
Bence Peter Marosan

SARTRE'S RADICAL REDUCTION TO THE INCARNATED SUBJECTIVITY

The metaphysics of contingency

1. Introduction

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The real stake of phenomenological reduction is the possibility of ultimate certainty. When Husserl elaborated his complex methodology of phenomenological reductions between 1903 and 1912, his final aim was to immunize philosophy against all possible forms of scepticism and relativism.¹ The aim of phenomenological reduction is to unfold the apriori features of reality. The proper theme of this present essay will be the same: the possibilities of the ultimate philosophical certitude.

It is well-known that Husserl was not very popular with the transcendental transformation of the »realist« phenomenology² of the *Logical Investigations* through the methodological operations of reductions. The vast majority of the first-line representatives of phenomenology rejected his transcendental turn, as well as his concrete methodology of reductions.³ But in the context of the present study we

¹ See: Dermot Moran, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, Routledge, London and New York 2000, pp. 124–126.

² As Roman Ingarden called it.

³ Moran, op.cit., p.2.

shall use the term »reduction« in a wider sense, that was given by Jean-Luc Marion, in his book *Réduction et donation*.⁴

According to Marion one could talk about the phenomenological reduction in a special meaning that was operative in a latent manner in the entire phenomenological tradition. In this sense the reduction means »to make something the object of phenomenological vision«. In this interpretation the phenomenological reduction focuses our attention on certain domains of phenomena. The more one is able to radicalize the operation of reduction, the more one is able to penetrate into the sphere of the phenomena. He wanted to express this idea in his famous saying: »the more reduction, the more givenness«.

In our present work we will keep in view this meaning of the reduction. Marion, in his above-mentioned writing, spoke about three fundamental types of reductions: 1. the Husserlian reduction to the *givenness* for a transcendental consciousness; 2. the Heideggerian reduction to the *givenness* of the event of Being for the human existence or *Dasein*. But Marion thought necessary a third principal type of reduction: 3. the reduction to an original givenness, that Marion calls here *interloqué*: our being taken aback by an original event of givenness.⁵ Marion, under the influence of Lévinas, articulates this *interloqué* in terms of a radical alterity (or otherness, *altérité*), and thus proposed a reduction to an original passivity toward this alterity.

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In the following I will treat the problem of reduction in Husserl and in Heidegger – but the third protagonist of my writing will be Sartre. I will try to show that this third type of reduction could be traced back to the phenomenological ontology of Sartre. He played a crucial role in founding of the French phenomenological tradition, and he determined the later essential achievements of French phenomenology, first of all: the achievements of Lévinas (from whom he also gained fundamental impulses through the latter's dissertation on Husserl) and Merleau-Ponty.

So, the main emphasis in this work will be on Sartre's phenomenology. Sartre's philosophical intentions were deeply determined by the original aims of phenomenology: that is to say by the intention of striving to unfold the hidden a priori of the existence and reality. He made the attempt to know the *truth* concerning the human and non-human reality – and it is the essence of phenomenology.

4 Jean-Luc Marion, *Réduction et donation*, P.U.F., Paris 1989, english : *Reduction and Givenness*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, Illinois 2000.

5 Marion, op. cit., [english] : 200–202, 204–205.

Though Sartre conceived the human existence entirely in terms of pure activity, of absolute freedom, and he attributed the passivity entirely to the objective being, at some crucial points he was forced »to follow the pressure of phenomena«. These points were the problem of emotions, of body and of the Other. The problem of the Other was the only point where Sartre admitted explicitly that the man is also passive in a certain manner. »The limit of a freedom could be just another freedom,« he said. We are passive in respect of the freedom of the Other. We cannot force Her freedom. So, in the end, the Sartrean reduction to the bodily subjectivity, proved to be a reduction to the passivity, just in the same manner as at Marion.

In the following analyses I will keep in view first of all those writings of Husserl and Heidegger which were known and read by Sartre (with an outlook to their later writings too). In regard to Sartre, I will focus to his phenomenological main-work, *Being and Nothingness* (1943), and other works of his phenomenological period, (such as: *Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions*, 1939, »*Intentionality: A Fundamental Idea of Husserl's Phenomenology*«, 1939, *The Transcendence of the Ego*, 1937). (Though, in my opinion, the phenomenological motif determined Sartre's thinking throughout his whole life; so also in his »Marxist« period, in the *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, 1960).

I will make the attempt to show that these three types of reductions are the different moments of one and the same philosophical movement. They are linked with each other in a certain logical manner, one methodical step follows from the other. This means: the phenomenological reduction to the transcendental consciousness necessarily leads to a reduction to the event of Being, and a reduction to the Being necessarily leads to the reduction to passivity.

The range of transcendental reduction or transcendental reflexion is very limited. It is much more limited than Husserl thought it, perhaps even in his latest writings. The nature of apriori this reduction could yield depends on many factors: this apriori is determined by our bodily constitution, by our historical and social situation. But though there is such a thing like the apriori, the unfolding of the determinative factors of our human, bodily existence could help us to shed light on the limits and possibilities of the discovering of the hidden apriori of reality. In our age of ever more popular naturalism the need of such an existential analysis is even more urging. This essay tries to be a contribution to this task, through the existential phenomenology of Sartre.

2. First phase: the Husserlian reduction to the transcendental consciousness

The prevailing philosophical stream of Husserl's age was psychologism. According to the representatives of this movement the laws and objects of mathematics and logics could be derived from empirical-psychological laws and processes. In the *Logical Investigations* (1900/1901), in this massive two-volumes »ground-breaking« work of phenomenology, Husserl tried to show that this view unavoidably lead to radical scepticism and relativism; and thus is unable to provide a firm ground for the theory of knowledge.

In Husserl's interpretation one could only secure the conditions of possibility of a systematic theory of knowledge by accepting the »ideal nature« of mathematical and logical laws and objects, as well as the »ideality« of meanings and species. But the author didn't stop at this point: Husserl went further. According to Husserl the consciousness has also such ideal, apriori structures. The aim of phenomenology was to unfold such ideal moments of subjectivity. He imagined a systematic theory of knowledge through the phenomenological description of the ideal structures of subjectivity. The most fundamental structure of consciousness, according to Husserl, was the *intentionality*, the directedness of the consciousness towards its object. The consciousness is always conscious *of* something. Husserl considered the phenomenology first all to be *intentional analysis*.

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The psychologist counter-attacks⁶ just after the publication of *Logical Investigations* made Husserl aware of the fact that his phenomenology was far from being safe against »any possible form of scepticism and relativism«. In order to provide a more secure grounding for a theory of knowledge, Husserl elaborated a complex system of *reductions* between 1905 and 1912; but already in 1903 he was thinking about the necessity of effectuating radical changes in his phenomenology.⁷ In a letter he said that a talk with Dilthey in 1905 convinced him concerning the necessity of a »transcendental turn« in his phenomenology;⁸ and in fact the first appearance of phenomenological reduction could be found in the »Seefelder Manuskripten« from August, 1905, where Husserl performs a phenomenological reduction on a »brown bottle of beer«, (Hua X: 237, A VII 25).

6 See for details: George Heffernan, »A Study in the Sedimented Origins of Evidence: Husserl and His Contemporaries Engaged in a Collective Essay in the Phenomenology and Psychology of Epistemic Justification«, in: *Husserl Studies* 16 (1999), pp.83–181.

7 See: Moran, op. cit., pp. 124–126.

8 BW 6: 275, cf. further: Iso Kern, »Einleitung des Herausgebers«, in: Hua XV, Martinus Nijhoff, Den Haag 1973, p. XLIV.

The first public presentation of Husserl's transcendental turn took place in his lectures *The Idea of Phenomenology*, in 1907 (between April 26. and May 2., in Hua II). The first systematic public elaboration of the methodology of reductions was the first book of his *Ideen* from 1903, (Hua III). The phenomenological reduction »bracketed« the »natural thesis« or »position« of the world, it »suspended« every thesis of the mind-transcendent reality, in order to direct our attention to what is unquestionably given: to the living present (»das lebendige Jetzt«) of the cogito and to its immediate data (»Gegebenheiten«). The vast majority of Husserl's students were unhappy with Husserl's transcendental phenomenology, some of them were even hostile to it.⁹

What was the special meaning of transcendental to Husserl? The main idea of transcendental philosophy was that every meaning and every validity of Being or existence is the result of the constituting activity of a consciousness. The phenomenological reduction »switched off« (»ausschalten«) the belief in the Being (»Seinsglaube«) of the natural attitude, in order to *focus* our attention on the constitutional (»konstituierende«) sources of this belief. The reduction at Husserl transforms everything into the phenomena of a transcendental consciousness. The main aim of transcendental phenomenology, for him, was to unfold the apriori connections between these transcendental phenomena, to describe the apriori structures of transcendental subjectivity.

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After the *Logical Investigations* this idea of phenomenological reduction remained the governing idea in Husserl's publication during his lifetime; and also in the writings Sartre had the opportunity to read (in *Ideas I*, »Philosophy as Rigorous Science«, *Cartesian Meditations, Formal and Transcendental Logics*). But Husserl felt that there were grave problems with the methodology of reductions (at least in its »Cartesian« form) from the very beginning; already before the writing and publication of the *Ideen*. We shall have a look at his *manuscripts* and (in Husserl's life-time) *unpublished works* also.

Husserl spoke about several different types of phenomenological reductions, depending on which particular domain of phenomena he wanted to direct our attention to. The Husserl-literature generally speaks of three fundamental types of reduction: 1. the Cartesian way, 2. the psychological way and 3. the ontological way of reduction.¹⁰ Sartre only knew the first one. The Cartesian reduction re-

9 Moran, op. cit., p. 2.

10 Rudolf Boehm, »Einleitung des Herausgebers«, in: Hua VIII, Martinus Nijhoff, Den Haag 1959; Kern, *Husserl und Kant. Eine Untersuchung über Husserls Verhältnis zu Kant und zum Neukantianismus*, Martinus Nijhoff, Den Haag

duces to the transcendental ego (to the ego of the philosopher herself/himself, but under transcendental reduction), with its apodictically given contents. This type of reduction was determinative in Husserl's published works of transcendental phenomenology.¹¹ When Husserl saw the aversion (even hostility) of his students and other followers from the transcendental turn, he thought that perhaps this methodological way in a certain manner was just »too fast«. It brought the philosopher immediately to the transcendental ego and to its *cogitata*.

So, Husserl thought that perhaps he could make his phenomenology more accepted if he introduces several other methodological steps underway towards the domain of transcendental phenomena and transcendental subjectivity. The psychological reduction reduces to the »intentionality« of the consciousness, but does not »switch off« the world as implicit background entirely. This reduction would result a pure or intentional psychology, directing our attention solely to the intentional structure of consciousness. Husserl thought that intentional psychology would serve as a good introduction or »Prolegomena« to transcendental phenomenology.¹²

Husserl in the *Crisis* explicitly juxtaposed the ontological way of reduction with the Cartesian,¹³ though the idea, or at least the possibility of this third type of reduction was present in the texts of the author, from the beginnings: already in *The Idea of Phenomenology* and in the *Ideas*; though in *Crisis* Husserl describes the »ontological reduction« as the »new way« of reduction. The ontological reduction approaches the domain of transcendental phenomena from the life-world; from this hidden, unthematized ground for every scientific objectification and every theoretical achievement. The life-world is our common, subjective milieu in the natural attitude and in the natural life. But the final goal in this way is still the same: to unfold the constituting (»konstituierende«) activity of transcendental subjectivity, even in the underground of life-world.

1964, p. 194, Bernet-Kern-Marbach, *Edmund Husserl. Darstellung seines Denkens*, Felix Meiner, Hamburg 1989, p. 62.

Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2000, pp. 51–53.

¹¹ Such as *The Idea of Phenomenology*, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy I*, *Cartesian Meditations*, *Paris lectures*, *Formal and Transcendental Logics*.

¹² *Erste Philosophie*, Second Part, Hua VIII, *Phänomenologische Psychologie*, Hua IX, »Phänomenologie-artikel«, Hua IX.

¹³ Hua VI: 156.

It was the heart of Husserl's »Copernican turn«:¹⁴ the ultimate source of every meaning and validity is the transcendental subjectivity. As we mentioned above: Husserl felt very early that there were really serious problems with the Cartesian way of phenomenological reduction. For the first time he presented these problems in his lectures about the *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*,¹⁵ during the winter semester of 1910/1911. Husserl was aware of the fact that the Cartesian reduction cannot get beyond the narrower range of present and the solipsistic sphere of own consciousness. In the Cartesian reduction we weren't able to approach the other subject specifically as Other; in this reduction we only possess experiences of *sympathy* (»Einfühlung«) as indexes toward the Other.

Therefore he elaborated in those lectures the method of »double reduction«. According to him there is another apodictic reduction to the specific content of the experience of sympathy. The first reduction reduces to the experience of sympathy, the second reduction reduces to the *object* (or rather *subject*) of this experience of sympathy, and thus makes the Other as Other, as my co-subject an object of apodictically evident phenomenological vision.

This reduction would lead to the community of monads; unfolding a community of monadological subjects. Therefore Françoise Dastur called it the »Leibnizian way« of phenomenological reduction, (in contrast to the Cartesian way).¹⁶ This double reduction (»doppelte Reduktion«) could unfold the apodictic content of experiences of past also. What was the particular reason for Husserl never presenting this achievement of »double reduction« in his published work during his life? This reason was the problem of *temporality*: throughout his whole life Husserl was struggling with the problem how to find a mediation between the time-flow (»Zeitfluss«) of the own consciousness and the time of the consciousness of the Other.¹⁷

The problem of temporality and intersubjectivity lead the late Husserl to a doorstep of an »Anti-Copernican turn«, that is to say: out of the narrower domain of transcendental. In the manuscripts of the very late Husserl the reduction appears

14 Tengelyi, *Der Zwitterbegriff Lebensgeschichte*, Wilhelm Fink Verlag, München 1998. In this present essay I will refer

with the term »Copernican« to transcendental philosophy, and transcendentalism in general.

15 In: Hua XIII.

16 Françoise Dastur, »Réduction et intersubjectivité«, in: E. Escoubas-M. Richir (ed.), *Husserl*, Édition Jérôme Millon, Grenoble 1989, p. 64.

17 Tengelyi, op. cit.

as collective achievement of co-phenomenologists (»Mitphänomenologen«),¹⁸ this operation is embedded into the history and the community in which it is performed by the researcher phenomenologists. The principle of principles, the demand of the concrete intuitive givenness of the thing itself (Hua III/1: 49) remained valid, but the more complex apodictic insights are in need of permanent affirmation of the other members of the phenomenologist community. In the centre of the life of phenomenology was the »primordial apodicticity« of the »factual cogito«,¹⁹ but this primordial apodicticity is placed into the flow of history. We find ourselves in a radical perspectivity, though this perspectivity grants an apodictic insight, situated in our bodily, historical, intersubjective nature.

3. Second phase: the Heideggerian reduction to the event of Being

Like Sartre, Heidegger didn't know about the later documents of Husserl's philosophical development. The texts he knew for certain were the followings: *Logical Investigations*, the first and second books of *Ideas*, the Logos-article (»Philosophy as Rigorous Science«), the Phenomenology-article and *The Phenomenology of internal time-consciousness*. In his last seminars²⁰ Heidegger also refers to the *Cartesian Meditations*. There is no sign that he knew the details of Husserl's researches concerning genetical phenomenology and the problem of the life-world. He had a better opinion of Husserl's early phenomenology (presented in the *Logical Investigations*) than of the transcendental philosophy of his master. During the life-time of Husserl he was the number one critic of the transcendental phenomenology.

The philosophical question that fascinated Heidegger from the beginnings was the question toward the meaning of Being (»Sinn von Sein«). The book that directed Heidegger's attention to the question of Being (»Seinsfrage«) was Brentano's work *On the Several Senses of Being in Aristotle*,²¹ which he read as early as 1907.²² In Heidegger's interpretation the problem of Being is the most fundamental philosophical problem: all philosophical questioning must start with this problem, and all questioning must return to this question. The philosophical tradition of the West buried this question, but in order to fulfil the inherent demand of philosophy one must recover and reconstitute this question in its entire sharpness.

18 Hua XXXIV: 315.

19 K III 12: 37–38.

20 GA 15.

21 Franz Brentano, *Von der mannigfachen Bedeutung des Seienden nach Aristoteles*, Freiburg 1862.

22 Moran, op. cit., pp. 200–201.

According to Heidegger the phenomenology of Husserl gave him »the eyes to see«. ²³ Phenomenology proved to be a philosophical vision with which he was able to articulate his interest concerning the meaning of Being. Since his first meeting with Husserlian phenomenology, Heidegger was forming the phenomenology in conformity with his own peculiar philosophical vision. He emphasized the concrete points in Husserl's philosophy that were especially suitable to his own philosophical intention: such as the notion of »categorical seeing« or »categorical intuition« in the Sixth Logical Investigation, that was about our capacity to »see« the Being as such. But Heidegger also integrated several other, different moments into phenomenology, such as his interests concerning ancient philosophy, motifs from philosophical and theological hermeneutics and philosophy of life and of existence.

Heidegger rejected Husserl's transcendental turn, and from the very beginning he didn't hide his doubts against it under a bushel; though when he was Husserl's assistant between 1916 and 1923 in Freiburg he presented those doubts in a moderate form. With Husserl's aid he became Professor Extraordinarius at Marburg in 1923, under the directorship of Paul Natorp. During his Marburg-period, between 1923 and 1928, he elaborated a harsh and thorough criticism of Husserl's transcendental phenomenology. His main objections were Husserl's presumed intellectualism and the omission of the question towards the meaning of Being. ²⁴

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Although Heidegger's criticism of Husserl has many different motifs and branches, and thus can hardly be classified under a single expression, the main direction of his objections against Husserl was the charge of *intellectualism*. Thus: 1. Husserl subordinates the practical attitude to the theoretical one. 2. The transcendental philosophy reifies and alienates the real, factual life. It rips out this life from its historical, mundane concreteness. 3. Scientism: Husserl orientates one-sidedly to the ideal of modern scientific methodology. 4. The oblivion of the Being: Husserl skipped over the hidden, but most fundamental presupposition of all philosophy: the question towards the meaning of Being. ²⁵

Heidegger accomplished the hermeneutical transformation of the transcendental phenomenology. ²⁶ He tried to elaborate the hermeneutical phenomenology of factual human existence in its historical, practical concreteness. The protagonist of Heidegger's hermeneutical phenomenology was the being-there, the *Dasein*, as being-in-the-world. Though the »hermeneutics« was a discipline of interpret-

23 Ibid., p. 228.

24 GA 20.

25 To Heidegger's criticism on Husserl see further: Moran, op. cit., pp. 20–21, 226–230.

26 Cf. op.cit. 4, 193, 197.

ing texts, in Dilthey it was the fundamental methodology of the cultural sciences (»Geisteswissenschaften«) as such, Heidegger conceived this discipline even more radically: the being-there (the *Dasein*) was by its very essence hermeneutical. The being-there was a being who understands interpretatively its own Being and the Being of the world and of the things in its surroundings (»Umwelt«). In this way Heidegger connected his hermeneutics of facticity with the question of Being: he tried to enlighten the Being from the entity that possessed the capacity of understanding of Being; that is to say: he tried to elaborate the question towards the Being as such through the analysis of the Being of being-there, as it understands itself in its Being.

These two points of Heidegger's criticism on Husserl (the hermeneutics of factual life and the omission of the question of Being) raise the question concerning the relationship between the hermeneutics of facticity and the question of Being in general. This problem appears in Heidegger's main work, *Being and Time* (1927) as the relationship between existential analytics (of being-there) and the fundamental ontology. According to Heidegger the existential analytics would introduce the question of Being as such. In a later seminar Heidegger focused on the question of Being, conceived in an even more fundamental form than »fundamental ontology«, called »metontology«, as the ontology of the Nature and World in general, that even preceded methodologically the existential analytics of human existence.²⁷

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The writings Sartre could know and read contained only the »operative idea« of phenomenological reduction. Sartre read Heidegger's *Being and Time* and his lecture on »What is Metaphysics?« in French translation.²⁸ That latter writing was even more important for Sartre, because of Heidegger's detailed study on the nature of Nothingness; (some motifs of this lecture returned in Sartre literally). In Marion's interpretation there is a second fundamental reduction at Heidegger (beside the reduction to the ontological difference): a reduction to Nothingness.²⁹

We shall see clearly the difference between the position of Husserl's and Heidegger's phenomenology. Husserl's standard position is *perception*. Heidegger's *care* (»Sorge«): the great whole of the life-history. Heidegger approaches the great themes of life-history from care: such themes as sin, conscience, anxiety, authenticity, truth, death and destiny. But Heidegger's project is still a transcendental one: he tries to unfold the apriori valid structures of human existence. The reflec-

27 Heidegger, *Einleitung in die Philosophie* (1928), GA 27.

28 See: Moran, op. cit., pp. 361–362.

29 Marion, op. cit., [english]: p.74.

tion on the nature of Being is a transcendental one, and the truth this reflection yields is a transcendental truth: *veritas transcendentalis*.³⁰

What is even more: Heidegger formulates the nature of understanding (»verstehen«) in terms of a project (»Entwurf«): in the understanding the being-there projects (»entwirft«) itself onto its own possibilities.³¹ There is an inner dynamism of the process of understanding that could be characterised by the term of »force« (»Kraft«); according to Tengelyi in this period of Heidegger one could clearly observe in his interpretation of interpretation the Husserlian conception concerning the meaning-constituting activity of subjectivity still being strongly present in an implicit way.³² In Tengelyi's view, Heidegger at this period wasn't able to break out of the »Copernican-paradigm« entirely.³³ But we should add: though he wasn't able to leave this paradigm wholly, he was still very well aware of the limits of meaning-constitution. In his »hermeneutics of facticity« Heidegger juxtaposed a *counter-movement* against this activity: and it was the event of Being. We are completely passive in regard to this event that could frustrate all our plans. The activity of human existence moves against the event of Being.

In Marion's interpretation the »operative idea« of phenomenological reduction in Heidegger refers to the *ontological difference*. Marion tries to show that the ontological difference could be found even in several senses in Heidegger's *Being and Time*: 1. first there is the ontological difference between the entity (»Seiende«) and its Being (»Sein«). Though metaphysics often realized that there is no entity without Being, it skipped every time the special difference between the entity and Being, and it replaced again and again the entity's Being with a particular entity, such as God. 2. But there is a second, no less fundamental ontological difference in *Being and Time*: between being-there and being-present-at-hand, between the subjective, conscious being and mere things.³⁴ But, as mentioned above, according to Marion there is another type of phenomenological reduction at Heidegger: the reduction to Nothingness, in »What is Metaphysics?«

The lecture of »What is Metaphysics?« was especially important for Sartre for several reasons: for example, for its special attention on the problem of Nothingness (as we have already mentioned), and also for its special emphasis on human freedom. In this text, the special »nihilating« (»Nichtung«, »Néantisation«) power of Nothingness even appears. According to Heidegger, Nothingness is more funda-

30 Heidegger, GA 2: 38.

31 In his lectures on Leibniz: *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz* (1928), GA 26.

32 Tengelyi, op. cit.

33 Ibid.

34 Marion, op. cit., [english]: pp. 127–128.

mental and original than negation, and it is also an important motif for Sartre. The ground of every possible act of negating is original Nothingness. Being and Nothingness connected essentially together at Heidegger: Nothingness belongs to the structure of the entity.³⁵ The being-there, as a finite entity, is essentially immersed into Nothingness. It is an ephemeral being, so in all of its projections it exists in the presence of Nothingness. In Marion's interpretation the phenomenological reduction in this regard would unfold at Heidegger this original Nothingness, this originality of Nothingness.³⁶

The problem of phenomenological *reduction* as such appears at Heidegger in a positive, affirmative context only in his lectures on *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (1928),³⁷ (which was of course unknown to Sartre). Even in this text Heidegger explicitly juxtaposed his conception of reduction with Husserl's.³⁸ The Husserlian reduction would lead the philosophical attention to the noetic-noematic structures of transcendental consciousness, whereas his reduction would lead back our attention to the ontological difference between entity and Being. What is more: the phenomenological reduction is only one step of the phenomenological method, and not even the most important one. The second methodological step is the *construction*: the entity's projection onto its Being, in regard of its possibilities. The third fundamental step of Heidegger's phenomenological method in this step is the *destruction* («Abbau»): the positive, affirmative appropriation of the metaphysical tradition; which appropriation would destroy the layers of metaphysics that conceal the original phenomenon of Being itself.³⁹

In the late Heidegger the direction of approach has changed. Heidegger, in his late period, tried to conceive the event of Being without the entity.⁴⁰ It is not the being-there who projects the Being, rather the event of Being which draws the being-there close to it.⁴¹ The being-there stands in the heart of the flow of Being. The man is completely passive in regard of this event. With these changes of emphasis Heidegger fulfils his own «Anti-Copernican turn».

35 Marion, op. cit., p. 74.

36 Ibid.

37 Heidegger, GA 24.

38 GA 24: 26–32.

39 It is important to add, that in Husserl the moment of destruction («Abbau») was also an important motif in several

key-texts. See: Moran, op. cit., p. 196.

40 E.g. *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*, GA 65, «Zeit und Sein», in: GA 14, pp. 3–30.

41 Moran, op. cit., p. 199.

Though Heidegger and Husserl had many points in common, perhaps the gravest difference between them was the question of language. Even in his latest period,⁴² language, as system of signs, remained in a way instrumental for Husserl. For Heidegger, however, language was first of all the living speech of everyday life, thus a mode of being, the way in which being-there lives. »Language is the house of Being« as Heidegger wrote in his »Letter on Humanism«. ⁴³ Through language Being itself calls us, in language it is Being itself who speaks through us.⁴⁴ The event of Being takes place from the very beginning in a linguistically articulated field. This event is a linguistic happening.

The French phenomenological tradition regarded Heidegger's conception of language to be too intellectualist. According to those philosophers (such as Sartre and Merleau-Ponty), the language of Heidegger was a texture of sense; something too intellectual. In Sartre and Merleau-Ponty language appeared on a much lower level than speech and poetry: at the level of *body*. According to them, the body by its very essence is an expression, the body is language. Every bodily movement is expressive, is something linguistic. The emphasis of the body's role in language refers to the main criticism the French tradition against Heidegger: according to them corporeality was almost entirely missing at Heidegger.⁴⁵ In *Being and Time*, perhaps, Heidegger was afraid of the possible danger of biologizing his existential phenomenology, but in his later works, such as the *Zollikon Seminars* (1959–1967),⁴⁶ he treats the problem of body (»Leib«) in detail as a fundamental existential feature of being-there.

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4. Third phase: the Sartrean reduction to the incarnated subjectivity

In the end of the first two parts of this essay, we emphasized moments in Husserl and Heidegger which point beyond the »Copernican paradigm« (so beyond transcendentalism, according to which every event in life-history could be reduced to the meaning-bestowing or constituting activity of subjectivity). Sartre, as we could see, didn't have the opportunity to read those works of these thinkers, in which the most important confrontations with the limits of this paradigm took place. Sartre himself, at least in his so-called phenomenological period remained within the frames of Copernican-paradigm. Only in writings of his »Marxist« pe-

42 See e.g. BI 5 1, »Transzendente Sprache«.

43 »Brief über den Humanismus«, in: GA 9.

44 See: *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, GA 12.

45 We could find this criticism at both Sartre (*L'Être et le Néant*), Merleau-Ponty (*Phénoménologie de la perception*, *Le*

visible et l'invisible) and Lévinas (*Totalité et l'infini*).

46 GA 89.

riod (first of all in his *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, 1960) appeared fundamental cracks in the Copernican paradigm. (In my opinion, as I already emphasized, this period was deeply characterized by phenomenology still).

In this third, main part of the essay we will continue to emphasize the anti-Copernican tendencies in the operation of phenomenological reduction. In Sartre's main phenomenological work, in *Being and Nothingness*, these tendencies couldn't »break through« in their real power; though already in this book there appear descriptions of utmost importance that work against the limits of the transcendental paradigm. Such topics were at Sartre the problem of body and of the Other. In following these descriptions, we shall observe *how* the essential movement of phenomenological reduction transcends the limits of transcendental philosophy, and *how* does it preserve the essence of transcendentalism at the very same time: the motif of apriori.

Sartre's encounter with phenomenology

Sartre met the phenomenology in 1932 through his friend Raymond Aron, who studied in Berlin, and there got acquainted with Husserl's philosophy. In Sartre's time in French the prevailing streams were idealism, represented for Sartre by his teacher Léon Brunschvicg, and realism. For Sartre, both idealism and realism were too abstract; according to him idealism cannot secure the dignity and independence of concrete things, out in the world, whereas realism cannot secure the dignity and independence of human subjectivity and freedom.

Sartre got really excited when he got to know that there was a philosophy which treated concrete things. He felt he had found the proper means to get beyond the fruitless opposition of realism and idealism; he had found a philosophy with which he could deal with the things themselves, and thus could save both the independence of things and of consciousness. Because he wanted to secure the independence of these two, he saw the most important moment of phenomenology in the idea of *correlation*: the correlation of consciousness and its object at Husserl, and the correlation of man and world at Heidegger.

Sartre spent one year in the French Institute of Berlin, between 1933 and 1934, where he read through the main documents of phenomenological philosophy available to him at that time. Sartre had his own philosophical ideas at the time when he was studying phenomenology in Germany, which he articulated during his studies in École Normale Supérieure; and he received phenomenology alrea-

dy through the lenses of these ideas.⁴⁷ He was especially sensitive to the thought of *contingence* in phenomenology that could be found both at Husserl and at Heidegger. This thought of contingency was present at Husserl in the factual nature of cogito and of existence,⁴⁸ and in the phenomenological hermeneutics of factual existence at Heidegger.

An important question is this: to what extent did Sartre accommodate the German phenomenology to his own philosophical vision, to what extent did he transform it and to what extent did he keep the original form and intentions of phenomenology? According to Gregory McCulloch, Sartre wanted to create a phenomenological ontology which would describe the special way of Being of the entities; in quite a similar manner to Heidegger's phenomenology.⁴⁹ On the contrary Dermot Moran argues that Sartre wanted first and foremost to provide metaphysics in the original, traditional sense of the term;⁵⁰ for which he found apt means in phenomenological philosophy; and which could be rather called a Cartesian metaphysics. »Sartre is a Cartesian at heart,« he said.⁵¹ The phenomenological descriptions fitted obediently into Sartre's own metaphysical vision.

I think Moran is principally right at certain essential points. The phenomenology of Sartre was deeply determined by his own metaphysical presuppositions. Perhaps the most important one of these presuppositions was conceiving the human being as pure activity, as pure freedom, without any transition or gradation. Man could be just entirely free or entirely thing-like, as Sartre thought it. (It was the great merit of both Lévinas and Merleau-Ponty that they could show the passive moments of human existence.) But, on the other hand, I think the relationship between metaphysics and phenomenology is just the opposite as how Moran conceives it. In Sartre, phenomenology transformed metaphysics to its own nature to a much a greater extent than metaphysics altered phenomenology; in other words, Sartre's philosophy was much more a phenomenological metaphysics than a metaphysical phenomenology. This means that Sartre's phenomenological insights determined at fundamental point the essential, overall character of his metaphysics and ontology. He had very subtle and sensitive phenomenological

47 See: Moran, op.cit., pp. 364–367.

48 Hua III/1: 69.

49 McCulloch, *Using Sartre. An Analytical Introduction to Early Sartrean Themes*, Routledge, London 1994, p. 3.

50 Moran, op.cit., pp. 358, 385: »*Being and Nothingness* is more accurately understood as offering a purely speculative metaphysics of a very traditional kind, the very kind repudiated by Husserl, Heidegger, and the phenomenological tradition generally. Thus, Sartre presents an ontological proof of the world at the beginning of the book. It begins from the assumption of intentionality: that all consciousness is consciousness of something.«

51 Ibid. p. 358.

insights and descriptions which did not merely float separately alongside his philosophy, but rather determined the ground-nature of the whole of his thoughts. Sartre's accounts on glance («le regard») and desire determined the whole frame of his philosophy, and made his own metaphysics something entirely different from traditional metaphysics.

Sartre's philosophical development until Being and Nothingness

Sartre made his first drafts of *The Transcendence of the Ego* (*La transcendance de l'Ego*, 1936) during his stay in Berlin in 1933–1934. Already in his first phenomenological study there appear some fundamental topics of the author's later, systematically elaborated existential philosophy, presented in *Being and Nothingness* (1943). The three main topics that appeared already in *The transcendence of the Ego* and run through his whole life-work: *Nothingness* as fundamental feature of human existence, *contingency* and *freedom*.

In *The Transcendence of the Ego* Sartre principally accepts the phenomenological reduction to the transcendental consciousness. According to him, the conception of transcendental consciousness shows the essential feature of human existence. The transcendental consciousness is fundamentally different than the empirical consciousness, which is the object of empirical psychology. Transcendental consciousness is a pure, clear, *transparent* field; a continuous flow that always transcends both itself and the world; this consciousness is *nothing* in regard to the solid reality of the things and of the world.

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The transcendental consciousness is transcendent to the world and transcendent to itself. It is intentionality: it aims its object; it is directed toward its object which is beyond it; it is pure «aiming». But Sartre criticizes vehemently the Husserlian conception of «transcendental ego». There is a psychological or psychophysiological ego; why do we need a transcendental ego behind consciousness? Such doubling of the ego is completely needless and useless, moreover: it endangers all fruits and results of transcendental phenomenology. This transcendental ego would stiffen or crystallize the otherwise clear and fluent transcendental field of consciousness. One must abandon this conception: the ego is an inhabitant of the world;⁵² it is an object for consciousness, like every other object in the world. The ego is beyond consciousness; it is the objective mode I appear in the world. It could be treated in different ways: the «I» («je») is the centre of acts, the «me»

52 Sartre, *La transcendance de l'Ego. Esquisse d'une description phénoménologique*, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, Paris 1966, p. 13: «L'Ego n'est ni formellement ni matériellement dans la conscience: il est dehors, dans le monde; c'est un être du monde, comme l'Ego d'autrui».

(»moi«) is a focus for states and qualities; but either way it is an observable thing out there in the world and cannot be found in consciousness at all.

The empirical consciousness, being the object of empirical psychology, can yield valuable information about the factual content of our empirical, observable being in the world; but cannot treat our peculiar, first-person perspective experience of the world. The traditional psychology reifies this experience. Sartre tries to show that in his *Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions* (*Esquisse d'une théorie des émotions*, 1939). In this writing (that was originally meant to be a part of major treatise of phenomenological psychology) Sartre wanted to describe the emotions as the particular modes of existence, of possible ways we could live in the world.

The emotions are certain modes in which we could live and experience the world: they are modes of the *relationship* between man and the world. Emotions, in Sartre's interpretations, are magical relationships towards the world; which transform the rational-instrumental relations of the world, unfolded from an objective point of view, into symbolic-magical relations. It is an *intentional* relationship: it aims the world and its objects in a peculiar way. When I feel joy because I am going to meet someone I love, the joy draws the beloved person near to me; the joy about the beloved person makes her present. The emotion transcends the actual state of the world, towards a state that is not actually present. In this sense the emotion is a nihilating force of human reality.

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Sartre considered the discovery of intentionality to be the greatest merit of Husserlian philosophy, as he told it in a short, four-page long essay, (»Une idée fondamentale de la phénoménologie de Husserl: l'intentionnalité«, 1939). Consciousness is completely empty: without the object to which it aims, it is really nothing. The peculiar being of consciousness consists in this aiming; strictly speaking this being is a non-being. Consciousness is alien to the world: everything that it is conscious of is outside in the world: houses, books, tables, other people, even the self or the ego itself. But Sartre also changed the Husserlian concept of intentionality in a fundamental way: it is *desire*: a desire of a being which it is not.

The phenomenon of imagination was always very important for Sartre. Imagination, for him, was an essential manifestation of freedom; a manifestation of the fundamental nihilating power of man. Sartre wrote two major studies on the phenomenology of imagination, (*L'Imagination*, 1936, *L'Imaginaire*, 1940). Sartre criticized the traditional psychological accounts of imagination, according to which imagination produces picture-like representations in the consciousness, which represent things in the world. He was hostile against these representation-

alist theories of imagination. In Sartre's interpretation, imagination is rather a principal, irreducible type of relationship towards objects. In imagination, I relate to objects in a completely new way than in perception or in recollection. Imagination is projection; it is a projective relationship to objects that are not actually present, or to a non-actual state of world. Our imagination allows us to lie, to make plans, to change the world and to change ourselves. It is a constitutional feature of human reality; without imagination there is no freedom.

Being and Nothingness and the reduction to the incarnation of subjectivity

In these writings, Sartre elaborated the details of his more important ideas concerning the phenomenological metaphysics (we should use this term in this context) of human reality, or of »being-for-itself«. Consciousness is man's relationship to the world; but man is essentially a bodily being; thus consciousness is from the beginning a bodily consciousness. The problem of the body was present in Sartre's analyses of emotion, of imagination and of intentionality in general. For him, intentionality is desire: that is to say, something essentially corporeal; (and the body is present in our emotional behaviours too, in our fancies and imaginations).

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Consciousness, as a transcendental field, is completely empty: with regard to its object it is a non-being, a *nothing*. As treated by empirical psychology, consciousness is an observable set of potential behaviours; empirical consciousness is not transcendental consciousness; which is all the time ours, in the first-person perspective. But this transcendental consciousness in the first-person perspective is our body's relating to the world. Transcendental consciousness is essentially an *incarnation*. One needs a special phenomenological reduction, or a special mode of phenomenological vision, to make this incarnation thematic. Sartre performs and brings through this phenomenological reduction in his phenomenological main work, in *Being and Nothingness*, (*L'Être et le Néant*, 1943).

Apparently in this book Sartre's emphasis is on Heidegger's philosophy. In this time he is unsatisfied with his earlier phenomenological works, which he considered to be too Husserlian, including his novel, *Nausea*. »My novel is clearly Husserlian, which I find rather distressing considering that I am now a partisan of Heidegger,« he wrote in a letter about this work, on 23 April 1940.⁵³ In this period Sartre accepted Heidegger's view, according to which the moods or states of mind (»Befindlichkeit«) could unfold (»découvrir« or »dévoiler«) Being as such. But it is important to emphasize that Sartre also criticized Heidegger at certain

53 Moran, op. cit., p. 370.

fundamental points, and in certain respects his philosophy was more Husserlian than Heideggerian. The most important matter we should mention at this point is that Sartre elaborated a philosophy of consciousness in this work; and he gave a severe criticism of Heidegger for dismissing the concept of consciousness.

Moran claims that Sartre rejected the whole of Husserl's concrete methodological apparatus of reductions, and even doubted the possibility of performing a phenomenological reduction in particular. He writes:⁵⁴

Sartre brought his own particular and original focus to bear on Husserl's phenomenology, rejecting much of Husserl's methodological apparatus, including the *epoché*, the reduction, Husserl's account of the *noema* and the intentional object, and his account of the appearance of the ego in consciousness. Sartre claims that all reduction is imperfect, that it is impossible to carry out a complete reduction, because we can never simply return to objects as they are given to consciousness, as the object will always escape the grasp of the *pour-soi*. In fact, Sartre rejects just about the whole of Husserl and yet continues to regard himself – at least until 1940 – as a Husserlian.

But this is only one side of the story. Sartre also emphasizes our capacity to *try* to perform the phenomenological reduction; as the capacity of consciousness to withdraw from the world, the capacity to bracket the existence of things, the capacity to *doubt*. In *Being and Nothingness* he uses the operation of *eidetic reduction*; he accepts the capacity of eidetic intuition, the capacity to intuit essences as such.⁵⁵ And, first and foremost, in Sartre's philosophy one could clearly show the presence of the »operative idea« of phenomenological reduction understood in the sense of Marion. Sartre wanted to make the human reality as »detotalized-(detotalizing)-totality« the theme of phenomenological vision; he wanted to reduce our naïve understanding of human reality to the phenomenon of incarnated subjectivity. Sartre could only perform this achievement by practicing phenomenological reduction in his own way.

Reduction to Being-for-itself

The Husserlian reduction reduces the objects to the phenomena. The object appears in a series of apparitions or phenomena. The object relates to a consciousness; the apparition of an object is always an apparition for a consciousness. Consciousness, on the other hand, is always the consciousness of an object, it is always conscious of something. Consciousness is intentionality. The question, in this context, is whether the Being of the phenomenon is confined to its related-

54 Ibid. p. 359.

55 Ibid. pp. 385–386.

ness to a consciousness; and, on the contrary, whether the Being of consciousness is confined to the intentional act. Sartre answers »no« to both questions: 1. if the Being of the phenomenon is purely phenomenal, that is to say: entirely dependent from a consciousness, then the consciousness would create its object; it would be a plain *idealism* in the manner of *Berkeley*. It is the conception of »esse est percipi«. Sartre attributes this conception to the transcendental philosophy of Husserl. According to Sartre Husserl is a *phenomenalist*, rather than a phenomenologist. 2. If, on the other hand, the Being of the consciousness falls entirely into its object, that is to say: if it is nothing else than a directedness to the object, then the object would absorb the consciousness, and we would fall prey for an absurd realism. This realism would abolish the consciousness, the cognition, and with this the question itself.

So, Sartre claims, the Being of phenomenon cannot be reduced to its »percipi«, to its experiencing, and the Being of consciousness transcends the object and the phenomenon all the time. The two poles are in strong interrelation, they are in unbreakable correlation, but they have their relative independence. The Being of the both is »transphenomenal«, (»transphénoménal«). There is difference between the phenomenon of the Being and the Being of the phenomena. According to Sartre, in accordance with Heidegger, there are special moods or states of mind that unfold the pure phenomenon of Being, such as deep boredom or anxiety.

Consequently Sartre thinks another, second reduction to be necessary: after the Husserlian reduction of the object to the series of its apparitions, one should perform the Heideggerian reduction to the ontological difference. One should emphasize the difference between the entity, the object and its Being. Sartre feels the ontological necessary to secure the mutual, relative independence of these two regions of Being: consciousness and the Being it aims.

Consciousness is a consciousness of a thing; consequently it is not a thing; it is by its very essence a no-thing or a no-thingness: it is nothing or nothingness. Hence, we get the other protagonist of the book: Nothing. Being is the being-in-itself. Sartre characterizes it with three fundamental features: the being-in-itself is itself, it is compact and it *is*. Sartre characterizes the being-for-itself, the consciousness, with the opposites of these features: the being-for-itself is not itself, it is completely transparent and finally it is, what it is not, and is not, what it is; (»qu'il n'est pas ce qu'il est et qu'il est ce qu'il n'est pas«). The consciousness or the being-for-itself is always beyond itself and is always beyond its object.

Consciousness as the consciousness of Being is underivable or undeducible. Consciousness is first and foremost unreflected: it is the thematic consciousness of its object, and the non-thematic consciousness of itself. One cannot imagine a consciousness that would not be conscious of itself in a non-thematic way. That is to say, I cannot be happy without knowing implicitly that I am happy. An unconscious happiness or sadness, according to Sartre, is *contradictio in adjecto*; so is a consciousness that is not conscious of itself in an implicit way. The consciousness does not have an essence, it cannot be derived from any essences or realities different from itself; things only have essence by consciousness. It is the meaning of the thesis: with regard to man, existence precedes the essence. Man is always beyond his essence; namely he is beyond his appearance in the world and his appearance for other people, because he is principally *free*.

This freedom coincides with the whole sphere of consciousness. Consciousness is essentially free in every moment. By its freedom it is able to objectify itself as ego in the world; this objectification, this ego is its essence; but consciousness is a continual parting from its mundane objectification, from its essence: the ego, the essence of consciousness belongs to the *past*. Thus Sartre cites Hegel's definition of essence affirmatively: »Wesen ist was gewesen ist«, (»Essence is what has been«). There is a special mood that unfolds the original freedom of man: *anxiety*. Sartre, following Heidegger and Kierkegaard, differentiates emphatically between fear and anxiety. Fear is fear of something fearsome in the world; fear has a concrete object. But anxiety is anxious about freedom itself, about the existence of being-for-itself. The soldier could fear the enemy; but he could only be anxious about his future behaviour in the battle. It is an anxiety about the *future*. But an anxiety about the *past* illuminates the peculiar »nature« of being-for-itself even more. Sartre cites Dostoyevsky's short story »The Gambler« as an example.

The gambler made the promise that he wouldn't play anymore. But when he is at the roulette table he must face the complete inefficacy of his onetime oath. The one who made the oath is a different person who now stands at the roulette table, and has to decide whether to keep his promise or to break it. He is completely alone with his decision; he could recall the situation of his oath; the pain of his family, the danger of the bankruptcy; but he has to decide alone whether to play or not to play. The decision made in the past is completely ineffective now. I have to renew my identity with my past self. I am identical with my past in such a peculiar way that I am *not* identical with my past; and I am my future in such a way that I am *not* my future. Man is a *diasporic* being; he is dissolved in time. Despite the similarities, Sartre is critical with Heidegger's account of the temporality of being-there. The fundamental temporal dimension of being-for-itself, in Sartre's

interpretation, is not the future, but the present: because it is alone my decision. The present is the moment for the taking-off towards the future.

The intercorporeal Being of Being-for-itself. Being-for-Other.

Consciousness is a bodily consciousness, an incarnated subjectivity. This would be the Sartrean reduction: to reduce our natural, empirical (either everyday or positive-scientific) understanding of human reality to the incarnated subjectivity, as the being-for-itself, which is, according to Sartre, a detotalized-(detotalizing-) totality. The problem of body is treated in detail in the third part of the book, in the »For-the-other« (»Le pour-autrui«), for the very reason because the body, in Sartre's view, from the very beginning is an intercorporeal entity. I could know my own body through the other. My own body, in the first person perspective, is the way of my existence. Legs are not things in the world: legs are walking and dancing. My hands are not things in the world either: they are writing and grasping. They are not instruments of a certain sort either: they are inseparably one with my actions, with my existence.

The body is the form that is necessarily taken by my facticity. It is a centre of my world, the instruments and the things are ordered around this centre. I can take a point of view about the instruments that I found in my world. I can change my point of view of things. The body is the entity from which I cannot take an outer point of view. I am placed radically in a perspective which is my body. The body serves as the anonymous background of my existence. If I perceive my body as a thing in the world, (perhaps through a mirror or in an X-ray machine), I objectify it; it ceases to be my own body, it is a thing in the medium of the world, amongst other things. My own body is unobjectifiable, it is the factual existence of being-for-itself.

According to Sartre my body is my being-for-the-other (»l'être-pour-autrui«); it is the way I am given to the Other, my apparition for Her. But how could I be certain in the being of the Other, when I could only experience bodies in the world? How could I be certain that the living bodies I see in the world are conscious bodies?

One of the greatest problems of philosophy is the problem of *solipsism*: that only my existence is certain. How could I prove the existence of the other person? According to Sartre I have to find the Other in the core of my existence. The other person's existence cannot be a simple probability, it must be as certain as my very existence as *cogito*. I do not constitute the other: I meet Her, as Sartre says. When the Other looks at me, I feel myself being objectified. When I am being-looked

I am an object for the Other. One mood or state of mind that discloses or unfolds my original being-looked-at is *shame*. Shame is an intentional act: I shame *myself* or I feel ashamed of myself in the presence of an Other. Shame is the acknowledgement of the Other. This mood shows apodictically the existence of an Other. I can be empirically or factually wrong, thinking there is somebody near to me, when I am actually alone, but these deceptions or frustrations are only proofs that I am being-looked-at from the very beginning. My existence is intertwined with the Other.

The secret protagonist of the Book, (in my opinion) is the Other. (Similarly, the secret protagonist of his novel *Nausea*, in my view, is Anny. In my interpretation Antoine Roquentin's life is a waiting for Anny). The being-for-itself is essentially a being-for-other. The relationship of being-for-itself and being-in-itself is articulated by the Other. The being-for-itself was born from the Other, in the factual, metaphysical and ontological sense of the word. It lives with and from the Other; and in death the being-for-itself will return into the Other. In death it donates its existence for the others; after death only the Other could decide about the meaning of my existence; only She could tell who I was.

The being-for-itself is desire. The desire par excellence desires the Other. (The being-for-itself fuels its factual existence from the being-in-itself, in eating, drinking and breathing; it desires the elements that feed it, but the desire gets its eminent manifestation in regard of the Other. It will be an important thought for Lévinas). The interpretation of intentionality (consciousness) as desire indicates in advance its essentially corporeal nature. According to Sartre, my relationships with the Other are fundamentally determined by the phenomenon of desire.

For Sartre, Heidegger's account of the problem of the Other is the most sympathetic one. He is unhappy with Husserl's interpretation of intersubjectivity, because it treats the Other on the level of cognition. He is also critical with Hegel's view, who considered the Other as the condition of possibility of self-consciousness (there is no self-consciousness without an Other), but Hegel took the position of the Absolute, which is impossible for Sartre. For in Hegel, Sartre thinks, there did not exist the »scandal of the plurality of consciousnesses«, because he placed every consciousness into the Absolute. But no one could bridge the gap between consciousness and consciousness. Heidegger considered my relation to the Other as a being-relation, as an existential relationship. But for Heidegger the other, just like me, was one of an anonymous mass, he was the One, (»das Man«, »l'on« in Sartre). The being-with, in Heidegger, was an inauthentic relationship. Therefore, as Sartre thinks, Heidegger could not make understandable any *concrete* relationship with the Other.

The Other is all the time a concrete other. She is a subject: if I treat or try to treat her as an object it is an inauthentic mode of behavior, it is a manifestation of the »bad faith« (»mauvaise fois«): when I try to objectify the Other, I am simply fleeing before her. Because, in this way, the Other could be treated either as a subject or as an object, the relationship with her is principally conflictual. If I treat her as a subject, I acknowledge her, she doesn't need me, so she could easily neglect me. If I make her an object, trying to reify or objectify her, I am simply fleeing before her original subject-being. I try to ground my contingent being with the help of the Other, but I cannot penetrate her subjectivity as subjectivity (such a fusion would destroy the otherness of the Other), so the attempt to ground my existence through the Other is necessarily doomed to failure.

The metaphysics of contingency

Sartre accepts the Husserlian reduction to the transcendental consciousness, though he is critical with the operation of phenomenological reduction as bracketing the world. According to Sartre this transcendental consciousness is conscious of what it is not: it is conscious of the Being and of the world. He also accepts Heidegger's reduction to the ontological difference, the reduction to the event of Being (and the Being as such at Heidegger fundamentally possesses the character of an event, already in *Being and Time*); though he is strongly critical of Heidegger also: he thinks that Heidegger's fundamental mistake was believing it possible to neglect the concept of consciousness or cogito. According to Sartre it is unavoidable to use the notion of consciousness in order to provide a coherent account of human existence. According to him, even Heidegger presupposed this notion in an implicit way.

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Sartre was also critical of Heidegger's peculiar intellectualism. In Heidegger's interpretation, things around us are first of all tools and instruments. They are disclosed as things only from a theoretical attitude. We are surrounded by tools, and, ontologically considered, their thingness is derivative. Sartre thinks that this view neglects the solid materiality of things: the instrumental function of things and their thingness is equally original. Heidegger, in Sartre's opinion, neglects the »malignancy coefficient« (»coefficient d'aversité«) of things. This aspect of things is not something derivative, a result of a change (»Umstellung«) to a theoretical attitude; this malignant aspect of things (that if I am not careful enough I can burn my hand with the cooker, or hit my head to the doorpost, etc.) is an essential and original part of our everyday relationships with things.

Sartre's main point of criticism against Husserl is the problem of the transcendental ego. In Sartre's interpretation, the ego would break the transparency of

consciousness and would lead to an unavoidable solipsism. He elaborated a non-egological phenomenology. Transcendental consciousness, for Sartre, is clear, translucent and diasporic («it is what it is not, and is not, what it is»), but not bodiless. Consciousness has a body as a necessary moment of its structure of existence. Consciousness could only exist in a bodily or corporeal way. I can only get to know or discover the corporeal aspect of my existence through the Other. Consciousness is intersubjective, it possesses an apodictic cogito towards the Other; consciousness is corporeal, and as corporeal it is intercorporeal at the very same time. Consciousness is a body for the Other. The body, from the very beginning, is an *expression* for the Other. Sartre anchors even the language and linguisticity on the level of corporeality.

Thus the human reality is an incarnated, intercorporeal event. In Sartre's interpretation, freedom is unbreakably bounded with facticity and situation. Freedom could only manifest itself in a situation, in a factual manner. Without situation there is no freedom. Freedom needs resistance, on which it could be effective. Freedom, on the other hand, could only be operative in a certain factual manner. I have my body, my family, my homeland, my mother language: these all belong to my past, to my facticity. The project of human existence takes place in the playground of facticity and freedom. The projection of existence *is* the play of these two.

Sartre kept the original ontological motifs of phenomenology: he tried to unfold the apriori moments of human existence. He tried to provide a metaphysics of contingency. Sometime, at certain points, he was extremely sensitive in his interpretations. That was the case in his »metaphysics of necessary facts« («nécessité de fait», Sartre, 21), where he ingeniously foresees the later philosophical development of Husserl. (Husserl, in his late period, tried to elaborate a metaphysics of »absolute facts«, »Urfakta«.⁵⁶ Such »absolute facts« were at him the corporeal nature of consciousness, intersubjectivity, historicity, etc. The earliest signs of this metaphysics of absolute facts appeared in the first book of *Ideas*. There he had a short remark about the factual nature of cogito: »the cogito as a fact is necessary«,⁵⁷ he said. Sartre resonated sensitively to this remark). Sartre wanted to provide an apriori discipline that unfolds these necessary facts concerning the human reality. That's what he thought with the name »metaphysics of contingency«.

56 In: Hua XIV, Hua XV.

57 Hua III/1: 98: »Offenbar ist die Seinsnotwendigkeit des jeweiligen aktuellen Erlebnisses darum doch keine pure Wesensnotwendigkeit, d.i. keine rein eidetische Besonderung eines Wesensgesetzes es ist die Notwendigkeit eines Faktums, die so heißt, weil ein Wesensgesetz am Faktum, und zwar hier an seinem Dasein als solchem, beteiligt ist.«

Another important point is Sartre's account of cognition. It is the other point where Sartre got really close to the very late Husserl. According to Sartre, cognition is a view or perspective to the Absolute, but from peculiar, factual situation. In cognition, we perceive or disclose the Absolute itself, but this perceiving or disclosing is determined by our facticity; it is determined by our historical, social and even bodily situation. Nevertheless, cognition is grounded in the absolute apodicticity of the cogito – in Sartre, as well as in Husserl. This perspective, which is determined by our facticity, is necessary; so if we gain knowledge in a certain perspective, this knowledge is absolutely self-evident.

5. Conclusion

The phenomenological reduction as a philosophical operation, one could claim in accordance with Marion, has its own peculiar dynamism. One could observe this dynamism in the history of phenomenological movement, or at least at certain main authors, as Marion did, but even in the life-work and unpublished manuscripts of Husserl himself. In the unpublished notes of Husserl, one could find topics and themes that were treated in a detailed fashion in later authors of the phenomenological movement also.

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When one follows this peculiar dynamism of the phenomenological reduction, one is able to penetrate deeper and deeper into the realm of phenomena. Above we spoke about the three major phases of phenomenological reduction that appeared at three different authors. Husserl focused on the constituting activity of consciousness. Heidegger on the event of Being. The reduction by Heidegger to the event of Being (if we are allowed to speak like that, following Marion) led the late Heidegger to the emphasis of our passivity in regard of this event (»Ereignis«). Sartre accepted both the reduction to the transcendental consciousness and the hermeneutics of factual existence (and the ontological difference), but he added to all of this his emphasis on the corporeal (and intercorporeal) nature of human existence.

Sartre made obvious that one could not avoid the notion of consciousness in a consequent account of human existence, but this consciousness is, from the very beginning, an incarnation; the human reality is incarnated (inter)subjectivity. This incarnated (inter)subjectivity is a diasporic (non-)being that is always beyond itself, (»it is what it is not, and is not, what it is«); it is a detotalized-(detotalizing-)totality. It is a totality, because it is one with its world and its factual situation, but it is detotalizing (and already detotalized) because it always transcends its facticity and situation, it annihilates the totality into which it is

embedded. Sartre wanted to reduce our naïve understanding of human being to this notion of human existence. It was his own phenomenological reduction.

From the Sartrian reduction to the incarnated (inter)subjectivity (or to the diasporic human reality) followed other reductions. A reduction to passivity was implicit in Sartre's phenomenology (though the phenomenon of passivity appeared more emphatically in the second main work, in *The Critique of Dialectical Reason*), but Sartre in *Being and Nothingness* wanted to treat human reality completely in terms of freedom. For him, in this period, human existence was pure activity. Though he suppressed the passive aspects of human reality, at certain points these aspects nevertheless came to the fore, against Sartre's own intentions. Sartre was forced by the compulsion of the phenomena. These points were the problem of emotions, the body and first of all the Other. Sartre's analyses of these problems were of fundamental importance for the further course of French phenomenology.

From Sartre's analyses of human existence followed the phenomenological ontologies of passivity in French phenomenology. Lévinas emphasized the role of the Other. In Lévinas, the own subjectivity, as a subjectivity in regard of the Other, was »a passivity even more passive than any passivity« (»une passivité plus passive que toute passivité«).⁵⁸ Merleau-Ponty, on the other hand, focused on the passive moments of human reality, with respect to its bodily nature; (both in the *Phenomenology of Perception* and his later, posthumous work, in the fragmentary *The Visible and the Invisible*). Merleau-Ponty conceived the human existence as a play of activity and passivity. In his late "ontology of genesis" he even made the attempt to explain the origin of this opposition. But the ground-breaker figure for these later achievements of French phenomenology was first and foremost Sartre.

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Abbreviations

Hua = Husserliana – Edmund Husserl *Gesammelte Werke*.

BW = Edmund Husserl *Briefwechsel*.

GA = Martin Heidegger *Gesamtausgabe*, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main.

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⁵⁸ Emmanuel Lévinas, *Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence*, Kluwer Academic – Martinus Nijhoff, Haag 1978, p. 30.

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