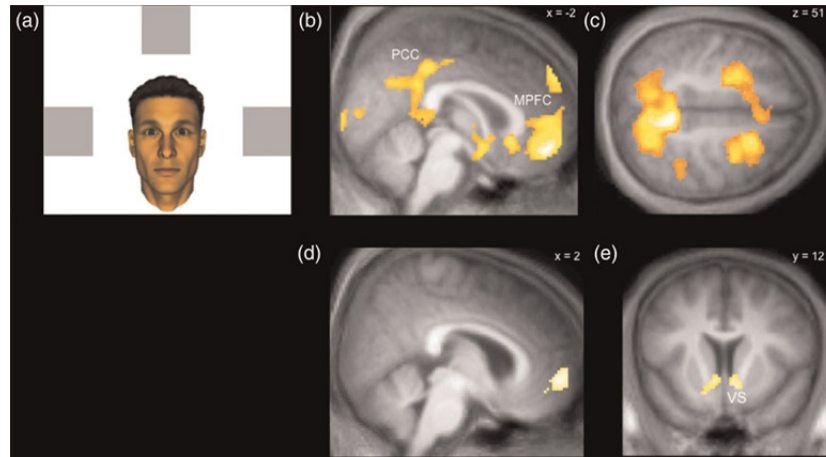


Fig.6.: a- the virtual character, b- neural correlates of joint-attention, c- non-joint attention, d- other initiated joint-attention, e- self-initiated joint-attention. (Schilbach et al. 2013).

Surprisingly, the authors themselves state that these brain regions are overlapping with the MENT system (*Ibid.*:404). According to Amodio and Frith (2006), the PFC's activity facilitates "contextual knowledge" about others, like knowing that such a disgusted expression occurs whenever my friend sees the face of a political opponent on the T.V. screen. This sophisticated form of social comprehension requires the ability to think about the other's conceptual mental states, like political beliefs. Nevertheless, demanding that a rudimentary level of cognition foreruns such a compound form of social understanding is a logical assumption. Following the second p.a., the activity of responding to social affordances- i.e., eye tracking- is not a radical alternative to "mindreading" (T.T.) or simulating (S.T.), but rather it is constitutive of them. We propose that the "2nd-person cognition" represents and explains our direct entanglement with others, which cannot be exhaustively described by a conceptual (T.T.) or physical deduction (S.T.). Therefore, it is the backbone of S.T. and T.T.

Let us consider the case of our friend's hateful expression when looking at a political rival on the T.V. screen. At the first moment, the anterior portion of mPFC actively follows the fellow's "social affordance"- i.e., his invite to look in the direction of the television. Hence, he exhorts us to understand his state of mind in a purely

physical way (SMT) without needing meta-representations or inferential processes. In the second step, the MNS system can account for some elementary forms of empathy mirroring the other's facial mimicry. During facial emotion processing, mirror neurons in the primary motor cortex provide an internal simulation of the observed facial expression that elicits a similar emotion in the observer, thus aiding the identification of that sentiment (Enticott et al., 2008). Given our attunement to others, to account for the inner affectivity provides the physiological make-up underlying our perception of the other's feeling-i.e., "He is expressing disgust or hate in the same way as I do." Finally, the activity of the MENT system, in virtue of the convergence of perceptual and mnemonic information, can address the "contextual" knowledge. Namely, the association of the occurring situation- e.g., what is going on television- with the other's bodily "affordances"- e.g., disgusted facial expression. To resume:

Lower-level: second p.a. The other invites me to a "common attentional pattern," which is constitutive of conceptual knowledge and guarantees the direct entanglement with the other's existence → Medium-level: first p.a. Through the inner mimicry; I understand the other's corporal expression. At this level, the self-affectivity becomes part of the realistic phenomenology of intersubjective cognition → Higher-level: 3d p.a. The sensorimotor information and the surrounding factors integrate for inferring the other's complex mental states, which depend upon socio-cultural knowledge or recurrent situations, e.g., political beliefs or being afraid whenever he crosses the road

4- Concluding remarks and prospects.

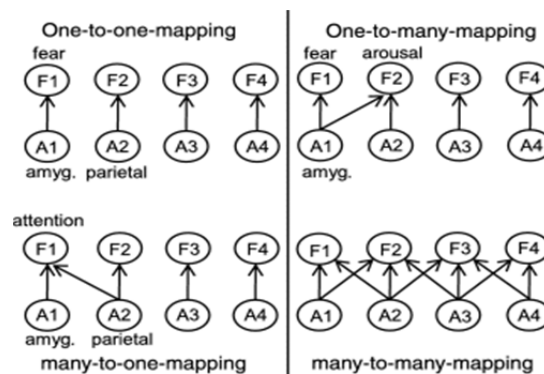
First, none of the approaches and related social cognition theories (S.M., S.T., and T.T.) are mutually exclusive. An "integrative account" is the best way of addressing a complete and realistic phenomenology of intersubjective understanding. The challenge at the philosophical level is consistently joining the theories of mind. The S.M. theory and the two p.a. should be considered primary to diverse approaches because of their directedness. This allows us to address the other's unmediated influence on our experience as in real-time interactions. Here, an objection arises. The 2nd p.a. is not explicative of the other's mental states. The research of Schilbach et al. only

permits the existence of a mutual "attentional pattern." However, it cannot explain intentionality (Moore & Paulus, 2013) or cultural factors that require conceptual and contextual knowledge and mental representation.

Nonetheless, I do not conceive it as a real issue because the three approaches and theories of mind are at different levels and irreducible to each other. So, the 2nd p.a. and S.M. theory can account for the common "attentional pattern," which is the basement of every social encounter. However, although it necessarily constitutes the higher mind-reading capabilities, they are not reducible to it. Mind-reading skills (e.g., empathy and contextual knowledge) duly belong to different "realms of explanation," which are S.T. (1st p.a.) and T.T. (3d p.a.). For instance, new research could focus on how the different roles in the "joint-attention task"- i.e., initiator or responder- could affect the reading of the other's mental state in the same complex real-like situation. Lastly, an over-comprehensive account would need to be more accurate in explaining the stratified and multi-step process of social understanding. Every different theory has the privilege of its specific level of explanation.

Consequently, the real challenge for social neuroscience is providing evidence to justify the conceptual connection between the different theories. For instance, the fact that Schilbach et al. determined correlates for second p.a. overlap with the MENT system, according to the brain mapping of other authors (Frith & Frith, 2006), provides additional support to my proposal. The ideal proof would be reproducing a complete social interaction by experiment and detecting at which time-scale the different neural areas are functionally active. Such an accurate record is currently non-testable because it is arduous to discern different processes on a millisecond scale. Besides, if the regions overlap, distinguishing which kind of function (e.g., eye-tracking, second p.a. or intentionality-grasping, first p.a. or 3d p.a.) they are currently performing is almost impossible. So, the same brain regions are active for a multitude of functions (one-to-many mapping). The task is discovering the physical connectivity among brain areas, which is representative of the conceptual connectivity among social cognition theories. This is a two-pronged process, which requires a deconstructive phase and a reconstructive one. The first step involves elucidating how the same neural area could perform different teleology and complexity tasks at distinct times. Schilbach et al.

(2006:407) propose that neural plasticity differences could exist in the same neural networks based on one's own involvement- i.e., the mPFC in direct (2nd p.a.) or indirect interaction (3d person p.a.). The further step involves determining the functional connectivity for the high-level social cognition, which involves a plurality of regions for the same complex "mind-reading" task (many-to-many mappings)- e.g., mPFC (2nd p.a.), inferior frontal gyrus (MNS, first p.a., S.T.) and MENT system (3d p.a., T.T.).



Stands for neural area; F stands for function.

In conclusion, we wish to avoid misunderstandings on the link between 2nd p.a. and sensorimotor theory with the realism of social cognition. The sensorimotor theory accounts for the direct entanglement of the interactors, justifying their actual role in social understanding. From this, it does not follow that our perception of the other is not partial, and it could not be mistaken. In contrast, our cognition is always and necessarily perspective and incomplete. The relevant implication of the 2nd p.a. is that the other is a concrete element of the social cognition loop. So, the phenomenon of mutual comprehension and communication becomes more intelligible than through a mysterious "intellectual detour." The history of the philosophical theories of social understanding goes from extremely intellectual accounts, which cannot explain the primary interactive phases, to deflationary and physical proposals, which cannot make sense of the more abstract "mental states." Now, it is time to take all the different insights and join them in a complete and realistic integrative account.

Notes

1. For an overview of the topic, see Siegel 2016.
2. For a complete overview of the nature of mental states, See Putnam (1967).
3. A different version of T.T. is the externalist; see Slors et al. (2015:256).
4. Gallese: "It seems we're wired to see other people as similar to us, rather than different (...) At the root, as humans, we identify the person we're facing as someone like ourselves".
5. For objections to this conclusion, see Slors et al. (2015:266-267).
6. Gallese: "This neural mechanism is involuntary and automatic," he says. With it, we don't have to *think* about what other people are doing or feeling; we know.

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Heidegger on 'Eigentlichkeit': Re-Contextualizing Authenticity

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DOI: 10.22034/iyip.2023.534326.1031

Abstract

The Heideggerian theme of authenticity (*Eigentlichkeit*) proves crucial to the task of fundamental ontology that Heidegger pursues in *Being and Time*. Clearly and textually based commentary on this notion of authenticity has been sparse. Many prominent readings of authenticity fail to stay true to its purpose in the text, opting instead to render a more substantial existentialist reading than is warranted. While such readings of authenticity are fascinating as *independent* conceptions worthy of philosophical attention, they cannot be adequately ascribed to Heidegger or the project of *Being and Time*. The present essay serves as an attempt to correct this course in the scholarship, offering a textually supported account of authenticity that recognizes its role as that which makes manifest the transparency that everyday Dasein lacks—a transparency that can do away with self-concealments and assist Heidegger in his pursuit of an answer to the question of Being qua Being.

Keywords: Authenticity; Martin Heidegger; 20th Century Continental Philosophy; Existentialism; *Being and Time*.



Introduction

Heidegger's notion of '*Eigentlichkeit*,' typically translated as 'authenticity' or more literally as 'ownedness,' has elicited an ongoing debate in the secondary literature.[1] Indeed, while different interpretations abound, even a casual reading of *Being and Time* leaves one with the impression that whatever Heidegger means by 'authenticity,' it must play an essential role in his philosophical project. Given that the more substantial account of authenticity is offered in Division II of *Being and Time*, interpretations have essentially been split into two general categories—one taking Division II as an extension of Division I. Another is taking it to mark a pronounced existentialist turn, which is a deviation away from the work of Division I.

Several prominent commentaries on Division II of *Being and Time* propose that Heidegger's work contributes to the existentialist lineage that begins with Kierkegaard and runs through the thoughts of Nietzsche, Camus, and Sartre.[2] Although existentialist rhetoric and themes manifest themselves in Division II, focusing too heavily on them obscures the role that terms like 'authenticity' are intended to play in Heidegger's work. As such, the present essay will correct the overemphasis of existentialist readings of authenticity by returning it to its role within the larger framework of *Being and Time*. While existentialist renderings of authenticity are immensely interesting and important in their own right, they cannot accurately portray what Heidegger intends by the term. Put, *Being and Time* is not a text that calls us to 'find ourselves' and 'be who we truly are.' It is not a manual on how to be authentic, nor does it give us the tools to look at individuals and determine whether or not they are living authentically. The aim of this essay will thus be to combat such readings by offering a textually supported account of authenticity that recognizes its function as the possibility of transparency or of the openness of Being that does away with self-concealments and assists Heidegger in his attempt to address the question of Being qua Being.

In pursuing the aim mentioned above, I first begin by presenting the existentialist readings of authenticity, focusing mainly on the work of Julian Young, who, while certainly not alone in his reading of Heidegger, typifies the general category of existentialist renderings of *Being and Time*. Following this is a brief account of previous critiques

of interpretations such as Young's, which focuses on the works of Randall Havas, Kevin Aho, and William Blattner. Finally, I make clear how Havas, Aho, and Blattner, while correct in their critiques of the existentialist renderings of authenticity, ultimately need to correctly emphasize the connection of authenticity with the overall scheme of *Being and Time*.

The Existentialist Reading of *Being and Time*

Existentialist themes indeed appear to play a prominent role in *Being and Time*, and strong existentialist readings of it seem to be inspired by a desire to locate within it something pertaining to the ethical—that is, an evaluative standard for what it means to be or become a fully realized self or a 'whole' human being. One of the troubles that leads to existentialist readings of authenticity pertains to the rhetoric that Heidegger employs to characterize it—proponents of this reading experience no shortage of passages from *Being and Time* in apparent support of their position. These troubles are amplified because existentialist interpretations begin by trying to answer the question: What would one discover if they were to limit the scope of their inquiry into authenticity to only those passages that directly address and attempt to characterize it? That is, if only to read Division II and perhaps borrow a few small passages from Division I while essentially divorcing the former from the latter.

If we wanted to limit the scope of our inquiry into those things that seemed explicitly connected to authenticity, we would have first to characterize a few other notions, especially the 'they,' anxiety, death, fallenness, nullity, inauthenticity, and anticipatory resoluteness. Treating each of these with the careful attention that they deserve would necessitate the writing of a rather substantial book or books, but for our purposes, a brief presentation of the 'they' will suffice, as the other relevant themes will emerge with the consideration of Young's work.

Heidegger introduces the 'they' (*das Man*) by making a provocative claim, namely, that proximally and for the most part, "everyone is the other, and no one is himself" (SZ, 128).[3] Put another way, he tells us that the answer to the 'who' of everyday Dasein is the 'they.' In its everyday Being-with-one-another, Dasein itself *is* not because the possibilities of its Being have been restricted and dictated to it by the 'they.' This means that the answer to the 'who' of everyday Dasein is, in

fact, the 'they.' Heidegger notes that most of our day-to-day dealings and experiences in the world are dictated to us by others, in so far as we drive down the road as *one* drives, we speak as *one* speaks, are shocked as *one* is shocked, and even rebel as *one* rebels:

We take pleasure and enjoy ourselves as *they* [*man*] take pleasure; we read, see, and judge about literature and art as *they* see and judge; likewise, we shrink back from the 'great mass' as *they* shrink back.... The 'they,' which is nothing definite, and which all are, though not as the sum, prescribes the kind of Being of everydayness (*SZ*, 127).

That last point, that the 'they' is nothing definite, plays a crucial role in Heidegger's use of the term. The 'they' is not some person or a group of influential people who secretly run the world and dictate how things are to be interpreted; instead, it is both everyone and no one. This might seem cryptic, but Heidegger's point is that some level of conformity is necessary for human existence. A paradigmatic example of this is language—some degree of conformity is needed in language if we are to communicate, think, and develop concepts. There is no single governing body that dictates language to us, though—it simply arises from our practices. As Young usefully notes, though, we can distinguish between conformity and *conformism*, and the necessity of the former does *not* entail the latter.[4]

Despite the non-necessity of *conformism*, it still comes to pass that the 'they' tend to operate as a type of dictatorship. Heidegger describes the 'they' as a force that 'levels down' and suppresses us by "keep[ing] watch over everything exceptional that thrusts itself to the fore" (*SZ*, 127), making it so that "every kind of priority gets noiselessly suppressed... [and] every secret loses its force" (*SZ*, 128). Despite these suppressions, *Dasein* is largely seduced by the 'they' because it makes things easy for us by narrowing down our possibilities. Without such a limiting agent, one might be overwhelmed or paralyzed by the reality of their condition, but the 'they' offers us the opportunity to disburden ourselves from our existence, to neglect our responsibility for it, and to feel tranquility at home in a world of familiarity that is strongly grounded (*SZ*, 128).

From this characterization of the 'they,' we come up to speed with Julian Young's interpretation of Heidegger. According to Young, the theme of the 'outsider' unites Heidegger with the likes of

Kierkegaard,[5] Nietzsche, Camus, and Sartre. (Young,2007, p.482) He elaborates on this theme, writing that "all of them valorize, morally and cognitively, the heroic individual who stands outside the conventionalities of bourgeois existence. In *Being and Time*, the valorizing term is 'authentic.'" (Young,2007, p.482) He notes that for Heidegger, we are conceived of as mostly being inauthentic and that we typically conform to orthodoxies and public opinions. Why do we find it challenging to rebel to be an individual and self-owned self? Young writes that for Heidegger, the 'startling' answer is death. (Young,2007, p.483) In tying together the themes of death and conformity, Young succinctly captures the heart of Heidegger's position, writing:

Individuals die. However, the One [the 'they'] lives on. So, to the extent that I think of myself *as* the One, I transcend mortality, which is the penalty of individuality, and so seem to evade the object of my most primal anxiety. (Young,2007, p.483)

If inauthenticity comes to be characterized by fleeing in the face of death, a fleeing that immerses one in the distractions of the 'they,' then facing up to death must be what is required for authenticity.

In Young's reading, inauthenticity is a coping mechanism that offers a perceived evasion of the "annihilating nothingness that is death." (Young,2007, p.483) It necessitates a type of self-deception though, what Sartre would call 'bad faith'; by confronting one's mortality, one is said to be able to see through this deception, to be 'individuated,' by allowing for an understanding of the fact that death is something one must undergo alone—it is a unique phenomenon in that others, the 'they,' cannot stand in for one. Authenticity is then born from one's confrontation and reckoning with the finite nature of their existence. It involves understanding that "my choices (even the choice to be a conformist, Sartre might interject) have to be made by *me myself*. I become (in my own, rather than Heidegger's, language) autonomous." (Young,2007, p.483) Furthermore, authenticity is said to *liberate* one to choose from all of the factual possibilities available to one. The idea here is that a true grasping of the fact that death is both certain and indefinite (*SZ*, 250), that death is certain for all and yet indefinite as to its when, brings about a lucidity whereby one grasps their life in its totality—as a narrative with a beginning and an end—allowing them to choose those possibilities and projects that

truly matter to them and to do so with urgency. (Young, 2007, p. 484)
 Young refers to this urgency as 'focus,' concluding that:

Authenticity is, then, autonomy plus focus. Better, it is *focused on autonomy*. To live such a life is to live an intense, passionate, urgent, and committed life. It is to live a life, in other words, that is intensely *meaningful*. Authenticity is early Heidegger's account of what it is to live a meaningful life. (Young, 2007, p. 484)

Under this reading, Heidegger is deemed indebted to Nietzsche, who, instead of 'focus' and 'autonomy,' offers being the 'hero' of one's life and 'free spirits,' respectively. Like Nietzsche, Heidegger is said to call for us to abandon the 'herd mentality' and to self-legislate—that is, to be the author of our own lives and to choose for ourselves what is truly important. Heidegger implores us, claims Young, to become ourselves in a new and genuinely autonomous sense.

Previous Critiques of Existentialist Renditions of Authenticity

The existential works of thinkers such as Young are genuinely fascinating and essential when considered *original* projects or *adaptations* of Heidegger's project. To put things rather bluntly, though, they cannot accurately *interpret* what Heidegger is doing in *Being and Time*. Regardless of the sympathies one has for the position espoused above and its philosophical merits as a standalone project—sympathies I, in fact, essentially share—it simply fails to take into account rather significant passages from *Being and Time*, Heidegger's later commentary on its themes, and the broader goal that *Being and Time* aimed (and admittedly failed) to achieve.[5] Young is certainly not alone in his existentialist interpretation of Heidegger's work. However, he has received our focus mainly due to his clear and concise writing, making his position more accessible to capture in a brief overview. Young is certainly not alone in his existentialist interpretation of Heidegger's work. However, he has received our focus mainly due to his clear and concise writing, making his position more accessible to capture in a brief overview. Young is certainly not alone in his existentialist interpretation of Heidegger's work. However, he has received our focus mainly due to his clear and concise writing, making his position more accessible to capture in a brief overview. Young is certainly not alone in his existentialist interpretation of

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he has received our focus mainly due to his clear and concise writing, making his position more accessible to capture in a brief overview.[5] This much has already been made clear in the secondary literature, although strong existentialist interpretations of Heidegger's work are still plentiful.

William Blattner rightly admits that Heidegger certainly deserves part of the blame for how his work has been received, as he does, in fact, appear to endorse some aspects of Nietzsche's and Kierkegaard's rhetoric at times.(Blattner,2006, p.129) He notes that Heidegger seems to have *wanted* to assimilate their critiques of average everyday Dasein as something lesser—that is, to make a hierarchical and evaluative assessment of these different modes of Being, but that he likely saw the philosophical difficulties that this would raise for his project, which is a hypothesis that would explain the constant moderation of his critical rhetoric; indeed, Heidegger is careful to reiterate time and again that his characterizations are *not* to be understood as disparaging, because he is merely describing a 'positive' existential phenomenon when he speaks of Dasein's 'average everydayness' in which the 'they seduce it' and exists inauthentically. (Blattner,2006, p.129) Blattner further echoes the point made above pertaining to the existentialist readings of Heidegger, writing:

Heidegger's rhetoric of ..." authenticity"... might suggest an ideal of "being true to yourself." Consider the following spin on Heidegger's language: In confronting the impending possibility of your own death, you realize what is important to you. Getting clear about what is essential to you inspires you to drive out of your life the distractions... that build a wall between you and what really matters to you. In doing all this, you "choose yourself" and are "true to yourself," that is, authentic.... There is certainly something to be said for this vision of authenticity... [It] is not what Heidegger has in mind by self-ownership. (Blattner,2006, p.1160)

We see once again that although these views of authenticity as a journey of self-discovery are exciting and perhaps of great value, they are not what Heidegger intends by *Eigentlichkeit*.

Randall Havas offers a different and more targeted critique of existentialist readings of authenticity, arguing that they go astray in (at least) two ways. (Havas 2000, 39) In the first instance, they suggest,

with some minor variances, that the authentic individual is one whose existence manifests an acknowledgment and appropriation of the 'groundlessness' of the way that their world has been interpreted; in Heideggerian language, this means that they have resolved themselves upon their being the "null basis of [their] own nullity" (SZ, 306). The idea here is that authenticity involves a response to anxiety in the face of death, a response that affirms that the everyday understanding of things afforded to one by the 'they' is *contingent*. This acknowledgment of contingency then frees us to 'choose ourselves' and, while understanding that any interpretation of affairs we arrive at will ultimately be groundless as well, resolve to build a focused and meaningful life for ourselves nonetheless—knowing full well that in the end death will dictate that we must 'take back' all of our ways of making sense of things (SZ, 308).

According to Havas, the first problem with this view is that it "takes for granted the intelligibility of the claim that the sense we make is 'grounded' or 'ungrounded,' 'necessary' or 'contingent,' with or without 'foundation.'" (Havas 2000, 39) He does *not* mean to question the intelligibility of the notions of 'grounded,' 'contingent,' and the like, but rather to emphasize the conclusion of thinkers like Hubert Dreyfus, namely, that human beings can never find a solid foundation for their lives given that reality is relative to human practices, (Dreyfus, 1991, p.337) Cannot itself be an *essential* truth. We cannot take it for granted that it is from a contingent point of view that we even recognize the 'groundlessness' of our existence—no 'view from nowhere' is available to us. (Havas 2000, 39)

The second problem that Havas notes with views of this type is that they seem to valorize an over-coming of the masses via what Young earlier referred to as 'focused autonomy.' Heidegger is clear that we cannot escape the fact that our modes of intelligibility are derived from the cultural practices that we find ourselves 'thrown' into. The fact that our ability to make sense depends upon cultural practices does not indicate some lack of originality but rather is a positive constitutive phenomenon of our Being; indeed, something other than this is difficult to imagine, which is a point that Havas makes quite nicely: "A radically self-determining human being is not a human being at all: there is no self and no determination of it without a sense of what is worth doing." (Havas 2000, 39)

Kevin Aho provides the final and perhaps most detailed rejection of the association of Heidegger's *Being and Time* with the works of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Sartre, Camus, and Jaspers. Aho summarizes the existentialist reading, noting that its proponents are attracted to authenticity because they find "a way of being that faces and affirms the finitude and contingency of life in a godless world." (Aho, 2003, p.5) It resonates even more strongly with them, however, in so far as it appears to allow a way for us to "sever human beings from the normative comforts and stability of public life, leaving us alone to choose and create our own singular meanings and values against the background of nothingness." (Aho, 2003, p.5)

According to Aho, the first problem with such a reading is that it fails to follow Heidegger's rejection of the tradition of subjectivity that finds its roots in Descartes. (Aho, 2003, p.6) Heidegger is explicit about his attempt to depart from this tradition, and he warns his readers early on in *Being and Time* that Dasein is *not* to be interpreted in terms of this traditional notion of subjectivity. Indeed, it is "one of our first tasks," says Heidegger, "to prove that if we posit an 'I' or subject as that which is proximally given, we shall completely miss the phenomenal content of Dasein" (SZ, 46). Alternative terminology, for example, 'life' and 'man,' are *explicitly* avoided when referring to that entity which each of us is (SZ, 46). Suppose Dasein is first conceived of as a Cartesian subject that must break away from cultural norms and live based on its own groundless values and 'authentic' possibilities. In that case, we have not taken the first step that Heidegger attempts to lead us down—namely, towards rejecting the Cartesian subject.

The second problem that Aho finds with the existentialist reading is that it limits authenticity to the discussion of our temporal finitude, which results in the type of radical freedom that one finds portrayed in thinkers such as Young. This is problematic because it fails to account for the other half of our temporal constitution that Heidegger prescribes, namely historicity. (Aho, 2003, p.9) The possibilities uncovered by an authentic Being-towards-death are not wholly self-originating, free-floating possibilities where anything goes, so to speak; instead, they are communal—afforded to us by a shared heritage. (Aho, 2003, p.10) Aho astutely reminds us of this point, noting that while Heidegger does indeed posit that anxiety individualizes Dasein (SZ, 188), he nonetheless immediately clarifies

that “this existential ‘solipsism’ is so far from the displacement of putting an isolated subject-Thing into the innocuous emptiness of worldless occurring” (SZ, 233). Instead, Heidegger tells us that:

Resoluteness, as *authentic Being-one's-Self*, does not detach Dasein from its world nor isolate it to become a free-floating "I." Moreover, how should it, when resoluteness as authentic disclosedness is *authentically* nothing else than *Being-in-the-world*? Resoluteness brings the Self right into its concerned being alongside what is ready-to-hand and pushes it into solicitous Being with Others (SZ, 298).

As seen in the passage above, Heidegger is rather emphatic in his warning that authenticity is not to be understood as an existential rebellion—that is, merely as an overcoming and separating of oneself from a world of conformity; indeed, even *thinking* of such a possibility proves incredibly difficult, because it requires thinking of a situation in which we have become disconnected from the entirety of our sense-making structure. As Aho rightly points out, the choices made by authentic Dasein are *never* original or its *own* in the sense that the existentialists maintain, but rather are “already socially constituted, through the language, public practices, and cultural institutions that we grow into as historical beings. (Aho, 2003, p.10) The appropriation in authenticity then becomes an appropriation of one's own historical past—its traditions, heritage, and heroes.

Rather than radical freedom, Aho argues that authenticity requires one's understanding of what possibilities one's own heritage has afforded to one—for it is that heritage that has provided the possible paths. It is up to her—the authentic individual—to resolve which paths are to be followed and which qualities of her heritage are to be retrieved and repeated. (Aho, 2003, p.11) The resolutely authentic individual is thus free to choose and seize upon possibilities, but she does so by engaging her heritage; it is thus not a 'radical' or 'free-floating' freedom but a freedom to act upon those possibilities that make sense within the sense-making structure of one's historical past. This authenticity reading is endorsed mainly by Charles Guignon, who also argues that "*Being and Time* attempts to combat the ‘groundlessness’ of the contemporary world by uncovering enduring values and meanings within the framework of ‘worldliness’ and human finitude.”(Guignon, 1984, p.322) Considered in this way, Heidegger is deemed to have been rejecting the nihilistic

conceptions of 19th-century historicism, i.e., those that took history to be a disconnected series of eras without any enduring values or goals,(Aho,2003,p.13) Moreover, in his rejection, he seeks to uncover 'trans-historical' values and meanings. While the deficiencies of such a reading will be described in the next section of this essay, it does achieve an excellent middle ground as it pertains to the existential themes of *Being and Time* by both admitting the role that authenticity plays in uncovering possibilities while also rejecting the notion that authenticity entails a type of radical freedom for an isolated Cartesian subject.

Contextualizing Authenticity—A Return to the Question of Being

A strong case has already been made against the existentialist reading of authenticity presented at this essay's beginning. Because of this, one might wonder what more needs to be said—have we not already indicated the relevant deficiencies with such interpretations? Unfortunately, even those responses that have been covered thus far, correct as they may be in their refutations of interpretations like Young's, fail to connect authenticity to the problem that *Being and Time* attempt to address. Put simply, they, too, have forgotten the question of Being that Heidegger sought to revive (*SZ*, 2). The idea that authenticity should be intimately connected with the question of Being should come as no surprise, as this is the question *Being and Time* seeks to address. As John Haugeland correctly emphasizes: "Ultimately *everything* in *Being and Time* has to do with the question of being." (Haugeland,2000, p.66) Before making this connection explicit, though, there are a few further points to be made against the existentialist reading of Heidegger's work.

Ultimately, if we take Heidegger at his word, such a reading must be ruled out from the start. The reason for this is his own persistent denial that this is what he was seeking to accomplish. For example, in 1930, just a few years after the publication of *Being and Time*, Heidegger comments on his *magnum opus*, expressing that:

It was never my idea to preach an 'existentialist philosophy.' Instead, I have been concerned with renewing the question of ontology—the most central question of Western philosophy—the question of being. (Haugeland,2000,43-77)

Heidegger also clearly denies the existentialist renditions of resoluteness that have been proposed because authentic resoluteness is essential to him in light of what it *discloses*; it is *not* an intentional choosing or weighing of alternative possibilities. Heidegger makes this point in *Being and Time* itself, writing:

One would completely misunderstand the phenomenon of resoluteness if one wanted to suppose that this consists simply of taking up possibilities that have been proposed and recommended and seizing hold of them. *The resolution is precisely the disclosive projection and determination of what is factually possible at the time* (SZ, 299).

The above passage serves not only as further evidence against the existentialist reading but also against the historical choice advocated for by Aho. Heidegger maintains this position throughout his later works as well, explaining in 1953 that "the resoluteness intended in *Being and Time* is not the deliberate action of a subject, but the opening up of [Dasein] out of its captivity in that which is, to the openness of Being." (Heidegger, 1971, p. 67) Again, if we take Heidegger at his word, then authenticity, as anticipatory resoluteness, *cannot* be encapsulated by the idea of an intentionalistic subject making deliberate and focused decisions—authenticity is not 'autonomy plus focus,' as Young argued earlier.

Given the ample evidence against the existentialist readings of authenticity and its corollary theme of resoluteness, one may question why these interpretations have remained so prevalent. They could undoubtedly thrive as original works *inspired* by Heidegger or as *extensions* of his thought, so why have they been offered repeatedly as representations of what Heidegger himself meant? Some of the blame can be attributed to the looseness of translation, particularly the translations of authenticity and resoluteness.

Beginning with the former, Heidegger explicitly warns that he intends *Eigentlichkeit* to be read in a strict sense (SZ, 43). Presumably, he has in mind a strict etymological sense, which would yield 'ownedness,' a translation that would avoid some of the implicit assumptions that arise concerning 'authenticity.' Ownedness and 'unownedness' (*Uneigentlichkeit*) better capture the spirit of what Heidegger means because they more closely relate to the theme of 'mineness' (*Jemeinigkeit*). In each case, Dasein is my own, in so far as

it is me myself, but I can exist in this 'mineness' in different ways—ownedness and unownedness are thus two ways or modes in which Dasein can be 'mine.' Resoluteness, a translation of '*Entschlossenheit*,' also poses problems in English. Dreyfus usefully reminds readers of Heidegger that while the German term typically refers to a kind of resolve, Heidegger tends to write it as '*Ent-schlossenheit*.' (Dreyfus, 1991, p.318) With the hyphen, it is more akin to 'unclosedness' or what we might more comfortably label 'openness.' (Dreyfus, 1991, p.318) Understanding *Ent-schlossenheit* in this way, as a matter of unclosedness or disclosure, helps to make sense of what Heidegger means when he says that "*the resolution is precisely the disclosive projection and determination of what is factically possible at the time*" (SZ, 299).

All this work has been done to show what authenticity is *not*, but the more pressing question still needs a positive answer. What exactly is the *positive* nature of authenticity? We have clarified translation problems and hinted that it must be somehow related to the question of Being that motivates the inquiry of *Being and Time* as a whole, but what is this relation? These are the questions that we are now poised to address.

Recall the context in which Heidegger begins to investigate Dasein in the first place. He begins with the question of Being qua Being. He first needs to find a mode of access to the question itself; that is, he needs to know what is to be 'interrogated' (SZ, 41). The answer to this question is, of course, we ourselves, Dasein, as it is "these entities, in their Being, [who] comport themselves towards their Being. As entities with such Being, they are delivered over to their own Being. *Being* is an issue for every such entity" (SZ, 42). The project of fundamental ontology necessitates that the questioner herself be brought into question alongside the metaphysical question. (Heidegger, 1997, p.93) In enquiring into the Being of Dasein, however, a problem quickly rises to the surface, namely that even though Dasein is "ontically 'closest' to itself," it remains "ontologically farthest" (SZ, 16). This point— that in its everydayness, Dasein lacks transparency is as such because our own specific state of Being, while known tacitly, remains concealed from us mostly (SZ, 16).

The hiddenness of Dasein's Being is elucidated upon in Heidegger's analysis of the 'they.' Proximally and for the most part, Dasein is inauthentic—it is not itself, but the They-self (SZ, 129). To reiterate,

though, Heidegger's acknowledgment of this is not evidence of some value-laden hierarchy; in fact, the 'they' is an *existentiale*—a primordial phenomenon that belongs to Dasein's positive constitution (SZ, 129). As an existential, it *cannot*, by definition, be overcome. So long as Dasein is, the 'they' is also part of Dasein's very ontological structure. Heidegger writes, "*Authentic Being-one's-Self* does not rest upon an exceptional condition of the subject, a condition that has been detached from the 'they'; *it is rather an existentiell modification of the 'they'—of the 'they' as an essential existentiale*" (SZ, 130). Any characterization of the authentic individual being a 'hero' or 'one who overcomes conformity' misses the point—"inauthenticity... does not signify any 'less' Being or any 'lower' degree of Being. Rather... even in its fullest concretion, Dasein can be characterized by inauthenticity" (SZ, 43). *Being and time* is not calling upon people to rebel against cultural norms or address a crisis of human nature because such affairs are merely ontic matters, not ontological ones. This is affirmed by Heidegger in Division I, when he addresses the topic of the corruption of human nature, writing: "Our existential-ontological Interpretation makes no ontical assertion about the 'corruption of human Nature,' not because the necessary evidence is lacking, but because the problematic of this interpretation is *prior* to any assertion about corruption or incorruption" (SZ, 180).

Now, while it is true that inauthentic everyday Dasein is not being disparaged due to a value-laden hierarchy, it still poses a problem for Heidegger specifically. Proximally and for the most part, Dasein conceals its Being from itself—in order to properly gain insight into the Being of Dasein then, which is supposed to be a step that brings us closer to answering the question of Being qua Being, we need to do away with self-concealments altogether. The concealing nature of the 'they' is problematic because it hinders the pursuit of fundamental ontology. As the 'they-self,' Dasein has its finitude hidden from it, which is problematic because it is an understanding of its finite existence that allows Dasein to bring an understanding of its whole to the forefront—its whole as existence that is stretched between thrownness and death, not as beginning and end, but as that which is determinative in each case for it. The possibility of fundamental ontology becomes predicated upon the possibility of authenticity—of authenticity, not as some normative condition towards which everyone should aspire, but as something for the *philosopher*.

The reading being advocated for here can then be succinctly characterized as follows. Authenticity, as anticipatory resoluteness, becomes the possibility of acquiring a lucidity into one's own Being—a seeing for oneself of what one truly is. A type of transparency characterizes it and is itself a disclosive mode. Such self-understanding is not something that isolates one, for, given that we understand ourselves in terms of our practices and comportments with entities of our concern and solicitude, any self-understanding necessarily presupposes an understanding of the entities among which one exists. The upshot of this type of authenticity is rendered explicitly in Section 62 of *Being and Time*, where Heidegger writes:

When Dasein is resolute, it takes over authentically in its existence the fact that it *is* the null basis of its own nullity.... The nullity by which Dasein's Being is dominated primordially through and through is revealed to Dasein itself in authentic Being-towards-death.... When the call of conscience [the call to authenticity] is understood, lostness in the "they" is revealed. Resoluteness brings Dasein back to its own most potentiality-for-Being-its-Self. When one understands Being-towards-death—towards death as one's *own most* possibility—one's potentiality-for-Being becomes authentic and wholly transparent. (SZ, 306-307)

Authentic understanding is thus characterized by an account of the hermeneutic 'as,' meaning that in this mode of Being, Dasein no longer takes its Being for granted as something justified, grounded, or certain, but instead realizes that it is interpretation all the way down. In other words, it understands that its understanding of the world and entities—and, by extension, even its understanding of itself—are contingent. This transparency reveals that Dasein is the null basis of a nullity and that its Being, 'in and of itself,' is groundless (SZ, 284).

Importantly, this insight or lucidity is different from an insight at the *individual* level. It is a lucidity of one's own Being as Dasein, but not as Jafar, Morteza, Mohammad, or some other individual entity. That is, it is a general peering into the window of the Being of Dasein *as* Dasein, not an insight into what matters to some individual. The reason for this ought to be quite clear:

Our Being alongside the things with which we concern ourselves most closely in the 'world' guides the everyday way

Dasein is interpreted and covers up ontically Dasein's authentic Being so that the ontology directed towards this entity is denied an appropriate basis. (SZ, 311)

Thus, it is the ontology directed towards Dasein—and towards Dasein in structural terms, not individual ones—that *Being and Time* seek to clarify in route to the larger question of Being *qua* Being. The goal is then to uncover a transcendental structure of the Being of Dasein, something that holds for all human beings throughout all of time.[6] Moreover, how could it be otherwise for Heidegger? After all, Dasein is not some radically isolated individual but always-already in the mode of Being-with-Others (*Mitsein*). As Being-in-the-world, Dasein is *essentially* Being-with-Others. Rather than some isolated cartesian subject, the 'who' of Dasein in Heidegger's ontological analysis is fundamentally tied to others.

Evidence of this is plentiful in *Being and Time*. For example, thrownness is an existential of Dasein, and as such, Dasein finds itself always-already 'in' the world; this thrownness, however, is not something that leaves Dasein radically free to choose, as we find in the work of Sartre, but rather entails that we always find ourselves, through no act of our own, as Being-in-the-world with Others—we find ourselves thrown into a particular horizon or socio-historical heritage (*Erbe*). From this heritage alone, we are supplied with values, i.e., from a community (*Gemeinschaft*) or people (*Volk*), not from an isolated subject. Authentic resoluteness is not some radical freedom by which one creates themselves in their own image or 'becomes what they are,' but rather one with a heritage from which it is forced to draw upon. Because the Self is something culturally constructed for Heidegger, one's culture must be a supplier of values and heroes that one can emulate. World disclosure cannot happen through human choice but through our activities—our ways of Being. It cannot be a matter of preference because the possibility of making a choice is always already predicated upon there being an intelligible world—i.e., the intelligibility of the world is a pre-condition for our activities, which means that the disclosure of it is something that must be *received* (through a historical heritage that one has in virtue of Being-with-Others), as opposed to something created or chosen. We are delivered over or abandoned to a world and historical culture, and this pre-interpretation of the world determines our ontic possibilities. Choosing a radically isolated and free individual would be incoherent

for Heidegger because one is already within a cultural horizon that cannot be escaped. Dasein exists *historically* as an entity thrown into a world and a historical tradition (*Überlieferung*). This feature constitutes Dasein's historicity (*Geschichtlichkeit*), from which its possibilities can be drawn in the first place.

So, rather than being necessary because of some arbitrary preference or hierarchical structure, the philosopher values authenticity for what it *discloses*—"Authentic disclosedness modifies with equal primordially both how the 'world' is discovered... and how the Dasein-with of Others is disclosed" (SZ, 297). It is authentic resoluteness that brings Dasein face to face with the "*truth* of existence" (SZ, 307), in addition to affording us with an understanding that frees for us the "possibility of acquiring *power* over Dasein's *existence* and basically dispersing all fugitive Self-concealments" (SZ, 310). Such power is not to be read in the individual sense, whereby one takes power over one's own life, but rather in the general sense of gaining power via an understanding of Dasein's existence for fundamental ontology. This point is obscured, as David Abergel notes, because many interpretations of authenticity interpret "authenticity and inauthenticity as two opposing states from which Dasein can choose." (Abergel, 2020, p. 86) Heidegger affirms that such a reading is a mistake, going on to say in the same passage from above that: "Neither does anticipatory resoluteness stem from 'idealistic' exactions soaring above existence and its possibilities; it springs from a sober understanding of what are factually the basic possibilities for Dasein" (SZ, 310). Given that Dasein *is*, in fact, its possibilities, understanding the possibilities for Dasein becomes tantamount to understanding its *Being*. Our understanding of the lucidity of authenticity can then be elucidated as an overcoming of the idle talk of the They, but an overcoming supplemented by an ability to understand or attune oneself to the situation of one's existence via the light of heritage.

Conclusion

Rather than providing a reading of authenticity that takes it as an existentialist after-thought utterly unconnected to the groundwork of Division I of *Being and Time*, I have offered one that returns it to its place within the context of the question of Being that the text seeks to address. The notion has thus been characterized as an extension, or

rather as an integral part of this larger project, instead of a detour. Instead of treating authenticity as something valuable in itself, it has been presented as a means to the end of providing an ontological 'window' that offers an unconcealed insight into Dasein's Being, which Heidegger hoped would allow him to address and clarify the nature of Being in general. If my interpretation is correct, then authenticity does not and *cannot* necessitate an individual's breaking away from the norms of social structures. Another consequence is that we cannot look at ontic situations, for example, another person's life, and answer whether they are authentic, for such a question misses the point altogether. While existentialist readings of Heidegger on authenticity remain incredibly prominent, these authors would be better served to embrace the originality of their views rather than attribute them to the project of *Being and Time*.

End Notes

1. To conform with the majority of the vast scholarship on this topic and to maximize readability, *Eigentlichkeit* will henceforth be translated as 'authenticity,' although 'ownedness' does indeed better capture what Heidegger seems to intend by the term, as well as how he explicitly introduces it: "As modes of Being, *authenticity* and *inauthenticity* (these expressions have been chosen terminologically in a strict sense) ..." (SZ, 43).
2. See, for example, Julian Young "Nihilism and the Meaning of Life," in *The Oxford Handbook of Continental Philosophy*, ed. Brian Leiter and Michael Rosen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 463–93.
3. References to *Being and Time* are noted within the text by "SZ," followed by the page numbers for the German edition. All translations come from the Macquarrie & Robinson version unless otherwise noted.
4. For a more in-depth existential reading of Heidegger that focuses on his relation to Kierkegaard, consider the Appendix to Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1991).
5. Young is certainly not alone in his existentialist interpretation of Heidegger's work. However, he has received our focus mainly due to his clear and concise writing, making his position more accessible to capture in a brief overview.
6. . This attempt to provide a transcendental account of the Being of Dasein that holds for all of time is something that Heidegger abandons in his later work, where he recognizes ontological shifts or changes in Being that result in radically different historical epochs—that is, a collection of epochs that offer fundamentally different disclosures of the world and of Being as such.

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Some Parallels between Phenomenology and Pragmatism. Intentionality, Attention, and Precategorical Dimension in Husserl and Royce

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DOI: 10.22034/IYP.2021.245796

Abstract

In this paper, I aim to show how Josiah Royce's philosophy contains many themes that will be at the core of Husserl's philosophical investigations. This paper is divided into two sections. The first one outlines the starting point of these two philosophers, contextualizing their background and showing how they share a common purpose: to put the experience at the center of their thought. For this reason, I want to analyze how they treat the concept of attention concerning intentionality to argue that their philosophies are strictly anchored to the givenness of the experience. In the second one, I deal with the rising of the precategorical dimension (prior to any objectivation) as a possibility of experience itself, paralleling the Husserlian concept of *Lebenswelt* and the Roycean of *the World of Appreciation*. Through this distinction, they criticize the scientific, naturalistic, and objectivistic *Weltanschauung*, showing how its method is founded in an intuitive and non-thematic relation with the world experience that comes ontologically before the scientific description.

Keywords: Phenomenology, Pragmatism, Intentionality, Precategorical, Attention.



Introduction

The relationship between Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) and Josiah Royce (1855-1916) has yet to be studied much, neither from a historical nor a theoretical point of view. Jaqueline Ann K. Kegley is the only one who focused her research on the relation between Royce and the phenomenological and existential tradition.[1] She has recognized how Royce's philosophy can fruitfully interact with a phenomenological approach to philosophical problems; according to Kegley, Royce, as Husserl does, gives importance to concepts of time of inner-consciousness, showing how a study of experience cannot do without an analysis of the first-person experience and that any theory needs a reference to lived experience. Royce is undoubtedly less well-known than Husserl, so I briefly outline his figure. Royce was a close friend and colleague of Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) and William James (1842-1910); when James took a year's leave of absence from his teaching duties, he got his position at Harvard in 1899.[2] During his life, Royce has studied, like no other pragmatist, German philosophy.[3], in particular, Kant and the post-Kantian idealism; for this reason, his name is often linked to those of the idealistic tradition. Since their first writings, he became interested in the concept of the Absolute, starting a massive debate with James and other pragmatists, which took the name "the battle of the Absolute." In the last part of his career, he approached Peirce's semiotics, re-thinking knowledge and experience in a hermeneutical way.

Before going further, it is worth contextualizing how Royce and Husserl got in touch; for this reason, I first want to draw attention to two students of Royce, William Ernest Hocking and Winthrop Bell. Hocking was the first student of Royce who decided to go, at the beginning of 1900, to study with Husserl. According to his testimony, when he was in Göttingen to do his Ph.D., Husserl told Royce that he "is an important thinker and may only be treated as such." Winthrop Bell is another student of Royce who went to Germany approximately one decade after Hocking to write his Ph.D. dissertation about Royce under Husserl's guide.[5] However, the Göttingen faculty voted to annul his doctorate due to the political situation (the beginning of the First World War). Bell received his degree in 1922, and he was the first teacher of phenomenology at Harvard from 1922 to 1927. His students were Dorion Cairns and Charles Hartshorne, who afterward became Husserl's more celebrated followers.

Intentionality and Selective Attention

Husserl

In this first section, I want to link the concept of intentionality and selective attention, present in the attempt led by Royce in *The World and the Individual* and in *Outlines of Psychology*, to establish certain elements characterizing the structure of the experience. In the early 1900s, Husserl was studying almost the same things about perception and selective attention; here, I am referring in particular to the lessons that Husserl held between 1904 and 1905 and that merged into the posthumous collection called *Wahrnehmung und Aufmerksamkeit: Texte aus dem Nachlass (1893-1912)*[6], located precisely halfway between the theoretical framework of the *Logical Investigations* (1900) and the so-called transcendental turn of *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy* (1913). It is worth framing the specific problem through which Husserl develops the theme of attention: the aim is to differentiate the intention from the apprehension about the perceptual scene. By the word intention, Husserl means a situation of dynamism, a tendency to (see paragraphs §35, §36, §37, and §84 in *Ideen I*); this term carries with it a constellation of different acts: remembering, perceiving, desiring are verbs which fall within the intentionality's compass. This intentional dynamicity can be expressed differently and outlines different object fields. Roughly speaking, intentionality shows the original correlation between consciousness and the world, and it is an essential aspect of subjective acts because consciousness is always consciousness of something. The theory of intentionality denies that consciousness is a sort of place, a closed space within which there would be images of things. Consciousness is positional and intentional and aims at something beyond itself, requiring a movement of transcendence and self-transcendence. In the *Logical Investigations* (particularly in the fifth research, §15, §16), intentionality, even if introduced in a germinal form, allows Husserl to distinguish intentional experiences and state of consciousness (Husserl 2001 pp. 106-113). Not all our experiences are intentional in the sense of presenting something to our attention. For example, sensations in themselves are not intentional, albeit they contribute to creating the matter of our intentional acts.[7] Perception has a positional nature, so it refers to intentional objects with specific features that the intentional acts attribute to them. This

does not mean that consciousness brings an object into being: it is a matter of constitution of objectivity not understood in the manner of Berkeleyan subjective idealism. This brief introduction to the concept of intentionality can be helpful to thematize the concept of attention since, when Husserl (2016: 116, 127) starts speaking about it, he describes it as a particular intention.[8] Husserl often uses the image of a ray of light that focuses on a particular object, leaving in the darkness other objects present in the perceptual scene; when something attracts our attention, our intention prioritizes something and sets aside something else. There are two possible ways to speak about intention: the first one is a kind of background-intention that does not pay attention to any particular elements, whereas the second one is a type of privileging-intention that highlights a particular element in the visual field: perceptual experiences occur around this continuous exchange between emergence and background. An object emerges from the perceptual background by intensity and contrast, but not all object has the same power to emerge. For this reason, according to Husserl, it is essential to look at the nuances of attention (Husserl, 2016, p. 126). The perceptual scene is triggered by a subjective factor unrelated to the objective emergence. Affections and feelings are closely linked to the features that prioritize a particular object. In this sense, contrast is a necessary but insufficient condition of the emergence. It is a multitude of factors related to objective and subjective poles that light up the objects. Again, perceptual dynamics need both the empirical features of the objects and the subjective, affective, and motivational circumstances. Husserl says that feelings appear as the authentic sources of interest (2016: 137). In Husserl's view, attention, having an emotional basis, keeps together the experience while it modifies direction by segregating some aspects of experience while privileging others. Within this field, attention acts and reacts, with characteristic freedom, to the intentional objects and the stimuli operated by affection and interest.

Royce

Now, we have to look at Royce's understanding of the concept of intentionality; here, we will see how the emphasis is shifted to the voluntary-practical side rather than the cognitive one, as Husserl does. Indeed, according to Husserl, attention is a power that moves the observation or noticing, like in the case of something that attracts

attention from the field of what is more or less noticed. However, when Husserl speaks about attention and interest, he usually refers to "theoretical interest," which is attention at work in reaching evidence in object perception (Husserl, 2016, p. 141). In Royce's view, the perceptual gaze is already decision-oriented, and the attention to the contents of experience becomes relevant to guide and direct the action plan (Royce 1899-1901: 810). According to him, an idea is an act of will and fulfills a purpose, so it is impossible to separate the content of a concept from its decision-making aspect. *Meinung* is the German word that underlies the term intentionality; in his masterpiece, *The World and the Individual*, Royce introduces the concept of *internal meaning*, which shares an etymological root with the German word. Next to the *internal meaning*, there is the *external meaning* that is the objective side of the intentional relation; we could say that the *internal meaning* is headed towards the *external meaning* – that is the noematic aspect of the mind-world relation. Perception is always orientated by a purpose, by a *telos* that establishes the salience's degrees of intentional objects. In the perceptual scene, some elements remain outside the cognitive framework because they are taken into account voluntarily; they do not become objects of selective attention. Now, the point is to wonder why certain elements are cut off, whereas other elements emerge and become salient in the same perceptual scene. As we saw earlier, according to Husserl, affection plays a decisive role in directing attention; in Royce's view, the subjective and voluntary aspect is related to an ethical ground.[9] The subject directs his attention because he has always wanted to accomplish something. No purely theoretical attitude contemplates the intentional relation as an abstract relation between the noetic and noematic aspects; the attention is always directed toward a practical purpose and is always interested in what to choose.[10] Royce ethically understands the concept of attention, which is closely linked to that of will. According to Royce, selective attention is the basic form of the will: it is oriented by concrete material situations that make available some possibilities that cut out aspects and integrate others. Whether an idea has an object depends on the choice that the idea makes, that is, on attention as a selective process. It is certain, however, that paying attention is not a purely subjective fact; to say that attention and, consequently, will are not merely subjective facts means looking at the particular and determined situation in which they have always been inserted: there is always a starting condition on which doing is

triggered. Royce, therefore, argues that attention cannot be directed to anything regardless of the context in which it is located; the will cannot be on an absolute freeway. The situation in which the subject finds himself operating is already pre-structured and materially determined: there are particular possibilities and not others; there are certain expectations, specific possible courses, and not others. Attention should be understood as an act through which a particular universal idea finds its exemplification and unrepeatably individual fulfillment; it is, therefore, not only a process that implies a psychological preference but also a preference understood as an exemplary and exemplifying choice. What reveals objects and opens the field to the manifestation of phenomena is the practical doing as the realization of possible actions, praxis as constantly determined by the situation in which it operates. The interest in something acquires a greater degree of clarity and intensity than another, and an object is seen as more consistent with realizing a purpose. Therefore, the life of our consciousness is a life of surveillance, evaluation, forecasting our acts, and interpreting our whole world in terms of actions. We do not observe any external fact without observing more or less clearly at the same time our attitude towards that fact, our evaluation of its value, our reaction to its presence, and our intentions concerning our future relations with it. The action plan, the idea's internal meaning, sets in motion an already pre-determined object field, which orients the perceptual field and chooses where to go and where to pay attention. Husserl and Royce claim that thought does not have absolute power, so they deeply analyze the concept of selective attention and prioritize the *datum* of the experience to the givenness of the experience.

The Precategorical Dimension: *Lebenswelt* and *World of Appreciation*

Husserl discusses in detail what *Lebenswelt* is in the investigations conducted in *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy* (1936). Husserl's *Crisis* is not a work in the philosophy of science as we now understand the term; however, it is deeply concerned with science, its practices and methods, its development, its relation to everyday experience, and its internal structure. In the first section, he argues that all modern scientific inquiry (started with Galileo) rests on a mistake. Modern science mathematized nature, believing scientific

language was the authentic way to understand nature objectively. Husserl tries to show that science is just a way, a particular practice, to see the world and contextualizes the scientific perspective in a more comprehensive relation with the world. That is why he starts speaking about *Lebenswelt*, and he describes it as a pre-scientific and pre-theoretical common ground, a non-thematic starting point already given in its naturalness; the world-of-life is a world of original evidence, a place of obviousness and shared practices that structure the world in his wholeness. As Husserl says, the world-of-life has always existed before any science, whatever its mode of being in the age of science. Husserl is trying to thematize what the natural sciences build on and what they start their own specific theoretical practice on: the validities that science discovers are always based on other unspoken validities that inhabit the world-of-life. These ideas of givenness and intersubjectivity are exhibited by Husserl in *Crisis* when he discusses the life-world in § 37, where he says:

«The life-world, for us who wakenly live in it, is always there, existing in advance for us, the “ground” of all praxis, whether theoretical or extra-theoretical. The world is pregiven to us, the waking, always somehow practically interested subjects, not occasionally but always and necessarily as the universal field of all actual and possible praxis, as horizon. To live is always to live in certainty of the world». (Husserl 1970, p.142)

He also insists on intersubjectivity in § 47:

«Thus, in general the world exists not only for isolated men but for the community of men; and this is due to the fact that even what is straightforwardly perceptual is communal». (Husserl 1970, p.161)

Hence, Husserl is obvious and explicit in highlighting the intersubjective and predatory aspect of the *Lebenswelt*: in short, scientific statements get their meaning by being embedded in the life-world. It is a universe of certainties made up of intuitive evidence, a pre-categorical layer with which the subjects entertain a daily and non-thematic trade and which is independent of any scientific, sociological, or psychological consideration. Our first impression of the world is a merely subjective-relative intuition of pre-scientific life in the world. With "subjective-relative" intuition, Husserl is not here alluding to a sort of skeptical relativism whereby the world is exhausted by the diversity of images that each subject makes; he is

indicating a ground that has always been shared and practiced that makes it possible to do specific theoretical and extra-theoretical activities. There is, therefore, a world shared by everyone, which is the world-of-life and a world, the objective world of the sciences, crossed by theoretical and scientific particularizations based on it.

In the same way, Royce distinguishes the world of appreciation from the world of description; he does so in many writings.[11], following an interpretative line that will lead him to question the status of the empirical sciences and their practices concerning the world. The world of description is configured as a world of established, verified facts, verified and ascertained by whom? Certainly not by any single individual. Each Individual is born and operates in an objective and concrete situation, which he cannot ignore: there are previous and ascertained knowledge and habits that define him. According to science, a fact needs to be irreducible, extraneous, and external to the will of the conscience, out of its power; Royce wants to show how everything that pertains to the world of description and that, therefore, can be verified and described is such because it belongs primarily to a pre-categorical level, the world of appreciation.

«The world of appreciation is, then, one of a sort of reflective “publicity” and interconnectedness; and such an interconnection and publicity is, as we have seen, the very presuppositions of the existence of any genuine truth in the world of description... Without the multitude of genuinely interrelated experiences, no true similarities, no describable universality of experience; without the facts of appreciation, no laws of description... Destroy the organic and appreciable unity of the world of appreciative beings, and the describable objects all vanish; atoms, brains, “suns and milky ways” are naught. The world of science, then, presuppose the world of spiritual oneness». (Josiah R., 1892, p.410)

The world of nature is constituted by description; objects described by sciences are reproducible and understandable within quantitative categories. Therefore, reproducibility and regularity are the fundamental characteristics of the description world. There are structures, orders, and universal laws that constrain the experience and prevent it from momentary improvisations. Only what is describable is universally communicable; only what belongs to this descriptive

domain is objective. However, if this world of description is communicable, this happens because there is a world that lies further down, which comes before this layer. The world of description (a world of abstraction) is deep-rooted in the social, non-thematic, and communicative dimensions of the experience. The point is that a particular fact is recognized only in connection with a particular action plan; it is, therefore, necessary to destroy the vision according to which there is, first of all, an objective world because such a world exists insofar as it is recognized as existing. It is recognized as existing because a pragmatic will considers it a valuable way to describe the world.

We believe in scientific discoveries that, day by day, find their place in scientific knowledge but are not passive acceptance because they always contain the intention to act; there is always a practical will behind every content of meaning that fulfills a specific conscious purpose. Royce is not totally critical of the scientific inquiry. However, a specific implicit physicalist monism that we could summarize as follows: the world consists of a single material substance, which is considered decomposable into scientifically identifiable elements. Through the distinction between the world of description and the world of appreciation, Royce claims that matter is what produces effects. This new materialistic non-reductionist ontology rejects to be considered in quantitative terms but emphasizes qualitative aspects. The notion of efficient cause - determined events produce other determined events according to definite laws - is a necessary but not sufficient condition to explain the role of the mental in the world; moreover, the notion of efficient cause is a form of anthropic causality and is pragmatically helpful for some purposes. It is, therefore, necessary to consider the notion of formal cause, understood as selective attention. In this sense, it is no longer helpful to obtain a narrow space for mental properties since the action of the will already manifests its presence on a material level: the selective attention, following a particular interest, chooses to describe the world in an "objective and mathematical" way to pursue a specific purpose. For example, exact measurement procedures require a typically objective attitude of attention, full of self-denial: scientists make a sort of sacrifice that derives from a selected attitude, cutting out any subjective element from their investigations because they chose to deny their subjective point of view in the name of the objectivity of

the science. This attitude responds to a particular determination of the will that goes beyond any moral judgment; I am not claiming here that this practice of not considering the subjective point of view is terrible. I am just saying that only thanks to this voluntary ἐποχή we can accept valid and objective scientific discoveries.[12] For this reason, Royce argues, as Husserl does[13], that the world of description cannot be the proper and fundamental way to know the world. In fact, with the notion of a world of appreciation, Royce claims that objectivity cannot be experienced in itself; it is not autonomous, and it is not even immediately perceptible data: the objective is what results from an agreement made possible by the intersubjectivity of subjective judgments. In *The Problem of Christianity*, Royce argues that scientific discoveries become such only within a common horizon and a community willing to accept scientific judgments.[14] In this sense, Royce says that

«we report facts; we let the facts speak; but we, as we investigate, in the popular phrase, “talk back” to the facts. We interpret as well as report. Man is not merely made for science, but science is made for man. It expresses his deepest intellectual needs... as well as his careful observations... The theories of science are human, as well as objective, internally rational as well as (when that is possible) subject to external tests». (Robinson, 1951, pp.179-280)

Husserl and Royce, even if in different terms, argue that nature and its description is something social and interpersonal and that science can be respectful of the world only if it is aware that it is just a specific way to understand and describe the world:

«Whenever the scientist speaks as a scientist, he is in the scientific attitude, thinking within the horizon of his theoretical end, thinking into it, so to speak, and at the same time having it as horizon in a privileged universal validity as the immediate horizon of his vocational interest. The rest of the world, the world-totality which *eo ipso* takes all human purposeful structures up into itself as world-totality, lies outside his interest. The full universal being of the life-world - especially in its function of making possible his theoretical world and what is pregiven as belonging to it in particular - is completely unconsidered». (Robinson, 1951, p.383)

End Notes

1. See Kegley J. A. (1978, 1988, 2008).
2. This year, Royce started to write his masterpiece *The World and the Individual* (1899-1901).
3. *The Spirit of Modern Philosophy* (1892) and *Lectures on Modern Idealism* (1919).
4. Royce J., (1913). *The Problem of Christianity*.
5. See Bell, J. (2011). In this article, Jason Bell parallels Royce and Husserl through the experience of Winthrop Bell, a Canadian student in Göttingen under Husserl's supervision.
6. Some of these lessons were translated into Italian and collected by Paolo Spinicci and Andrea Scanziani with the title *Percezione e Attenzione* (2016).
7. Husserl E., (2001). *Logical Investigations*, p. 109: «They themselves are not acts, but acts are constituted through them, wherever, that is, intentional characters like a perceptual interpretation lay hold of them, and as it were animate them. »
8. In this sense, "attention is not intention [Intention]" as regards an act of taking a position, or even a new act on its own, where a doxic position is explicitly taken in respect of the object. Starting from 1905 on, attention is a modification of an act, which superimposes on the unity of intention; it fuses with it.
9. Royce J., (1899-1901). *The World and the Individual*, Preface, XV: «That all our beliefs about the truth of any grade and that all theories have a practical meaning, I do indeed explicitly teach. That, as my reader will see, is my whole philosophy».
10. Royce, J. (1899-1901), pp. 38–39: «Now the finite process, whereby our consciousness passes from an indeterminate state of purpose, intention, search for contents, to a relatively determined one, is known to us in its psychological manifestations as a process of selective attention, which always becomes more defined, the more it proceeds. »
11. The distinction between the world of description and appreciation runs through several writings of Royce. It appears for the first time in *The Spirit of Modern Philosophy* (1892). Royce articulates this distinction in *The World and the Individual* (1899-1901), and, in the end, he integrates these notions with that of community of interpretation in *The Problem of Christianity* (1913).

12. Royce, J. (1899-1901), p. 122: «The discrimination process plan is truly a self-renunciation plan. There is a heroism of sacrifice in it. I will abandon myself to the facts for what is in me. I will find myself only by losing myself in the careful observation of what already exists».
13. Similar statements are also found in *Crisis* Appendix VII, p. 382: « The life-world is the world that is pregiven, valid constantly and in advance as existing, but not valid because of some purpose of investigation, according to some universal end. Every end presupposes it; even the universal end of knowing it in scientific truth presupposes it and in advance; and in the course of [scientific] work, it presupposes it ever anew, as a world existing, in its own way to be sure, but existing nevertheless. The scientific world (nature in the sense of natural science, world in the sense of philosophy as universal positive science) is a purposeful structure extending to infinity - a structure [made by] men who are presupposed, for the presupposed life-world. Now, though we must further make evident the fact that the life-world itself is a "structure," it is nevertheless not a "purposeful structure," even though to its being, which precedes all-purpose, belongs, men, just as we encounter them and become acquainted with them as a matter of course with all their purposes and their works, which, as developed by men, henceforth also belong as a matter of course to the life-world. Here is again something confusing: every practical world, every science, presupposes the life-world; as purposeful structures, they are contrasted with the life-world, which was always and continues to be "of its own accord."
14. Royce J., (1913). *The Problem of Christianity*, pp. 322, 324, 331: «The individual observer's discoveries have first to be interpreted to the scientific community and then substantiated by the further experience of that community before they belong to science. In other words, the work of science is what, in the athletic phrase, is called teamwork. The spirit of science is one of loyalty to a community of interpretation»/«The individual has made his discovery, but it is a scientific discovery only in the case it can become, through further confirmation, the property and experience of the community of scientific observers»/«Isolated observations of individuals, even when these individuals are of the highest grade of expertness, are always unsatisfactory... The acknowledged facts of a natural science are the community's possessions».

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Phenomenology, Marxism in Question of Immigration

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Abstract

I will look at immigration from the perspective of phenomenology and its somewhat Foucauldian understanding of governmentality in the third way that Marxism integrates phenomenology. The term economism has been kept as a primary reason for closing the state borders from immigration. Different ideas of which sector of being clearly defined legitimizes the sovereign. I hypothesize that in the economic times of third-way economic policies just behind us, economics is the most clearly defined category to legitimize sovereignty and its borders in many senses. Economism as a reason to keep borders closed is paradoxical since economic activity most clearly penetrates the borders. Poststructuralist analysis of flows like in Gilles Deleuze or of hospitality in a political sense and context in Jacques Derrida is essential. Phenomenology helps to understand governmentality, as I will argue/show. It can also help to see keeping people out of sovereign - like the state as a question of governmentality. The question becomes a technical question of governmentality. The point is to sketch out the technical governmentality concerning the immigration question, mainly phenomenologically.

Keywords: Phenomenology, Governmentality, Immigration, Foucault, Postphenomenology, John Searle .



Introduction

Here, I will define primarily the governmental question concerning immigration. I will see Definition of risk and agency: This might be vague, but it should work. According to Ulrich Beck, reflexive modernization also means agency structure (theoretically structure, not structure as social structure), that individuation in which "individuals reflect upon and flexibility the rules and resources of their workplace and leisure time" (Beck, 1992, p. 3). This analysis of risk agencies is also present in the changing mining laws of Finland, my home country. Risk of different identities and border passing is also present (Adeuanju, Oriola, 2011)

There is the phenomenological reading of Deleuze, and the embodiment analysis of technology is an important (also phenomenological) point of reference in this article. Biopower is the capacity to control ourselves with dispositive created in our social practices and their complex interaction. Reidar Due explains in his book *Deleuze*: "For all thought is now seen as social practice taking place within force field composed of other social practices" (Due, 2007, 127.) Those fields are Intuitively, this idea is reasonable. The problem is that every thought comprises the force fields when looked down in more detail. Due claims this notion is not causal because "thought is real, both as process and as a 'form of content' and that social reality cannot exist independently of the thoughts that it generates and that it embodies through social practices and modes of organization." (Due, 2007, 127-128.) This questions the Ferrarisian notion of separation between the social and natural world.

John Searle has also been claimed to be a phenomenologist in many senses in general. Before we can go to the American reading of Biopower in Deleuze's thinking that paradoxically found this social ontology, let me briefly note some basic principles of the Foucauldian theoretical project of biopower. I must start from the very beginning. Foucault began his famous book *The Archaeology of Knowledge*.

"For many years now, historians have preferred to turn their attention to long periods, as if beneath as if beneath the shifts and changes of political events, they were trying to reveal the stable, almost indestructible system of checks and balances, the irreversible processes, the constant readjustments, the underlying tendencies that gather force, and are suddenly reversed after centuries of continuity,

the movements of accumulation and slow saturation, the great silent, motionless bases that traditional history has covered with thick layer of events" (Foucault, 1972, 3) There is ontology of law connected to also Foucault (Biasiotti, 2011).

On the other hand, it is essential to note that from a more scientific perspective, the Foucauldian notion of biopower has been seen altogether as out of time by Donna Haraway. As Rosi Braidotti notes, "Foucauldian diagrams of power describe what we have already ceased to be" (Braidotti, 1994, 104.) The critical point here is that in posthumanist thinking (which Braidotti is part of), an important figure, Latour, states that "scientists define facts, only facts; they leave the politics and moralists the even more daunting task of defining values. Critical posthumanist thinkers such as Deleuze and Guattari (1983) believe that the socius as a full body forms a surface where all production is recorded, at which point the entire process seems to emanate from this recording surface (Deleuze Guattari, 1983, p. 10) and" all production constituting a surface over which the forces and agents of production are distributed" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, p. 10) This shows how ways to speak go to the same line with object-oriented thinking described by its creator as "object is whatever opposes the human subject."

Deleuze and Guattari state, "The performative itself is explained by the illocutionary, not the opposite" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 87). Roland Bogue describes Deleuze's and Guattari's *Thousand Plateaus* in the following way: "*Thousand Plateaus* takes up many themes of the themes of *Anti-Oedipus* (volume one of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*), but in ways that do not so much complement as complicate the elaborate schemata of the first work. In place of the opposition of molar and molecular in *Anti-Oedipus*, one finds a triad of molar, molecular, and nomadic, to which correspond three 'lines': the molar or rugged segmentary line, the molecular or supple segmentation line, [and] the line of flight. (Bogue, 1989, 124)

Searle writes that institutions are historic and created by language. (Searle, 2010) This makes it easier to understand the differences between new materialism and the linguistic understanding of institutions. In neoliberalism, no public institution would generally deliver the service but a filter mechanism, for example, phone calls at standard (cheap) prices. Then, institution in the sense of risk understanding and management technologies is the only filter that

helps to understand risks. This leads to new materialism, which does not make a difference between material and language or society and nature. The comparison is essential to show that interconnections reduce risks in Ulrich Beck's theory about societal dangers. When nature, society, language, and material are interconnected, it is easier to see and trace the interconnections that reduce risks.

Goodchild describes Deleuze's idea of institution: "All fixed orders of society, including conventions, institutions, and impulses that provide a framework for possible social relations but which themselves remain unaffected by what happens are instances of antiproduction" (Goodchild, 1996, 74). In Deleuzian terms, an institution is this kind of filter mechanism that is not static. One example of a practice approach and how it is connected to the registers is how capital plays the role of a recording surface. (Deleuze & Quattari, 1983, 11-13.) Much writing concerns posthumanism and practical subjects like immigration (Braidotti, 2018. Rosenberger, 2015).

Ferraris's idea that collective intentionality is better explained through arch writing, the text as the contents (Ferraris, 2013, p. 154). According to Andrew Sayer, a critical realist with a posthuman twist in his theories: "If structures are widely distributed such as those of capital accumulation, then this implies that although they have some spatial and temporal precondition, these can be met in variety of spatial and temporal contexts" (Sayer, 2000, pp. 136-137) There is an institution of capital accumulation that is not fixed and as Sayer states affect spatial and temporal contexts that are not part of the institution.

Finnish Teivo Teivainen uses plane as a word that can explain some breaking of barriers in theoretical methodology framework - that resembles general ontology in partly Marxist and non-Marxist economic debates. The same idea can be found in how Deleuze describes the concept of **a diagram**: "Panopticon traverses all these forms and is applied to all these substances: it is in this sense that a category of power exists, as a pure disciplinary function. Therefore, Foucault will name this the *diagram*, a function that must be 'detached from any specific use' as from any specific substance" (Deleuze, 1988, p. 72). The Spinoza political implications of Deleuze. (Negri, 2000).

This questions the Ferrarisan notion of separation between the social and natural world, which could also be seen as Foucauldian according to Ferraris (2013), who sees his social ontology as

Foucauldian. On the other hand, it is essential to note that the Foucauldian notion of biopower has been seen altogether as governmentality in some popular discourses of Foucauldian theory. Pennywise title, *Remembering Out of Time* by Donna Haraway, means that Haraway sees Foucault as out of time in the 1980s boom and enthusiasm for new technologies.

As Rosi Braidotti notes, Foucauldian diagrams of power describe the history of different pressures in society and such. (Braidotti, 1994, 104.) Foucault is critical for some forms of contemporary British Marxism. There are Marxist pressures and chaotic piles of history (in the Marxist sense), so to write. There are also phenomenological approaches included in most third-way Marxist approaches to the methodology of, for example, cultural studies.

Posthumanism thinkers such as Deleuze and Guattari in the concept/term the *socius* as a whole body forms a surface where all production is recorded, at which point the entire process seems to emanate from this recording surface (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, p. 10) and "all production constituting a surface over which the forces and agents of production are distributed" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, p. 10) This shows how ways to speak go to the same line with object-oriented thinking described by its creator as "object is whatever opposes the human subject."

"The quasi causality of the body without organs is best understood concerning the larger social body without organs, which, in its reterritorialized form, Deleuze and Guattari call *socius*" (Bogue, 1989, p. 94). How could these areas created be the sole purpose and driving force of calculation? Object-oriented ontology is also understood partly through structuring objects as things in themselves. In that case, these calculations are only part of the complex process of calculating and changing different elements.

Deleuze and Guattari state, "The performative itself is explained by the illocutionary, not the opposite" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 87). Roland Bogue describes Deleuze's and Guattari's *Thousand Plateaus* in the following way: "*Thousand Plateaus* takes up many themes of the themes of *Anti-Oedipus* (volume one of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*), but in ways that do not so much complement as complicate the elaborate schemata of the first work. In place of the opposition of molar and molecular in *Anti-Oedipus*, one finds a triad

of molar, molecular, and nomadic, to which correspond three 'lines': the molar or hard segmentary line, the molecular or supple segmentation line, [and] the line of flight. (Bogue, 1989, 124) These lines are not important for my research except that they make it easier to see the performative's role in the mechanistic collective. Foucault states: "For a long time it was thought that language had mastery over time, that it acted both as future bond of promise and as memory and narrative" (Foucault, 1994, p. 167). "All fixed orders of society, including conventions, institutions, and impulses that provide a framework for possible social relations but which themselves remain unaffected by what happens are instances of anti-production" (Goodchild, 1996, 74)

In this chapter, it is crucial to see that according to my theoretical understanding, New Realism is not a Realist position in general (namely, that reality has its own existence independent of the subject). However, it is more like a development of post-modernist thought, an attempt to fix different problems associated with post-modernist assumptions; different forms of realism have developed. It is important to note that Graham Harman describes that de Landa has distinguished different linear causation, typically material, and catalysis causation, usually expressive. These can also be understood as modes of reality, social or natural, in that expressive is social and not material. There is governmentality in the question of immigration, as explained in the abstract. This point only shows that the phenomenological approach is more superficial, but it is also needed to understand governmentality.

This is important because Harman claims that the idea that entities are only catalysts is similar to Bhaskar's idea that there are always many tendencies in every cause. (Harman, 195-196, 2010) The new realist divides nature and society compared to other forms of realism that are near to it theoretically. One example of a practice approach and how it is connected to the registers is how capital plays the role of a recording surface. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, 11-13.) The capital can also be seen as a metaphor in a Bourdieu way.

John W. Cook argues that Wittgenstein's Humean view of causation remained the same during his philosophical career. (Cook, 1994, 177-181.) This understanding of causes is common to the Wittgensteinian theory of knowledge. Human practices meaning and knowledge in the social world. In his book *Social Construction of*

What, Ian Hacking writes, "Kant may have cast the mold, but drive for construction belongs to the twentieth century" (Hacking, 1999, 47.) Scott Lash supports the assumption that the constructivist account belongs to the twentieth century. He tries to challenge the belief that critical theory is modernist and post-structuralism is post-modernist (Lash, 1990, 153.) This can be understood as a risk more important than culture, and the era before the First World War coming back can be traced back to this pragmatism. The idea in neo-communist terms (basically neo-communist as one story in neocommunism) is that conformism and consumerism swallowed the socialist creative ways to more uniform counter or subculture.

Risk can be traced and blocked in the counterculture, which is the common intuition nowadays. Next, I will posit these questions about ontological beings (in general) in the framework of social ontology. Namely in the world of conventions, rules, and performatives. According to Deleuze applies this genetic principle to all features of social organization, including the human 'subject' (Due, 2007, 130.) The formal starting point of their method is multiplicity. A multiplicity is an indeterminate 'group' defined formally as *a capacity to be affected* prior to the elements it will consist of" (Due, 2007, 130.) Latour sees the social, or, as he likes to put it, assemblages, as interconnected and intertwined entities. Also, counterculture can be seen in the Latourian way. Counterculture is an example of assemblage and risk here. The point is about the separation of nature and society.

Elder-Vassess account of causality separates different Spheres of Social Reality. From the point of view of this Latour/Deleuze axis, he claims that society is part of the well-structured and organized, layered theory of the emergence of properties *from nature* since he is claiming that collective intentionality can be individuated as a particular stratum of reality that is either needed or not needed in the causal sphere. The claim that the social world and social structures are represented by text denies this claim because the social is always represented by text. Ferraris suggests that texts replace collective intentionality. The individual can easily alter a textual/social form. Causality of human action is often modified in practice, as R. Harre and E.H Madden (1975, 83.) claim in their book *Causal Powers*. Critical realists take a very different approach to reality and claim that reality consists of different levels, and those levels function as

independent and reducible through the concept of emergence. Searle also states that emergence plays a vital function in the explanative structure of nature.

In other words, reality is constructed as a theoretical model where entities are placed in different social or natural reality strata. This point can be further represented by Alf Hornborg, who claims that Latour does not see phenomena such as imperialism embedded in technology because he is, in fact, so obsessed with how we use objects that he does not see how the objects use us. (Hornborg, 2016)

Reidar Due explains in his book *Deleuze*, "For all thought is now seen as social practice taking place within force field composed of other social practices" (Due, 2007, 127.) The force consists of objects and persons that both have a similar agency. Both terms are, therefore, fundamentally actors and consist of networks. (Harman, 2016) fields are Intuitive, and this idea is reasonable. The problem is that every thought comprises the force fields when looked down in more detail. Due claims this notion is not causal because "thought is real, both as process and as a 'form of content' and that social reality cannot exist independently of the thoughts that it generates and that it embodies through social practices and modes of organization." (Due, 2007, 127-128.). Discussion on also partly posthuman terms of immigration and citizenship relates. (Crouch, 2004, 78).

Let us look at the account of Causality that Deleuze gives in his social ontology to trace which causality principle introduced here by Deleuze could be seen as Searlean practice. Searle seems to understand. This is the difference between different exact structural levels in Searle's theory. As the unpredictable element, the text is restricted to the Representational principle, which is an analytical concept. It allows parts of causal processes to be separated and observed individually. The genetic principle is described: "Any 'object' is a cluster of relations conditioned by the composition of determining forces and processes of different kinds. (Due, 2007, 130.) He concludes that "we can therefore not isolate within this cluster an individual thing and ascribe to it a series of events which we then set out to explain" (Due, 2007, 130.)."

Here, the concept of social ontology is potentially enlarged: "Haraway wants to fight back by positing affirmative and empowering figurations for the new interaction with animals, mutants, and

machines, which is constitutive of our historical era" (Braidotti, 2002, p. 139). The constitutive idea of modernity was in many areas that the space and material itself were only an instrument to show something or tell a story. However, in modernity, the space itself was the thing that was being transformed and researched through, for example, theatre. According to Christopher Balme Theatre historian Max Herrmann, theatre space is always created only after human movement. (Balme, 2008, 78-79) Therefore, the space of theatre is connected to humans in a posthumanist sense. By this, I mean that humans are closely connected to nonhuman beings, as I will explain more closely later. In Herrmann's example, the theatre space is transformed through human movement, but this is trivial since the two interact and are seen as counterparts that do not necessarily exist without the other (although the actor needs a space, which is often a fact in conventional theatre. The figurations Braidotti explains as the basis of Braidotti's thought is that behind the theatre framing, anything can happen even though it is only exploring the potential of different material or human elements connected in an empowering sense.

One example of a practice approach and how it is connected to the registers is how capital plays the role of a recording surface. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, 11-13.)

Ferraris's idea that collective intentionality is better explained through archwriting, the text as the contents (Ferraris, 2013, p. 154). Ferraris helps in this project by opening a door for a more sophisticated understanding of the terms that Searle calls the causal explanation in his theory. Searle's three terms for causal explanation in his social ontology must be reformed in a more Marxist, self-reflexive, and critical theoretical sense. I will combine the best parts of these ontologies described by Renault by using Searle's ontology as the basis of my research and constructing a process-oriented ontology to three terms that explain causation in Searle's ontology.

The problem of Causation in Searle's social ontology is the following. Searle does follow Austin in the understanding that speech acts are extrinsic relations between statements, text, etc. The problem in this, however, is that there are *nondiscursive presuppositions* (Deleuze & Guattari (2004, 86) that need to be more clearly understood in the manner of cause and effect. Instead, According to Deleuze and Quattari, the performative changes the conditions of speech in three different ways: 1)It made it impossible to conceive

language as a code, 2) It has made it impossible to see semantics syntactic or even phonematics as a scientific zone of language independent of pragmatics 3) made it impossible to maintain a distinction between language and speech. Speech cannot be defined independently of speech acts, according to Deleuze (viime kys al)

The plane of practice is, therefore, separate from any other level. So, in this idea, Searle is not separate from the practice approach. He makes the separation by drawing his theory closer to the neo-materialist theory by admitting the material nature of the status function in his 1995 social ontology. I will look into the question of causality of the performatives through the ontology of Searle. It is crucial how the material background enables differences.

At the bottom, the problems could be about Derrida's idea of the possibility of an illocution. It means that the speech act is enforced and does undoubtedly succeed. On the other hand, a perlocution is more random in effects. The text cannot work causally if no difference is made between the perlocution and the illocution because only the illocution has the billiard ball touch. To say it in another way, is it possible that causal patterns are connected to social facts, or are they an impossible combination? If social facts are understood to be socially constructed? The answer is that, as learned from Bhaskar's account of causality (connected his practice approach to social sciences), the potential is the primary source of a social sphere. So, in Bhaskar's notion, nature is not separate from society in some sense in the same way as, for example, Latour.

Stephen Zepke describes some ideas on how the (social) world, according to Deleuze (and Guattari), is composed. "This plan(e) of composition is not defined by its form, by its substance or by a subject" (Zepke, 2009, p. 116). There is an example of technology that can be used to counter the argument that economics is about social processes (Teivainen 2002 in general) because economics is the process of technical change that counters (as one feature) social threats. This is partly the constitutive argument that Teivainen criticizes in his Ph.D. Social approaches must be contrasted with opposed technology when a risk is considered. This also resembles the new realist (Ferraris 2013, 2015) divide of social and natural. The idea that, in a posthuman way, nature and society are seen as one whole is opposed to constitutionalism (a term used in Teivainen's sense).

In my understanding, risks are controlled by countering a tendency until tendencies around the countered tendency are too thick as metaphors, meaning functionally that they cause different risks. This last is in a critical realist sense, but also a joke. For example, before, I did in Belgium and the Netherlands train hopping with no ticket nowadays; nowadays, I buy a ticket but have to hop on a train. Deleuze describes this problem in the following way: "Representing the topic does mean that it does not only bring to light the situation but also the basic things of the problem" (Deleuze, 2005, p. 107). This argument is a bit against deleuzianism because the developer of critical realism is Marxist, and deleuzianism, in general, is sometimes against Marxism. There is always in Marxism the idea of vulgar physical production forces. Then, when capital (in very general Bourdieuan sense meaning many capitals) for some reason is collected enough

The representational principle is an analytical concept. It allows elements of causal processes to be separated and observed individually. The genetic principle is described: "Any 'object' is a cluster of relations conditioned by the composition of determining forces and processes of different kinds. (Due, 2007, 130.) He concludes that "we can therefore not isolate within this cluster an individual thing and ascribe to it a series of events which we then set out to explain" (Due, 2007, 130.) According to Deleuze applies this genetic principle to all features of social organization, including the human 'subject' (Due, 2007, 130.) The formal starting point of their method is multiplicity. A multiplicity is an indeterminate 'group' defined formally as *a capacity to be affected* prior to the elements it will consist of" (Due, 2007, 130.)

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human 'subject' (Due, 2007, 130.) The formal starting point of their method is multiplicity. A multiplicity is an indeterminate 'group' defined formally as *a capacity to be affected* prior to the elements that it will consist of" (Due, 2007, 130.)

On the other hand, I will look at the potential of the assemblage theory of Manuel de Landa to give a theoretical space to understand capitalism as a layered organism. As Fernand Braudel, cited by de Landa, says, "It was essential to my purpose to distinguish between these two upper layers and explain them about each other" (Braudel, 1992, p. 25). Manuel de Landa writes in his book *Thousand Years of Nonlinear History* that "we may very well ask ourselves whether some (or most) of these applications has been purely metaphorical. There is, no doubt, some elements of metaphor in my use of the terms, but there are, I believe, common physical processes behind the formation of mesh works and hierarchies" (de Landa, 1997, p. 58).

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From Function to Surface: Phenomenology of the Thinking Organ

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DOI: 10.22034/IYP.2021.140210.1026

Abstract

Neuroscience and its attendant subdisciplines, including, so it supposes, philosophy, hold that there is nothing more to self and society than what is in the brain. However, two centuries have yet to resolve the philosophical objections to such claims, much less resolved the binding problem that would link mind and brain or arrive at a general, materialist explanation of consciousness. Just as ideological and economic blinders beset this discipline, they limit philosophy to account for the nature of this 'thinking organ' – what that means and if it can even exist. Taking the work of Hegel, Heidegger, and Deleuze, and neuroscientific results, I consider the phenomenology of the Organ. I argue that understanding this object requires distinguishing concepts such as function and activity, Capacity and regulation, and surface and recognition. Results show that the ability to arrive at a thinking organ as the Organ is uncertain but worth the pursuit for the services done to science and ethics.

Keywords: Phenomenology of the Organ, Brain Science, Philosophy of Neuroscience, Heidegger, Hegel, Body without Organs.



introduction

Organs in place of ideas: Reductionism has social and ideological motivations

All we would hope to know about the human is supposed to be in the brain. An electrode set at the right place can remove the sense of self, as it can remove the recognition of your mother's face. We should thus expect nothing more of epistemology, psychology, linguistics, sociology, or any other of the human sciences than what we would expect to receive from an informed analysis of a brain scan in the proper experimental setting.

The force exerted behind such claims is a behemoth – hundreds of billions of dollars and tens of thousands of publications (Eklund et al., 2016). Nevertheless, the fundamental philosophical criticism leveled against such arguments remains. As Husserl puts it in his *Philosophical Investigations*, they are a category error (Husserl & Moran, 2001, pp. 55-56), mistaking behaviors for physiology, signs for instruments, and, more generally, placing observations in place of concepts. (Heidegger 1968, 8) That a part of the brain's anatomy, the caudate nucleus, for example, is associated with feelings of love (Villablanca, 2010), attaches a concept to observation, and tells us little about either love or the cognate nucleus. That such research gets the press, it does seem more to be about commercial value as a source of treatment, enhancement, and manipulation. It supports a reductionist ideology where the subject is invested only with utilitarian, capitalist functions.[1] They, in turn, receive their genealogy and axiology by the positioning of facile Darwinist drives as an explanation of will and human motivation.

However, this system gives us access to an agent manipulating the environment *as an organ*. If the brain is the agent governing the whole organism, the selective advantages of the whole organism must match the selective advantages of the brain. However, that is not what we see with organs – the heart's function is to circulate blood, and no principle of natural selection is *a posteriori* going to give us the structure of the heart.[2] Instead, this system also implies an agent working apart from the organism unless the only real organs of the agency are those of reproduction.

Whether it is the utilitarian 'selfish gene' or the "trillion handshakes" (Tallis, 2012, p. 234), computational and Darwinist explanations of consciousness quickly amount to their own form of dualism. The revolutionary child psychologist Eleanor Gibson (1987) called this "Crypto-Cartesianism." Here computational theories of cognitive science seat immaterial consciousness within the material brain as a set of calculations that becomes, like Descartes' soul, effectively transcendent. These calculations deflect agency and activity away from the material Organ.

The philosophical underpinnings of neuroscience swing between reductionism – love is only firing in the caudate nucleus – to mysticism – brain matter transubstantiating into immaterial consciousness. Such extremes entail some conflict at their base. It has three sources that must be addressed.

The language of neuroscience is entrenched in the concept of an autonomous subject. Especially in analytic languages such as English, 'I have a pain in my arm' requires a subject separate from the body. We are not rid of the soul because we still have faith in grammar.[3] This is entrenched with the legal self and the social contract. After all, though they may lose the hand that signs the bill, their face may age, and their cells divide, even neuroscientists want to conserve the association of their bodies with the contents of their bank accounts.[4]

The need to assert that the locus of agency is nowhere comes up against the need for social beings to recognize agency in others as basic units of social relations. Recent, fascinating neuroscientific work on the importance of the social has not resolved this issue but intensified it.

So, we are at once beasts who have transcendent brains, agents who do not act, scientists whose genes tell their brains to make science so that they can make reproduce. It is no wonder that we see in the simulacrum of the reasoning cortex and reductionism to animal drives little more than the dualism of the charioteer in Plato's *Phaedrus* with the animal and the rational both pulling at the bit, the old dualism repeated despite the hype and grant money.

This is where phenomenology can come in to clear the air. Though much effort has been devoted to embodied experience, much less often has the Organ (in part or whole) been an object of investigation.

We will examine some of these rare incarnate instances while maintaining our own set of principles.

Pierre-Jean-Georges de Cannabis (1802/1844, 137) laid down the position of the materialist mind in 1802: the brain secretes thought like the liver secretes bile. Essentially, 'neuropsychology' can only claim much more than this by succumbing to Crypto-Cartesianism. We shall see that the choice of the digestive organs was influential in shaping the implications of his analogy. Understanding the Organ requires understanding what it is for itself as an independent being. This entails distinguishing its function, which it does *for* the organism and the activity it does. However, when philosophers have created phenomenologies of the specific manner of being pertinent to their particular Organ, they tend to come up with different results; and this is because they have taken as the object of their investigation an organ that easily slips from activity to function, from function to agency. It is then straightforward to conflate function and activity and arrive at 'Crypto-Cartesian' or solipsism. Heidegger's problematic reading of the Organ will show that activity is wrapped up in its Capacity. However, we will show that Capacity is ultimately no more essential to the Organ than activity. Capacity and subservience to the organism are essential only for relations outside the Organ through regulation.

Understanding the Organ also requires that we cup it in the hands of radical empiricism. If the thinking Organ is that which is so often invested with a *ghost in a machine*, then we cannot at any stage abandon its flesh, and this means we must understand it as an enclosed surface and understand its activities as surfaces as well.

We should prepare ourselves for an inadequate result, which would point to the weakness of my phenomenology or the fact that, as we have known since Husserl, there is no consciousness without a world. There is no self without society. The inadequacies of understanding the living Organ and the ideology of debasing the human and the flesh do not excuse us from the pursuit.

2. Phenomenology of the body leaves no space for the Organ

Some of the most profound thought of the 20th century has been devoted to the philosophy of the body. Long before contemporary techniques of intervention and observation led to the impasse we face, Heidegger placed us as selves in the world, and Freud placed us

within the physicality of our drives. Figures such as Henri Bergson and Maurice Merleau-Ponty successfully ventured into empirical psychology and phenomenology. Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* is a foundational text that lays out the connections between a psychological phenomenon and the primary position of the embodied subject. There he employs observations of phenomena, such as phantom limbs, to argue for the placement of the whole organism as a living, active, situated being (2002, 87-95). Along the way, the phenomenologist refutes Cartesian dualism, physicalism, and Bergsonian duration. The basis of his argument is that clinical observation results do not confirm these theories. When submitted to phenomenological analysis, observations suggest a different relation between mind and body. Merleau-Ponty. He does not try to replace a concept ("love") with an organ ("caudate nucleus"); instead, he uses the psychiatry and neurology of his day to engage with theories of the self and arrive at new concepts.

More recently, a few brave neuroscientists have attempted to confront Western philosophy on their own terms. One of the best is Antonio Damasio, who uses vast arrays of data showing that, as he believes, Descartes was wrong (Damasio, 2008) and Spinoza was right (Damasio, 2003). His conclusions and philosophical methods are similar to those of Merleau-Ponty. However, the vast progress made in the intervening sixty years makes his work valuable for philosophers, especially his later work on the neurology of the social (Damasio, 2018). From the point of view of ratiocination, the faculty of reason, the work of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1999) has shown that concepts and their relations are inextricably dependent on the body's lived experience in the world. Experimental ethics has shown the relationship between the body and moral persuasion.[5] Over the last 20 years, much criticism of neuroscience has coalesced into Multi-E models of cognitive science – embodied, enactive, ecological, and environmental (Shapiro, 2014). Meanwhile, important observations have been made regarding the neuroscientific basis of body consciousness. Discoveries of the afferent system mapping and engaging with the body have shown how the brain perceives the body and how consciousness affects and is affected by these systems (Craig, 2002).

This remarkable body of work, from the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty to contemporary obesity research (Ruppel Shell,

2019), makes great strides to elucidate and problematize the relationship between self, brain, and body. Here the body emerges as an increasingly complex agent. However, we need a view of what it would mean to have a particular body part, an *organ* be an agent in and of itself.

This is because most of this work is devoted to systems of perception. Organs of perception do not perceive themselves. The eye does not see itself, nor the brain feel when touched. If we took the second part of the Cannabis analogy ('the liver secretes bile') and replaced it with 'the eye emits nerve impulses,' we have a much more amenable but much less clear illustration. Another reason is that the Organ is viewed as a servant of the organism. 'Organ' is the Greek word for 'instrument.' To suggest that an organ is an instrument means that something must be using that instrument, an agent separate from it, and we are back with the homunculus. A thinking organ must not be an instrument but an agent in and of itself. The non-dualistic, embodied, and enactive self has as its subject the whole organism and not an organ. If we aim for not agency or the desire to live but merely having an activity, this can be observed by both Organ and organism on equal terms.

The dissolution of the two was to be found in the post-War 'Body without Organs.' The phrase first appears in the conclusion of a play by Antonin Artaud. It is taken up as a central image in the philosophy of Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari more for its articulation in their reading of the author's schizophrenia than for the sense of the phrase itself. Though the image transforms in its meaning through fetishism, myth, and intentional encrustation throughout their project, it retains its content as an undifferentiated sentient/insentient force. It never loses the initial associations given it by Artaud:

For you can tie me up if you wish,
but there is nothing more useless than an organ.
When you will have made him a body without organs,
then you will have delivered him from all his automatic reactions
and restored him to his true freedom.[6]

The subject of Artaud's work is, indeed, freedom but the freedom of a person with schizophrenia to work against the chains of correct thinking, to resist his medical, American, and divine captors'

insistence against the logic of his ravings. Even the autonomic nervous system is to blame for binding him to involuntary movement, movements his will did not authorize. He would then be a Cartesian soul, only will and reason on his own terms. However, this is not a soul delivered from the body's restraints or a body that never had a soul; it is a body delivered from the soul. Moreover, the science of body consciousness has sought to do this. The body without organs has created, as it were, a single organ that is not an instrument but pure agency. The body without organs acts as a total being, with, at times, a diverse, deep, destructive, but continuously contiguous surface of activity. The capacities of all the organs rendering their specific services in the chorus are extracted. Inchoate and hyper-voluntary flesh leap forth.[7]

A clear understanding of the Organ must demand that, whether it thinks or secretes insulin, the results be the same, and this feature distinguishes the phenomenology of the Organ from the phenomenology of the body. If the phenomenology of the body is primary, the Organ is always an instrument and never goes beyond the boundaries of functionality. We will see that when we strip function from activity, we are left with the Organ as that which has the Capacity to act and engage with the organism through Capacity and regulation.

Hegel's liver leads to activity

An early and indicative version of Husserl's critique of psychological positivism comes in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* as a refutation of phrenology, psychologism's 18th-century microcephalic aunt. In arriving at what makes conscious activity distinctive, Hegel could not accept that a simulacrum existed between mind and body – that a set of activities could manifest themselves in some part of the anatomy. The then-popular science of registering bumps on the scalp could not indicate the personality because bumps could not serve as a sign of activity, nor could they be an instrumental cause. As Hegel is part of the modern *episteme*, his views regarding functions and activities are similar to ours, yet the medicine of his time preserved a different metaphysics. The open fissures in his positions are attractive.

Organs of the body, the heart, and liver, though active, exist in and for themselves, the nerves, and the brain as well.[8] In his

terminology, this means they are dialectically closed circuits. They host the being-for-self of the spirit/mind, but they cannot be equated to it, and their forms do not operate in some semiotic or analogous fashion – as the form of the grape does not affect the taste of the wine. Hegel refutes the fallacy of formal and functional resemblance – that the Organ for recognizing beauty should be beautiful, that for memory like a Rolodex, or that for smell like a rose. He would, by extension, be highly skeptical of our fMRI-fueled fascination with attaching brain regions and behaviors. Spirit/mind is characterized by its activity whose forms and marks are incompatible with an organ (§ 324–339).

Let us start with a passage from the beginning of his argument, a passage significant for the history of the Organ as the origin of thought:

Now, in ordinary life, anger, e.g., as such an internal action, is located in the liver. Plato even assigns the liver something still higher, which some even regard as the highest function of all, viz., prophesying, or the gift of speaking of holy and eternal things in a non-rational manner. However, the movement which the individual has in his liver, heart, and so on cannot be regarded as wholly reflected in itself; instead, it is present in such a manner that it has already taken on a corporeal aspect in him and has an animal existence turning outwards to an external reality. (§ 326)

Hegel's reference is to Plato's *Timaeus* [9] The author holds that the lesser gods made man with two souls, one in his head and one in his liver. The soul in the head is rational and must control the "niggling beast" that is under the animal influence of the gut. In sleep, as it were, when the head does not lord over the lower soul, dreams, and visions appear. For Romantic Hegel, these visions may even be greater than the rational. The *Timaeus*, indeed, had behind it the heptosopic tradition of ancient ritual when signs of the cosmos were reflected on the surface of the liver of a sacrificial animal.

Nevertheless, it was also the case that there was a material understanding of how the four bodily humors affected emotions. From Plato's time, the "animal spirits" were taken to be of a different metaphysical order than higher thought. It was a lengthy, philosophically, and theologically uneven process before all emotions were regarded as immaterial. Throughout the history of medicine,

humor did not just prompt emotions as states, nor were they merely signs of emotions. Black bile *was* melancholy, and choler *was* anger. They were *liquid, ichorous feelings* (Paster, 2014). From Hippocrates to Galen, to the Christian Church Fathers, to the great Islamic physicians, emotions, and even their related thoughts, could be material.

Hegel does not say that anger is "hosted" by the liver or that bile is a "sign" of anger in the sense that endorphins are mere causes of a "state" of elation. He holds to the ancient tradition of the materiality of senses of humor in order to, at least, give a phenomenal location of their activity. However, like the activity of organs, humors are distinguished from other states by limits to the scope of their function and application. Bile may be anger and subsist in the liver, but it only expresses itself outwardly as anger within the confines of the body. Should it become expressed by an angry word or the packing of a dueling pistol, that would have to involve the liver and the agency of the spirit as the author of the subject's activity. Furthermore, this is how Hegel approaches the corporality of thoughts in general. He continues:

On the other hand, the nervous system is the immediate repose of the organism in its movement. The nerves themselves, it is true, are again the organs of that consciousness which is already immersed in its outward-directed activity; the brain and spinal cord, however, may be considered as the immediate presence of self-consciousness, a presence which abides within itself, is not objective and also does not look outwards. In so far as the moment of being which this Organ has is a *being-for-another*, i.e., is an outer existence, it is a dead thing and no longer the presence of self-consciousness. This *being-within-itself*, however, is by its very nature a fluid system in which the circles cast into it immediately dissolve, and no *lasting* distinction is expressed.

It is possible that Hegel has a reference in the back of his brain in this particular passage of the *Timaeus* to the "mirror" of the liver. This mirror is the surface of the sacrificial Organ, which expressed the will of the gods in the ancient world. In Plato's mythic imagery, it takes and gives impressions to and from the head. While the ichors of the senses of humor may be emotions – so much more measurable bile, so much more anger – they do so only within the orbit of their own operation. The brain and nerves are vessels filled with fluid

(consistent with the theory of the time). That fluid bears impressions upon it like the ripples of a pond, but is not identical to them, is not changed by them, and holds no residue. The mark of the spirit is the motion of its activity, and these organs are merely conveyances of it. He continues:

Meanwhile, the spirit itself is not abstractly simple but a system of movements in which it differentiates itself into the moments, but in this very differentiation remains free. As spirit articulates its body into a variety of functions and allows one particular part for only one function: so too, the fluid *being* of this *being-within-self* can be thought of as articulated into parts. Furthermore, it seems that it must be thought of in this way because the *being* of spirit, which, in the brain, is reflected into itself, is itself again only a middle term between spirit's pure essence and its corporeal articulation, a middle term which therefore must partake of the nature of both; the corporeal aspect must therefore also be present in the middle term in the form of *immediate* being. (§ 327)

Thus, the body participates with the spirit but in an *immediate* sense, which signifies passivity, subordination, and limited dialectic movement for Hegel. However, this is not merely because the spirit/mind is a homunculus hidden within the body but because it is primarily an agent of activity. Organs can only host and facilitate this activity because, in part, the very distribution of their functions means they do not form a whole. Hegel reverses the mechanistic views both contemporary to him and us. To replace his terms with contemporary ones: it is not the 'agent,' which is the middle term between brain activity and bodily activity, but brain activity which is the middle term between agent and activity. True to idealism, the body, like neuroscience's agent/self/soul, can now be safely removed and let the unencumbered spirit fall down the rabbit hole of history.

Spirit's *being for itself and for another* is that which acts, and this distinguishes Hegel's episteme from that of the classical age. While traditional medicine regards there to be two types of tissues: basic – those typical to that part of the body itself – and sporadic – those which transverse body parts[10] – Hegel characteristically makes these categories of *relation through movement*, just as Cuvier and Lamarck determined anatomy through function. Bile is anger, but only in, and then on, the flesh; nerves and the brain convey angry thoughts

and trigger angry actions but only convey them further. The mind is not the body because it does things for and by itself and beyond itself.

The central role of activity brings up one of the most vexing problems of behavioral psychology. For example, a history of damage to the frontal cortex is more often found in people convicted of violent crimes. Nevertheless, you can find plenty of people who have a history of front-cortical damage, who have never struck or murdered anyone, and many people who have done so with no such damage. (Sapolsky 2018, 54, ch. 16) "Violent crime" is not an epileptic seizure; it has a complex set of situations, opportunities, consequential antecedents to the act, and circumstances around it. As Kraus (1964, 56) wrote: "You can identify that someone was the murderer by their penmanship, but you cannot identify by someone's penmanship that they are a murderer." In this gap, the subject operates within its anatomy and the latitudes and confines of circumstances. No faculty or disposition is an act, nor must it invariably determine one.

This philosopher exemplifies the standard approach the West has taken to the phenomenology of the body and its parts in the modern period. When an activity associated with the soul is also associated with an organ, it can have a relationship of identity in subservience to the body and not its activity (as in the case of the liver). Alternatively, it can be a seat of activity (as in the brain or the sense organs) that operates as an instrument that performs a discrete function other than the product itself. In this, Hegel is no different than St. Thomas Aquinas.[11]

A truly Canabis-like materialist notion of the brain must be closest to that of Plato's and Hegel's liver, where the activity itself is material; the liver, with its queer mirrorlike Capacity, seems to depart from the scene of the philosophy of not just of thinking organs, but of organs in general. This makes a difference because the type of Organ a philosopher uses matters to the results obtained from thinking about it, even if the effort is to arrive at a concept of the philosophy of both Organ and organism.

Heidegger's eye sees only itself

one may find Phenomenology's most extensive discussion of the Organ in Martin Heidegger's *Grundebegriffe der Metaphysik* (*Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*). These lectures delivered in

1930 greatly influenced his followers, yet the author did not take them as complete and were not published until 1992. His arguments wander, backtrack, prevaricate, and include critical 'notes to self.' In many cases, they take long, exotic voyages without ever arriving in port, which is the case with his discussion of the Organ.

After the publication of *Being and Time* in 1927, Heidegger spent most of his later career developing elements of that transformational work. The phenomenology of animal being is part of his aim to arrive at the foundations of *dasein* as a position of the embodied human in time. He does this deductively: to get access to what it means to have a human body, let us consider what it is to have a non-human body. He excavates three essential distinctions: humans are world-forming, stones have no world, and animals are poor in the world. To see why animals are poor in the world, we can turn to zoology (212),[12] Moreover, this leads us to question the nature of the organism and then the Organ. For this, he uses familiar techniques, taking up the "specific manner of being" of the Organ and organism. His examples are specific – the dog, the eye, the amoeba. Moreover, because of his method, the results are particular to the example and, I shall show, detrimental to understanding the specific being.

Just like cannabis, his choice of Organ determines his results, especially in the case of phenomenological investigation. In the above passage, Hegel picks three examples of three modes of activity and openness. Heidegger, for the same end, takes only one – the eye.

This is because Heidegger shares our philosophical opponents. He views Descartes' dualism as a foundational error that results in taking consciousness as the primary mode of being (208). Thus, Cartesian mechanistic explanations of the body are also fatally flawed, and Heidegger finds, as do we, reflections of the same flaws in the mechanistic biology contemporary to him (though he could not have seen Crypto-Cartesianism coming). Taking up an organ so important is his riposte. Both Descartes and Heidegger are drawn to sensory organs as places that give us entry to thought. Descartes can link the anatomy of the eye to the nervous system and thus account for "impressions" made upon the soul in the pineal gland near the optic nerve. As an organ, the eye gives him access to the activity of the mind, theorizing about the eye the relationship between the two. Sensory organs give Heidegger access to the mode of being of the animal in the world because we can "transpose" (202) ourselves into it

through our observations of being in the world, which you cannot do with a stone. However, the aim is not to show where the soul is present (as in Plato's *Timaeus*) but where it is deprived. After Heidegger discusses the Organ, he will take up drives and instincts as accessible features to transpose us into the animal experience. The eye can show how the animal has the Capacity to see but does not see. What has the Capacity but not the content of that Capacity is poor; animals are thus poor in the world. Heidegger richly demonstrates this conclusion, despite his foray into the Organ.

Let us first accentuate the positive and reorder his arguments to summarize them. As the Organ in Greek is the 'instrument' by which an 'act' is performed, we would be tempted to compare the Organ to the tool or equipment (*Zeug*), which received ample treatment in *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 2010). However, the Organ is something different because it is not ready-to-hand but is part and parcel of the organism itself (230, 231). Part and parcel are essential.

In his article "What is an organ: The Phenomenology of Organ Transplantation," Fredrik Svenaeus (2010) argues that since we can transplant organs, something Heidegger did not consider, then we have begun to view them more as tools as removable and replaceable, like Heidegger's famous hammer. However, Svenaeus does not examine any of the cases in the *Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik* (217, 218, 221, 225) where the phenomenologist argues that the Organ is not a tool. Inside or outside the body is not the principal reason why organs are not tools. Just as with Hegel, activity is more important than location. First, the tool has "serviceability" (*Dienlichkeit*, 215). It can be put into service – put to use. The Organ has subservience (*Diensthaftigkeit*); it does its own thing in serving the organism (225-226). This is a difference in the nature of their respective activities. When removed, the Organ can do virtually nothing of the act it does when within the organism.[13] A hammer can hammer wherever it is.

The Organ's subservience is based on a capacity (*Fähigkeit*) which is what the Organ can do. We have eyes because they have the Capacity to see. They are in a state of readiness (*Fertigkeit*), primed for the activity to fulfill that Capacity. Capacity most determines the Organ's existence: "Capacity as a particular kind of potentiality for being, for having and offering possibilities, is not merely distinguished from the readiness for something through its character as a form of potentiality. Rather, being capable and being ready for...

announce a fundamentally different manner of being in each case" (222). For the Capacity incorporates the Organ into itself and retains the Organ within itself. The Organ remains an organ as long as it is retained within the organism (227). Indeed, this is what most distinguishes the account of the activity of any organ, but it is more richly conceived in organs that deal with chemistry or secretions. The Organ's Capacity (under normal, healthy conditions) is not ready-to-hand; it is constitutive of the organism's being.

This is determined by the particular nature of the Organ's subservience. An organism functions, again, because it does something *for* the organism. In very artificial conditions, such as that Svenaeus mentions, the activity might be done without the presence of the host – an 'Organ without a Body' – but that activity then does not contribute to the functioning of the organism's life. It performs its function, but it does not fulfill its Capacity. The eye in a vat can continue sending signals, and the liver excretes gall, but they will not do anything there. The stimulus-response mechanism is a means of incorporating Capacity with subservience. A better, more general, term for this process is "regulation."

Capacity only exists when the function is executed somewhere else because Capacity is affected by regulation – the motor cortex moves the muscles of the eye that have sent a signal to the visual cortex, the glial system informing hepatocytes to produce more bile. Capacity without regulation would then make the Organ into something serviceable (it could make bile if it got the signal) but not in service, and so no different than the tool. Thus the permeability of the Organ with the organism comes from the permeability of their capacities – it is not the eye that sees, but the organism, yet the eye has the Capacity to see. The activity and the instrument for it are inseparable in function and in time, though regulation governs the Capacity above activity. Regulation is a common term I am introducing. Let us tentatively say it is the joint act of subservience. It seems that Heidegger does not consider regulation, even in his later Zollikon seminars that dealt mainly with medicine, as a means of incorporating Capacity and subservience.[14]

In Heidegger's final account, the ability of the Organ to perform its function and the organism to perform that activity are both parts of the same living process. The Organ performs it in service to the organism as alive and the organism performs it as a result of drives, or simply

because it is alive. Drives and urges permeate the organism's Capacity and serve to regulate its activity (229) outside the organism in contrast to the communication inherent to regulation as a separate concept.

The greatest virtue of Heidegger's discussion is that he is at great pains to avoid introducing vitalism or some other external agent into an organ or organism. This is, of course, to avoid the pitfalls of Cartesianism and to arrive at an account of the animal without anthropomorphism. In our case, it allows us to isolate the Organ from the Crypto-Cartesian function.

There is, however, one signal problem with the formulation of Capacity and, thus, subservience. If Capacity precedes the Organ that possesses it – if we need to see before we have eyes – then the Organ must be uniquely suited to it. Nevertheless, how do we know the eye is the way to see? If seeing is one thing, why do eyes have different structures for different organisms? Heidegger would answer that this is because different organisms have different beings in the world and afford different capacities suitable to that being. Therefore seeing is not one thing. How, then, would we come up with a notion of being in the world which would give us the seeing that we would need to arrive at the Organ of the eye? It would seem unlikely that we could arrive at the human or bee's eyes (230) by this method. This is, in fact, a similar problem to that mentioned above with the murderer and handwriting – many different forms could be adaptive for the same activity, and you cannot arrive at the form from the activity alone.

This is most evident if we replace the eye with another organ – Hegel and Timaeus' liver, for example. Let us match one of Heidegger's signal statements demonstrating Capacity with an analogy:

- 1a) Can the animal see because it has eyes, or does it have eyes because it can see? (218)
- 1b) Does the animal digest because it has a liver, or does it have a liver because it digests?

We can reduce these statements to their individual capacities:

- 2a) Can the eye see because it transmits nerve impulses to the visual cortex, or does it transmit nerve impulses to the visual cortex because it can see?

2b) Does the liver produce bile because it emulsifies fat, or does bile emulsify fat because it is produced in the liver?

With each of these formulations, we find that their point needs to be revised. Yes, we have eyes *so that we may see*. Necessity is the explanation of Capacity. However, by 1b, we already find that the liver does help digestion, but we have something other than the liver to do what it needs to do, and we could conceive of something to replace the liver. With 2, we move closer to physiology. Something else could transmit to the visual cortex And process light waves differently. Moreover, especially with 2b, other things could and do emulsify fats. The fascination with the eye has led the phenomenologist into a tautology. The meaning of "see" is inseparable from the eye. It functions as a metaphor for perception. Bats 'see' with echolocation; we say a dog 'sees with its nose.' Heidegger alludes to this in the Zollikon conversations when he says we "see" with our hands in a dark room.[16] Seeing comes to be what it is through the regulation of the organism and the response of the Organ at any stage of organs, phylogenic and ontogenic. As Steven Jay Gould argued, evolution cannot be played backward; neither can the answer to necessity.

The eye is a traitorous organ, as are all the senses; what it does is hard to distinguish from its bodily subject. The digital 'all or nothing' property of nerve responses and the difficulty of distinguishing perception from memory can easily allow excluded middles and solipsisms to slip in.

So, we are left only one message cast from Heidegger's unsuccessful voyage: that activity of the Organ is the execution of Capacity, and the organism's activity regulates Capacity. However, the Organ's activity is not determined by Capacity, but Capacity is determined by activity. The activity of bile in the gut is the liver's Capacity, which makes it subservient to the organism's Capacity to live. The activity of thought in the body and world is the brain's Capacity, which makes it subservient to the organism's Capacity to live. With life, we always return with Heidegger to Dasein.

However, there is still a figure in the shadows of this activity which we first must outline in relief before we can conclude. Later in his discussion, Heidegger writes, "And yet, there is no avoiding the self-like character of capacity, i.e., its instinctual and intrinsic self-proposing." He would instead not take this path, as it opens up the

possibility of a vital force or a self only realized in consciousness. In our terms, it opens up the unwanted possibility of a hidden agent separate from Capacity itself. However, distinctions in capacities suggest a self-definition that gives them outlines in activity and space. This is property (as in personal possession, *Eigentum*) that is assimilated (*eigenommen*) into itself, moreover, which it governs (233).[17] In Hegel, we also have a definition of activities within the organs that correspond to Galen's fundamental distinction between basic tissue and sporadic tissue. The Organ exists within the "self-proposing" of its Capacity, but it also exists within the boundaries afforded by the limits to its Capacity.

In contrast, Artaud's body without organs is revulsion toward any choral anatomy. For him, the voices of separate capacities and the give-and-take of regulation restrain the voluntarism of the patient. His existence is one of porous borders between the inner and outer and an absence of them within. Artaud's body is all one Capacity and no subservience. Let us examine a couple of uses of the Body without Organs to prepare our final point.

Empiricism turns Cartesian

As Slavoj Žižek lays out in his *Organs without Bodies*, the transition from Heideggerian contemplation of phenomena to Deleuze's empiricism is one where the 'present-at-hand' and the 'ready-at-hand' are coalesced: "this standard attitude simultaneously considers objects as isolated positive entities occupying a particular location in abstract geometric space, as objects of contemplative representation, and as objects perceived through the standpoint of the subject's existential engagement, reduced to their potential use within the horizon of the subject's interests, projects, desires, and so on" (Žižek, 2012, p. 26). Furthermore, the coalescence of the material and spiritual is a central feature of Deleuze's empiricism which is often *effectively* identical to materialist mysticism. In the terms we have examined, the Body without Organs is one where there is no real estate (i.e., *Eigentum*) within the body, there is no subservience, there is only the whole Capacity of the organism (though like the egg that appears in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, or the chrysalis, it cannot be called an organism); and even this 'self' in its schizoid diffusion of identity, is

unstable. It is a body issuing junk, "fluids and insufflations" (Deleuze, 1990, p. 88).

So if we are to arrive at an understanding of the Organ, we must reverse this surfacelessness to one of the surfaces, this will to one of Capacity. We must turn from the schizophrenic Artaud to the kaleidoscopic surfaces of his antithesis in *The Logic of Sense*, the Alice of Lewis Carroll. This is what Žižek seeks to do in reversing the organless Body without Organs to an entity (though he will not say it) with a function and no capacity or will:

Is, on the one hand, the productive flux of pure Becoming not the BwO [Body without Organs], the body not yet structured or determined as functional organs? Moreover, on the other hand, is the OwB [Organs without a Body] not the virtuality of the pure effect extracted from its embeddedness in a body, like the smile in *Alice in Wonderland* that persists alone, even when the Cheshire cat's body is no longer present? [...] 'Well! I've often seen a cat without a grin,' thought Alice, 'but a grin without a cat! It's the most curious thing I ever saw in my life!' This notion of an extracted OwB reemerges forcefully in The Time-Image, in the guise of the GAZE itself, as such an autonomous organ no longer attached to a body. (Žižek 2012, p. 26)

All is well and good, but we have seen that function never is absent without an agent, that the function is always for something, and understanding the Organ itself requires that we limit ourselves to activity and Capacity. The Organ without a body, like the Body without Organs, lacks subservience and Capacity. For Žižek, this gaze is active yet de-subjectivized. Subject, for him, always is at once Marxian and Freudian, and well should be if we consider that both are socially and historically positioned (as Žižek is at pains to repeat) in immanently fading bourgeois capitalism. However, like Heidegger's eye, this gaze and affectiveness is a subject in hiding.

For the gaze, even without a face, is never anything but the radical statement of subjectivity, "crystallized" in Deleuze's Time-Image or not. Moreover, like subjectivity, the gaze is also always a gesture and, like the smile, always a sign. This means a recipient, meaning the Organ without a Body, is not alone but part of a system of exchange embedded in the world. The eye has also fooled Žižek. This Organ without a body might be the liver of an ancient sacrificial sheep

bearing signs of the zodiac, but it is not Žižek's liver, Hegel's, mine, or yours. Perhaps it is even a thinking organ, but not one that allows itself to be both an organ and to think. Moreover, if we are talking about cinema, which Žižek implies here, the gaze, like the PoV shot, is a tool.

In a footnote to the above passage, Žižek reveals that this Time-Image, in its detachment from the body, can be compared to other metaphors for the attachment of consciousness to the brain. Thus, we have come full circle. A Body without Organs has a Cartesian will without parts; an Organ without a Body is (like?) a Cartesian consciousness outside of a brain. We still do not have an organ that thinks.

However, the gestural act in the gaze suggested by the above passage points the way to full contemplation of the surface through the gesture of communication, and this is where we begin to see, almost on terms consistent with the statement of Aristotle's in *Metaphysics* Θ (1050a- β), that form is activity and activity form.

Activity is surface; the surface is a message

According to Deleuze, what gave Artaud the (completely inaccurate) impression of the snobbish, well-fed Englishman in Louis Carroll was the panoply of surfaces that the schizoid mind had to expand to depths. He fumed: "Jabberwocky" is a poem whose author took steps to keep himself from the uterine being of suffering into which every great poet has plunged." (Deleuze, 1990, p. 84) For Artaud and Deleuze, at this point, surfaces are taken to be sterile. However, like the uterine lining, the surfaces of the body are far from sterile. Though the boundaries of many organs themselves do not matter much for their functioning, the activity of their respective cells is entirely dependent on manipulations in their surfaces. That gives the Organ its particularity – Galen's 'main tissue.' If we speak of the products of an organ, they are also defined by their surfaces.[18] The chemical surface of bile is so astonishingly complex to inspire its own form of mysticism. I would press the reader to contemplate an image of the three-dimensional surface of bovine liver catalase.[19]

Moreover, we should be clear that the "structure" of the surface, its surface content, is not its only important characteristic if we understand structure to represent some Pythagorean or semiotic ideal.

If DNA is viewed as a language, a platonic system of signs, the surface of DNA is its quadripartite constituents. However, the manner in which it is enfolded is crucial to the molecule's activity. The surface structure of DNA determines, in part, which genes are expressed. Proteins, in turn, have a chemical structure, but their surfaces are also enfolded. Several diseases are believed to be caused by improper enfolding of proteins (Ellis & Pinheiro, 2002). Interestingly, some mutations and viruses – even new organisms – can emerge from a misfolding. This takes us to where Deleuze's surfaces begin to gain depth in the fold of the baroque (Deleuze, 2015).

However, the Capacity of these products via their chemical reactions is often in the field of communication. A structure has its particular surface so that it may interact with another surface. 'Like lock and key' goes the biochemists' truism. This acquires its most baroque version in the proteins of symbiotic organisms—a truly Deleuzian world. A plant in a symbiotic relationship needs to allow its fungal symbiont, for example, to trail itself up into the plant's root structure. There are benefits to this for both parties. However, the plant must also protect itself from pathogens that might infect it through the same passage. So plants and their symbionts have extremely complex structural surfaces, which means a very complex lock is only for a very complex key. Botanists call these structures 'decorations' put over the surfaces of the symbionts. Decorations have no other function than what, in the language of the field, is called 'recognition.'^[20] Though science is full of metaphors (like 'adaptive'), nothing distinguishes this kind of recognition from that of a face or a password – the assembly of correspondences that lead to an (electro-)chemical reaction, new physical information. Moreover, versions of this communication of surfaces can be seen throughout the biological and neurological activity. Furthermore, marching up from the roots to the tree to Newton sitting under the tree, we cannot empirically find any difference in the baroque recognition of these symbionts than in the far simpler recognition that takes place on the part of neurotransmitters. Regulation amounts to communication between the Organ and the organism, which occurs through electrochemical reactions. These reactions are what define and determine the Organ's Capacity.

Thus, we have been able to get by discovering that the Capacity of an organ is to act, and its activity is a surface. The extent to which this surface is communicative is its Capacity for regulation. Thus, rather

than being defined by subservience, Capacity is defined by regulation.[21] We should not be loath to admit that this can account for the brain's activity in thought, but that can also apply to the activity of a mushroom in a tree. Either these activities are distinguished by no more than the differences in their surfaces, or limiting yourself to the Organ alone is not enough to account for consciousness. So much, so far, the phenomenology of the Organ is able to reveal.

The preceding should be enough to argue that much more work needs to be done on the phenomenology of the Organ before we can arrive at anything approaching flesh that can think and find its place in the world of social and material essences and surfaces. However, this should not excuse us from engaging with scientific results, as the figures above have done, nor in recognizing that the path is narrow, the journey long, and the destination perhaps less appealing than was expected. At the least, we should recognize that our adversaries along the way have an ideology that, for social and scientific reasons, deserves all the bile we can secrete.

End Notes

1. See Žižek's (2012, 16, fn. 195) response to Daniel Dennett. I examine the radical ethical connotations of reductionist neurology in Trimble (2015).
2. See Fodor (2000, 191), who regards the argument of a brain seeking adaptive advantage as a "distributive fallacy." Note that this means he must accept an agent distinct from the brain, and so, like all computationalists, he was a Crypto-Cartesian.
3. "I am afraid we are not rid of God because we still have faith in grammar." *Twilight of the Idols*, Friedrich Nietzsche (1982, 483).
4. A lengthy and trenchant refutation of the "homunculus," agency, and free will ends with Sopolsky (2013, 613) arguing: "I can't myself imagine how to live your life as if there is no free will. Viewing ourselves as the sum of our biology may never be possible. Perhaps we'll have to settle for making sure our homuncular myths are benign..."
5. Consider the famous "trolley argument."
6. *To Have Done with the Judgment of God* in Artaud (1976).
7. See Deleuze (1990).
8. Unless otherwise indicated, subsequent references are to Hegel (1977) by section number.
9. Plato (1937, vol. 2, 49–50; 2012; in Greek, 1905, § 70dff.).
10. Galen, *Natural Faculties* (1.6).
11. Note his discussion on humor and agency in the *Summa Theologiae* Q. 48.2.
12. Unless otherwise indicated, all references are to Heidegger (2001).
13. "The hammer is not an urge toward hammering. As a finished product, the hammer lies outside the act of hammering. By contrast, something like the eye, which belongs to a capacity and subserves the Capacity of seeing, can do so only because the Capacity is itself intrinsically subservient and, as such, can take something into service" (226). Thus though Svenaeus may be able to arrive at a practical phenomenology to understand the experiences of transplant patients, it seems pretty likely that the received Organ will disappear in use even faster than the swinging hammer and, so long as it is healthy, stay so because the patient cannot put it in and out of use.
14. Though one place in the *Grundbegriffe* swerves towards this point: "That which the Capacity as such allows to arise and brings into relation

to itself, namely the Organ, is thus taken into service or released from service (as in the case of atrophy). An instrument cannot atrophy because it is never subservient and does not have the possibility of capacity" (230). Here we make the point that regulation leads to changes in activity on the part of both Organ and organism. Heidegger's point is one of distinguishing serviceability and subservience, ours of reconciling Capacity and subservience.

15. Consider cochlear implants, replacing some or all of the ear's anatomy with a microphone.
16. Heidegger (2001, 108/83)
17. Recall that in Heidegger's etymology *Eigen* (one's own) is associated with *Augen* (eyes) via *Eräugnis* ('to be made apparent'). See Buchanan (2016).
18. In another article (Trimble, 2020), I discuss the affective distinction *between* mental surfaces as enacted on the consciousness of a neurosurgeon.
19. <https://www.rcsb.org/structure/1TGU>.
20. E.g., Rasmussen et al. (2016) and Besserer et al. (2006).
21. We may add to this that regulation is executed by recognition, which is a change in the physical information of the organism. Consider common biochemical examples such as the Krebs cycle expressing different information at each step.

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