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IN MEMORIAM
ISTVÁN M. FEHÉR
(1950-2021)

On 17 June 2021, after a long illness born with patience and a persistent work ethic, István M. Fehér, professor emeritus, Széchenyi Prize-winning professor of philosophy, full member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, passed away in Budapest.

István M. Fehér was born on 24 April 1950 in Budapest. He began his university studies in English and Italian in 1969, and later graduated in philosophy from the Eötvös Loránd University. In 1977 he was appointed assistant professor at the Department of History of Philosophy at the Eötvös Loránd University. He defended his doctoral thesis in 1979, his candidate thesis in 1985 and his academic doctoral thesis in 1990. In 1981 he was promoted to assistant professor, in 1987 to associate professor and in 1992 to professor. Between 1990-97 he was head of department. He has lectured in the fields of modern and contemporary history of philosophy and philosophical hermeneutics, and since 1992 he has been the developer and director of the Doctoral Programme in Hermeneutics at the Eötvös Loránd University. In parallel, between 1992-97 he was also a professor at the University of Miskolc, and from 1993 he was head of the History of Philosophy Department. In 1991 he taught at the József Attila University in Szeged, and between 1995-97 he was professor at the Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Piliscsaba. While retaining his position as a historian of philosophy at the Eötvös Loránd University, he was also professor of the history of ideas at the Andrásy Gyula German Speaking University in Budapest, from its foundation in 2002 until his retirement. Between 1997-2000, he was awarded a Széchenyi Professor Fellowship. He has made extended research trips and held guest lectures at universities in Italy (1983-84), Germany (1987-88), and at the University of Virginia in the United States in 1992-93. He was a Humboldt fellow at the Ruhr University in Bochum and visiting professor at the Humboldt University in Berlin in 1999.

In his research in modern and contemporary philosophy, István M. Fehér has been involved in an in-depth study of German idealism, phenomenology, existential philosophy, neo-Marxism and philosophical hermeneutics. His research areas have included the philosophy of Schelling and Hegel, Husserlian phenomenology, the

philosophical work of Martin Heidegger, György Lukács, Jean-Paul Sartre, Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics and the humanist and hermeneutical tradition associated with it, as well as 20th century German, French and Italian philosophy. His interest extended to the course and outcome of the philosophical debates that shaped the main schools of thought. He was receptive to interdisciplinary research, and was deeply involved in questions at the interface of philosophy and literary studies, and in the history of ideas. He was an internationally renowned researcher in his field, who maintained lively professional and friendly contacts with students of Heidegger and with representatives of philosophical hermeneutics clustered around the elder Gadamer. His research has led to the writing of several monographs, most notably his book on Martin Heidegger. He has also edited volumes of essays and conference proceedings, and has published numerous studies in Hungarian, German, English, French and Italian, along with his translations of Heidegger and Gadamer. He has presented his research at international philosophical conferences, universities and in academic societies.

István M. Fehér was a creative, innovative historian of philosophy, who did not stop at analysing, summarising and synthesising the philosophical achievements he studied, but found partners in great predecessors and contemporaries, and in the course of an intensive philosophical dialogue with them, he worked on developing his own philosophical approach, his novel insights and original ideas. His creative thinking has focused mainly on asserting the values of the humanist tradition as it emerges in the hermeneutic horizon, engaging in dialogue with contemporary experience, exploring the deeper connections between being and meaning, and illuminating the possibilities of meaning and hermeneutic benevolence. His attention was also focused on questions of philosophical scepticism and critique, the conditions for the cultivation of debate and dialogue, especially with regard to the possibilities offered by philosophical hermeneutics, while he was also able to show the limits of these possibilities as the "cross of hermeneutics". His professional conduct and his human attitude were characterised by impeccable preparation and competence, an unconditional respect for scientific values, openness, modesty and humility in his philosophical research and in his collegial relations. The volume of his work, its pioneering character for philosophical hermeneutics, and its inestimable value for the reception of the modern European philosophical tradition, is indicated by the publication of *Filozófia, történet, értelmezés. Hermeneutikai tanulmányok (2000-2020)* (Philosophy, History, Interpretation: Hermeneutic Studies) by L'Harmattan shortly before his death. It is a four-volume collection of the products of his work over the last two decades and a unique achievement in contemporary Hungarian philosophy.

As a teacher, researcher and the most prominent representative of philosophical hermeneutics in Central Europe, István M. Fehér was a *school-establishing* philosopher. His students who completed their doctorates under his guidance are now renowned representatives of Hungarian philosophy. Under the auspices of the ELTE and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Hermeneutical Research Group, which he founded and which brings together his direct students and colleagues, has enriched the Hungarian and international hermeneutical literature with new research results, textbooks and conference proceedings since 2012. Even more important was the cultivation of a fertile culture of philosophical debate, which also turned the cultivation of philosophy into a living practice among his disciples. On several occasions (2010, 2012, 2017), his students and colleagues have published joint volumes of studies in his honour.

István M. Fehér has also worked continuously as a scientific organiser. The highly successful international conferences he organised in Budapest (on Heidegger in 1989, on Gadamer in 2000, on Schelling in 2003 and 2014) were landmarks on the Central European philosophical scene. He was actively involved in professional societies and in the work of organisations governing scientific life. For a long time he was a member of the board of the Hungarian Philosophical Society, and between 1990-95 he was its secretary general. He was elected a member of the Board of the International Schelling Society in 1986, of the International Hermeneutical and Scientific Society in 1994, and the Honorary President of the Hungarian Daseinanalytical Association in 2004. He has served on the Scientific Committee of Philosophy and the Scientific Ethics Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and as a doctoral representative to of General Assembly of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He also co-chaired the Philosophy Committee of the National Provisional Accreditation Commission in Hungary. He has been involved in the editing of several journals. From 1982 to 1995 he was editor of the *Magyar Filozófiai Szemle* (Hungarian Philosophical Review), and participated in the editorial boards of several foreign journals (*Heidegger-Studien*, *Itinerari filosofici*, *Heidegger-Jahrbuch*). Since 2000 he has edited the series *A filozófia útjai* (The Paths of Philosophy) published by L'Harmattan.

István M. Fehér has won the highest professional awards for his rich scientific activity and extensive life's work. He was elected a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 2007 and a full member in 2013. In 2013, he was awarded the Széchenyi Prize for his internationally renowned achievements in the field of Heidegger studies and philosophical hermeneutics, as well as for his multifaceted teaching, research and scientific organizational activity.

A special mention must be made of István M. Fehér's professional and friendly relationship with the Babeş-Bolyai University, and in particular with the Hungarian section of the Philosophy Department. This relationship has been continuous and multifaceted from the second half of the 1990s until now. He has frequently served in doctoral committees as a subject matter expert and held numerous lectures and seminars for students and lecturers. For a longer period, he helped to maintain the Hungarian-language master's programme in hermeneutics as an annual guest lecturer. Here, he gave a series of semester-long lectures on the hermeneutical critique of the aesthetic and historical consciousness. He last visited Cluj in October 2016, when he was invited by the Centre for Applied Philosophy of the Babeş-Bolyai University to give lectures in Hungarian and English and share his professional and organizational experiences on the activities of the Hermeneutics Research Group of the Eötvös Loránd University. He has published several papers in the Central University Library's journal *Philobiblon* and in the Transylvanian Hungarian Philosophical Society's journal *Többllet*, in volumes edited in honour of professors of philosophy, and currently has a two-part, voluminous German-language paper in the Philosophy series of the *Studia* of the Babeş-Bolyai University.

With the death of István M. Fehér, a leading figure in Hungarian and international philosophical education and research, an irreplaceable expert and irreplaceable friend, has passed away. The void he left behind will be unfillable for a long time.

Károly VERESS

HERMENEUTISCHE ÜBERLEGUNGEN ZU HEIDEGGERS SCHWARZEN HEFTEN UND ZUM NEUDENKEN SEINES DENKWEGS II.*

ISTVÁN M. FEHÉR**

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

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

* Der erste Teil dieses Beitrags ist in der letzten Nummer der Zeitschrift (*Studia UBB. Philosophia*, 1/2021) erschienen.

** István M. Fehér was professor of Philosophy at ELTE University, Budapest and Andrásy German Speaking University, Budapest.

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

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

INHALT:

Erster Teil

- I. *Zeitfaktor und Aufgabenstellung*
- II. *Erklären und Verstehen oder wie einem philosophischen Denk- und Lebensweg methodisch (hermeneutisch) nachgegangen werden soll*
- III. *Zurück zum Thema Heidegger und der Antisemitismus – die Frage nach der Individualität*
- IV. *Vorurteile und der Umgang mit ihnen aus hermeneutischer Sicht*
- V. *Rückfälle und ihre philosophische Begründung*
- VI. *„Einmal Minister...“*

Zweiter Teil

- VII. *Mangelnde und gesteigerte Sensibilität – Heidegger und Hegel – Die Zweideutigkeit und die Schattenseiten der formalen Anzeige*
- VIII. *Lukács, Scheler und – der Teufel*
- IX. *Die Größe der großen seinsgeschichtlichen Abhandlungen*
- X. *Zum Neudenken des Denkwegs Heideggers*

VII. Mangelnde und gesteigerte Sensibilität – Heidegger und Hegel – Die Zweideutigkeit und die Schattenseiten der formalen Anzeige

Heideggers Verhalten zu den Juden hat man treffend mit der Bezeichnung „mangelnde Sensibilität“ oder „Mangel an Sensibilität“ charakterisiert.¹ Die Bezeichnung „Fabrikation von Leichen“ und dann ihre Gleichstellung mit „motorisierte[r] Ernährungsindustrie“² zeigt in der Tat als ungewöhnlicher Vergleich eine eigentümliche impassibilité.

Heidegger wäre freilich mit dieser Kritik kaum einverstanden gewesen. Er hätte darauf hingewiesen, daß Philosophie nicht Erbauung ist (ein Argument, das bereits Hegel geltend gemacht hat³), und seelische Zustände wie Sensibilität, Mitleid und im Allgemeinen Gefühle nicht in sie hineingehören. Es verhält sich damit so, wie mit den Charakterisierungen Optimismus und Pessimismus. Diese seien „kindische Kategorien“.⁴ In der Philosophie komme es also auf Sensibilität nicht an. Da an diesem Punkt sich in der Tat Parallelen zwischen Heidegger und Hegel zeigen, dürfte es vom Nutzen sein, hierauf kurz einzugehen.

Ein erster Hinweis soll an oben Gesagtes erinnern: Hegel bevorzugt von Anfang an – wie Kant und der Idealismus im Ganzen – den Standpunkt des Allgemeinen und nimmt ihn ein.⁵ Heidegger geht dagegen vom Standpunkt des Individuums, des je

¹ Siehe Holger Zaborowski, „Eine Frage von Irre und Schuld?“ *Martin Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus*. Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 2010, 611ff., 643. Hinzu kommt noch „weitgehende Ignoranz“ (nämlich Ignoranz „gegenüber dem Schicksal der Juden in Deutschland“), (ebd. 612). „Ignoranz“, wie ein anderer Autor erörtert, „meint nicht einfach naive Ahnungslosigkeit, kenntnisloses Unwissen, sondern eine mehr oder weniger bewusste Haltung der Wahrnehmungsverweigerung, des Wegschauens und Nichtwissenwollens“ (Reinhard Mehring, *Heideggers „große Politik“. Die semantische Revolution der Gesamtausgabe*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016, 176).

² GA 79, 27. Vgl. ebd., 56, wo sich der Ausdruck „Fabrikation von Leichen“ in einem etwas abweichenden Kontext wiederholt.

³ G.W.F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, Theorie Werkausgabe, Bd. 3, 16.

⁴ Vgl. GA 40, 41: „Der geistige Verfall der Erde ist so weit fortgeschritten, daß die Völker die letzte geistige Kraft zu drohen, die es ermöglicht, den [...] Verfall auch nur zu sehen und als solchen verlieren abzuschätzen. Diese einfache Feststellung hat nichts mit Kulturpessimismus zu tun, freilich auch nichts mit einem Optimismus; denn die Verdüsterung der Welt, die Flucht der Götter, die Zerstörung der Erde, die Vermassung des Menschen, der hassende Verdacht gegen alles Schöpferische und Freie hat auf der ganzen Erde bereits ein Ausmaß erreicht, daß so kindische Kategorien wie Pessimismus und Optimismus längst lächerlich geworden sind“ (Hervorhebung I.M.F.) Vgl. noch GA 95, 61, 240; GA 96, 53.

⁵ Siehe Anm. 29 im ersten Teil dieses Aufsatzes.

eigenen Daseins aus, weswegen ihm von hegelianisch-marxistischer Seite vielfach vorgeworfen wurde, Gebilde dessen, was bei Hegel den objektiven Geist ausmacht, nicht zu kennen. Angesichts dieses Ausgangspunktes scheint ein Mangel an Konsistenz zu bestehen, wenn Heidegger ein paar Jahre nach der Veröffentlichung von *Sein und Zeit* plötzlich und unvermittelt vom z.B. deutschen oder völkischen Dasein zu sprechen beginnt.⁶ Zur Zeit der Ausarbeitung der Seinsgeschichte ist ihm menschliche bzw. daseinsmäßige Freiheit bereits durchaus fraglich geworden. Die Überordnung oder der Vorrang des Seins (oder Seyns) gegenüber dem (individuellen) Dasein ist eine ausgemachte Sache. Der Mensch kommt vorwiegend nur noch in Betracht, wenn und indem er dem Anspruch des Seyns ent-spricht. Die zweite Denkperiode Heideggers könnte mithin kaum mehr unter den Titel „Phänomenologie der Freiheit“ gestellt werden,⁷ es sei denn, Freiheit, und zwar eine unbegrenzte oder abgründige, nunmehr dem Seyn zugeschrieben wird. An diesem Punkt lohnt es sich, auf Hegels Theorie der welthistorischen Individuen, die ja jeweils in Vertretung des Weltgeistes handeln, zurückzugreifen:

„Ein welthistorisches Individuum hat nicht die Nüchternheit, [...] viel Rücksichten zu nehmen, sondern es gehört ganz rücksichtslos dem *einen* Zwecke an. So ist es auch der Fall, daß sie andere große, ja heilige Interessen leichtsinnig behandeln, welches Benehmen sich freilich dem moralischen Tadel unterwirft. Aber solche große Gestalt muß manche unschuldige Blume zertreten, manches zertrümmern auf ihrem Wege.“⁸

Hegel formuliert etwas später noch klarer: „Das Partikuläre ist meistens zu gering gegen das Allgemeine, die Individuen werden aufgeopfert und preisgegeben“.⁹ Die Geschichte ist von dieser Perspektive her, „als diese Schlachtbank [zu] betrachten, auf welcher das Glück der Völker, die Weisheit der Staaten und die Tugend der Individuen

⁶ Heideggers Menschenbild wird dadurch radikal geändert; einer der Ersten, die darauf aufmerksam machten, war Karl Löwith, *Heidegger – Denker in dürftiger Zeit. Zur Stellung der Philosophie im 20. Jahrhundert*, in: Karl Löwith, *Sämtliche Schriften*, Bd 8, Stuttgart: Metzler, 1984, 124–234, hier 136, 146. („Während in *Sein und Zeit* das je eigene Dasein sich selbst übereignet und überantwortet war, wird nun das Menschenwesen dadurch bestimmt, daß es ein gehorsames »Hören« auf den Anspruch des Seins und zu diesem gehörig ist.“)

⁷ Verwiesen sei hier auf Günter Figals Buch *Martin Heidegger. Phänomenologie der Freiheit*, Frankfurt/Main 1988, 1991, Weinheim 2000, Tübingen 2013.

⁸ G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, Hegel, *Theorie Werkausgabe*, Bd. 12, 49.

⁹ G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, Hegel, *Theorie Werkausgabe*, Bd. 12, 49.

zum Opfer gebracht worden sind.“¹⁰ Eine moralische, auf das Individuum bezogene Beurteilung lehnt Hegel entschieden ab. „Das Recht des Weltgeistes geht über alle besonderen Berechtigungen“.¹¹

Die Seinsgeschichte ist auch bei Heidegger – welcher der individuumbezogenen, nur menschlichen Moral nicht weniger als Hegel ablehnend gegenübersteht – den Individuen übergeordnet und mit Katastrofen durchaus verträglich, ja operiert durch sie.¹² Daß „manche unschuldige Blume zertreten“ wird, ist für Heidegger nicht weniger als für Hegel tragbar. Für die Individuen, die ja „aufgeopfert und preisgegeben“ werden, zeigt also auch Hegel seinerseits einen erheblichen „Mangel an Sensibilität“. Heidegger wie Hegel könnten freilich diesen Einwand als Mißverständnis des Wesens und der Aufgabe der Philosophie zurückweisen. Diese Erwiderung könnte man wiederum mit dem Hinweis darauf zu entkräften versuchen, daß es unterschiedliche Arten von Philosophie und Philosophieren und unterschiedliche Vorverständnisse und Interpretationen dessen, was eine Philosophie leisten kann und soll, gibt und daß jeder Philosoph die Verantwortung für seine Art der Philosophie übernehmen soll. Die geschichtsphilosophische bzw. seynsgeschichtliche Art ist dabei so, daß sie so oder so in die Unfreiheit des Menschen münden zu müssen scheint. Es ist jedoch nicht seit eh und je ausgemacht, daß Philosophie sich als geschichtsphilosophische

¹⁰ G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, Hegel, *Theorie Werkausgabe*, Bd. 12, 35.

¹¹ „Die Religiosität, die Sittlichkeit eines beschränkten Lebens – eines Hirten, eines Bauern – [...] hat unendlichen Wert [...] Dieser innere Mittelpunkt [...] bleibt unangetastet [...] Im allgemeinen ist aber dies festzuhalten, daß, was in der Welt als Edles und Herrliches berechtigt ist, auch ein Höheres über sich hat. Das *Recht des Weltgeistes* geht über alle besonderen Berechtigungen“ Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, Hegel, *Theorie Werkausgabe*, Bd. 12, 54; Hervorhebung I.M.F.). Vgl. noch Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, § 30, Hegel, *Theorie Werkausgabe*, Bd. 7, 83: „nur das *Recht des Weltgeistes* ist das uneingeschränkt absolute“ (Hervorhebung I.M.F.).

¹² Das Wort Katastrophe taucht in den *Schwarzen Heften* vielfach auf, meistens als normaler Bestandteil der Seyngeschichte; vgl. GA 95, 39, 50 („Durch jene erste – und längste – Entscheidung bringt sich das Seyn selbst in die »Katastrophen«-bahn seiner Geschichte“), 133; GA 96, 45; GA 97, 53 („Was wissen wir inmitten solcher Weltkatastrophen, wie sie sich jetzt ereignen, vom Geheimnis der Geschichte? Dürfen wir unsere kleinen »Belange« und deren Gefährdung zum Maßstab dafür machen, ob etwas endet oder anfängt oder ein Übergang ist und sich vorbereitet?“ [dieses Zitat kommt vielleicht am ehesten in die Nähe Hegels, bei dem ja die Individuen „aufgeopfert und preisgegeben“ werden]), 116, 250, 317 („die jetzige Weltkatastrophe [...], die sich in Jahrtausenden vorbereitete und zwar in den verborgenen Geschicken des Seyns [...] Wie sollen wir die Katastrophe denn auch nur erfahren, solange wir uns dessen entschlagen, sie erst einmal als Geschick des Seyns zu denken?“), 329, 331 („Die Katastrophe des Seyns ist seine Eschatologie“), 335, 336, 361, 375 („Die Katastrophe der abendländischen Geschichte steht erst bevor“), 378 („Katastrophe der Kehre“), 384, 390, 391, 392 und 464.

oder seinsgeschichtliche Rechtfertigung (Karl Löwith hatte in bezug auf Heidegger den Ausdruck „seinsgeschichtliche Sanktionierung“¹³ gebraucht) des Bestehenden (Hegel) oder des Geschehenden (Heidegger) zu verstehen hat. Es ist vielleicht nicht von ungefähr, daß es heutzutage „Schwierigkeiten mit der Geschichtsphilosophie“¹⁴ gibt. Verstanden als großes Narrativ wird sie kaum mehr ernsthaft betrieben.

Hegel wollte zunächst die Vergangenheit und dadurch die Gegenwart rechtfertigen, bei Heidegger wird auch das Zukünftige mit einbezogen und im Voraus gerechtfertigt. Walter Schulz hat in diesem Zusammenhang nicht zu Unrecht über Geschichtspositivismus gesprochen: „Man kann in der Tat von einem »Geschichtspositivismus« bei Heidegger reden: alles Geschehen wird »anerkannt«, aber es wird anerkannt als Geschick, d.h., es fordert immer die »Entsprechung« heraus“.¹⁵ Wir wissen nicht, was geschehen wird. Aber was geschehen wird, das Zukünftige, ist als Geschick des Seyns anzunehmen. Auch diese Haltung mag auf einen Mangel an Sensibilität zurückgehen.

Es gibt allerdings einige Textpassagen bei Heidegger, die weniger wegen mangelnder, als vielmehr – umgekehrt – wegen gesteigerter Sensibilität die Aufmerksamkeit auf sich lenken. Deren wohl wichtigste dürfte eine Erörterung der Vorlesung des WS 1933/34 sein, in der im Rahmen einer Interpretation des Fragments 53 von Heraklit ziemlich ausführlich auf πόλεμος eingegangen wird.¹⁶ Das Wort πόλεμος wird hier als „Krieg“ übersetzt¹⁷. Heidegger richtet sein Augenmerk insbesondere (wohl auf Einfluß Carl Schmitts) auf den Begriff des Feindes und die

¹³ Siehe K. Löwith, *Heidegger – Denker in dürftiger Zeit. Zur Stellung der Philosophie im 20. Jahrhundert*, Löwith, *Sämtliche Schriften*, Bd 8, Stuttgart: Metzler, 1984, 124–234, hier 175.

¹⁴ Verwiesen sei dazu auf das Buch von Odo Marquard, *Schwierigkeiten mit der Geschichtsphilosophie*, Frankfurt/Main 1982.

¹⁵ Walter Schulz, „Über den philosophiegeschichtlichen Ort Martin Heideggers“, in *Heidegger. Perspektiven zur Deutung seines Werks*, hrsg. Otto Pöggeler, Köln-Berlin 1969, 95–139, hier 130.

¹⁶ Vgl. GA 36/37, 90f.

¹⁷ „Groß und einfach steht am Beginn des Spruches: πόλεμος, Krieg“ (GA 36/37, 90). Demgegenüber heißt es im nach Ende des Krieges verfaßten Gedenkschrift *Das Rektorat 1933/34. Tatsachen und Gedanken (1945)*: „Das Wort πόλεμος, mit dem das Fragment beginnt, bedeutet nicht »Krieg« [...]“ (GA 16, 372–394, hier 379). Die Interpretation des Heraklitischen Fragments wird entsprechend erheblich umakzentuiert; der kämpferische Ton, der den Vorlesungstext vom 1933/34 herrscht, verschwindet völlig, und „Kampf“ selbst wird als „Auseinandersetzung“ interpretiert. Siehe noch „2. Wir dürfen nicht nur πόλεμος nicht als Krieg denken und den Satz: »Der Krieg ist der Vater aller Dinge« als angeblich heraklitischen noch dazu verwenden, den Krieg und die Schlacht als das höchste Prinzip alles Seins auszurufen und so das Kriegerische philosophisch zu rechtfertigen“ (GA 16, 379). Dazu ist zu sagen: Es gibt im zitierten Vorlesungstext des WS 1933/34 nichts, das eine „kriegerische“ Interpretation ausschliesse. Daß das Kriegerische nicht philosophisch zu rechtfertigen sei, scheint eine später gewonnene Einsicht gewesen zu sein. – Siehe noch GA 94, 474 („gegen den Feind kein Ausweichen gibt“).

Art und Weise, wie mit ihm umzugehen sei. Es wird dabei zugleich ein grundsätzlicher Unterschied getroffen zwischen äußerem und innerem Feind: „Der Feind braucht nicht der äußere zu sein, und der äußere ist nicht einmal immer der gefährlichere“, so heißt es. Es könne, so Heidegger weiter, „so aussehen, als sei kein Feind da. Dann ist Grunderfordernis, den Feind zu finden, ins Licht zu stellen oder gar erst zu *schaffen* [...]“.¹⁸ Diese Art, sich zum Feind zu verhalten (ihn „erst zu schaffen“), taucht auch in den *Schwarzen Heften* auf,¹⁹ und auch deswegen dürften einige knappe Bemerkungen angebracht sein.

Zunächst stellen wir die Frage zurück, ob irgendjemand Bestimmtes und, wenn ja, wer wohl unter dem inneren Feind gemeint sei. (Daß diese nur die Juden sein können, ist freilich unschwer zu folgern, da die Kommunisten oder die Sozialisten offene Feinde des NS waren²⁰).

„Den Feind erst zu schaffen“: wer die Jahre des ausgehenden Marxismus erlebt hat, kann von einem sonderbaren wie beänstigenden Gefühl von *déjà vu* ergriffen werden. Man wird zwangsläufig an die Periode der Schauprozesse erinnert, die ja dazu berufen wurden, den „inneren Feind“, d.h. den Feind innerhalb der innersten Kreise der Parteileitung selbst, aufzufinden oder zu entdecken und ihn somit erst zu „schaffen“. Auf diese Weise kam es immer wieder zum „Schaffen“ des Feindes. In den letzten Jahren des Marxismus war häufig – selbst in Parteikreisen – davon die Rede, es sei unklug – und für die Sache des Sozialismus letztendlich schädlich –, von Menschen, die zwar selbst nicht Marxisten sind, aber dem Regime ursprünglich nicht feindselig gegenüberstehen, durch unnötige Angriffe zu Feinden zu machen – solches „Schaffen von Feinden“ sei ungeschickt und töricht. Es gelte, den Lager der Freunde des Marxismus zu vermehren, nicht den seiner Feinde.

¹⁸ GA 36/37, 91. (Hervorhebung I.M.F.) Bekannt ist seit längerem der Bericht Karl Löwiths, der jedoch ähnlich wie die erwähnten Erinnerungen Karl Jaspers' wenig glaubenswürdig erschienen sein dürften. Siehe den Text um Anm. 13 und 14 im ersten Teil dieses Aufsatzes sowie K. Löwith, „Der okkasionelle Dezisionismus von C. Schmitt“, (1935), in ders., *Sämtliche Schriften*, Bd. 8, 32–71, hier 66: „Selbst das deutsche »Gemüt« wurde in Zusammenhang gebracht mit diesem Mut. Desgleichen sei der Feind nicht bloß »vorhanden«, sondern das Dasein müsse sich selbst seinen Feind *schaffen*, um nicht stumpf zu werden“ (Hervorhebung im Original). Löwiths Bericht ist, wie wir jetzt im Vergleich mit dem veröffentlichten Vorlesungstext sehen können, ziemlich präzise.

¹⁹ Vgl. GA 94, 141: „Wo steht der Feind und wie wird er *geschaffen*?“

²⁰ Siehe hierzu Gregory Fried, „The King Is Dead: Martin Heidegger after the *Black Notebooks*“, in: *Reading Heidegger's Black Notebooks 1931–1941*, edited by Ingo Farin and Jeff Malpas, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England: The MIT Press, 2016, 45–57, hier 53f. Vgl. noch das Zitat von Robert A. Kann, das im ersten Teil dieses Aufsatzes an Anm.48 angeschlossen ist („inner enemy“).

Heideggers Kontext ist offensichtlich ein anderer. Der Marxismus war in den letzten Jahren seiner Existenz bereits im Rückzug und sollte sich im offenen Wettbewerb der Aufforderung des „kapitalistischen“ Westens stellen. Der NS dagegen war im Aufbruch, ernsthafte äußere Feinde gab es kaum und deswegen war da auch kein Wettbewerb. Aus Heideggers Sicht (welche nicht unbedingt mit der des NS zusammenfiel) ging es darum, das Wachsein bzw. das Wachsam-Sein – entferntes Derivat der „Wachheit“ der Faktizitätshermeneutik vom 1923,²¹ welche ihrerseits wiederum an die Interpretation der Paulusbriefe in der religionsphänomenologischen Vorlesung 1920/21 anschließt („laßt uns wachsam sein“²²) – beizubehalten und möglichst auch zu steigern. Dazu scheint ein Zustand allgemeiner rechtlicher, staatsbürgerlicher Unsicherheit, in dessen Rahmen jedermann jederzeit zum Feind (des Regimes, des Volkes) deklariert und demgemäß behandelt werden kann – das genaue Gegenteil von all dem, was heute als Rechtsstaat gilt – bestens geeignet zu sein. Bemerkenswerterweise ist vom äußeren Feind in diesem Text gar nicht die Rede, nur vom inneren. Der Kampf gegen diesen ist gewissermaßen schwerer als der mit dem äußeren; „denn dieser besteht ja nur zum geringsten Teil im Gegeneinanderschlagen; oft weit schwieriger und langwieriger ist es, den Feind als solchen zu erspähen, ihn zur Entfaltung zu bringen, ihm gegenüber sich nichts vorzumachen, sich angriffsfertig zu halten, die ständige Bereitschaft zu pflegen und zu steigern und den Angriff auf weite Sicht mit dem Ziel der völligen Vernichtung anzusetzen“.²³ In dieser detaillierten Beschreibung der Art und Weise, wie mit dem inneren Feind mit Aussicht auf Erfolg umzugehen sei, geht es wohl nicht mehr um „Mangel“, nicht um etwas, das fehlt, sondern um einen „Überschuß“, nämlich den des (wohl eschatologisch motivierten) Vertreibungs- oder Verfolgungsdrangs. Es dürfte sich um eine „gesteigerte“ Sensibilität handeln, und zwar eine – den Feind betreffende – „feindselige“ (Sensibilität braucht ja nicht notwendig positiv, z.B. Mitleid, zu sein). Es läßt sich wohl sagen: Der Mangel *dieser* (feindseligen) Art Sensibilität wäre uneingeschränkt positiv einzuschätzen gewesen.

Die Theorie des inneren Feindes läßt sich aber wohl auch als *formale Anzeige* interpretieren. Damit wird ihre Schärfe gemäßigt bzw. neutralisiert (oder eben „formalisiert“). Die „formale Anzeige“ stellt einen wesentlichen Bestandteil von Heideggers phänomenologischer Methodologie dar, die Heidegger in Anlehnung an

²¹ Vgl. GA 63, 16: „Thema der hermeneutischen Untersuchung ist je eigenes Dasein, und zwar als hermeneutisch befragt auf seinen Seinscharakter im Absehen darauf, eine wurzelhafte Wachheit seiner selbst auszubilden.“

²² Vgl. GA 60, 104. Vgl. noch ebd., 105 („Die Antwort des Paulus auf die Frage nach dem Wann der $\pi\alpha\rho\upsilon\sigma\iota\alpha$ ist also die Aufforderung, zu wachen und nüchtern zu sein“), 124, 274 („es ist eine ständige Gefahr in uns selbst, daß der, welcher nicht wach ist, besiegt wird“).

²³ GA 36/37, 91.

Husserls Unterscheidung von Generalisierung und Formalisierung²⁴ ausgearbeitet und in seinen Schriften bis zu 1930 immer wieder verwendet hat. „Alle philosophischen Begriffe sind *formal anzeigend*“, heißt eine ausdrückliche Reflexion von 1929/30.²⁵ Durch das Konzept der „formalen Anzeige“ versucht Heidegger, die Frage nach der philosophischen Begriffsbildung und „Methode“ zu beantworten.²⁶ Die formale Anzeige ist richtungsgebend, aber inhaltlich bzw. sachhaltig nicht gebunden, d.h. sie läßt die inhaltliche oder sachhaltige Ausfüllung offen bzw. fordert den jeweiligen Leser oder Interpreten auf, die besagte Ausfüllung selber zu vollziehen. Eines der charakteristischsten Beispiele hierfür ist das „Wozu“ der „Entschlossenheit“: „Wozu sich das Dasein je faktisch entschließt, vermag die existenziale Analyse grundsätzlich nicht zu erörtern“, schreibt Heidegger in seinem Hauptwerk.²⁷ (Hierzu gehört auch das „Um-zu“ des Zeuges: seine spezifische Form bleibt offen oder unbestimmt, während das „Wozu“ – daß das Zeug zu irgendetwas dient – das Zeug jedenfalls charakterisiert.) Das heißt, das Wozu solle von jedem einzelnen Dasein selber entschieden und vollzogen werden; die sachhaltige Ausfüllung der Entschlossenheit sei jeweils Sache des existierenden Daseins. Dadurch, daß Heideggers Theorie des inneren Feindes als *formale Anzeige* interpretiert wird, verliert die Frage nach ihrer „sachhaltigen Ausfüllung“ gewissermaßen auch dann an Relevanz, wenn sie sich wohl durch sehr wenige Gehalten, vielleicht sogar durch einen einzigen „Gehalt“ ausfüllen läßt, bzw. wenn es sich mehr oder minder deutlich vermuten läßt, welcher phänomenaler „Gehalt“ es war, der den Anfangs- und Ausgangspunkt der Formalisierung gebildet hat und in deren Verlauf allmählich zum Verschwinden kam. Egal wer der innere Feind ist (die Juden oder Ernst Röhm und seine SA-Leute²⁸), mit ihm sei so umzugehen,

²⁴ Siehe E. Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. I. Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*. 13. §: „Generalisierung und Formalisierung“. *Husserliana* (fortan: Hua) III/1, neu hrsg. K. Schuhmann, Den Haag: Nijhoff, 1976, 31ff.

²⁵ GA 29/30, 425.

²⁶ Das Thema taucht in den frühen Vorlesungen immer wieder auf. Siehe GA 58, 248f.; GA 59, 29, 61f., 74, 85, 97, 173, 190; GA 9, 9ff., 29; GA 60, 54ff.; GA 61, 20, 32ff., 60, 66f., 113, 116, 134, 141 und 175; GA 63, 85; GA 21, 410; GA 29/30, 421ff., 441ff., 491. Vgl. H.-G. Gadamer, *Gesammelte Werke*, Bd. 3, 316. Aus der Literatur siehe: D.O. Dahlstrom, „Heidegger’s Method: Philosophical Concepts As Formal Indications“. In: *The Review of Metaphysics* 47, Number 4 (June 1994), 775-795; Th.C.W. Oudemans, „Heidegger’s ‚logische Untersuchungen‘“. In: *Heidegger Studies* 6, 1990, 85-105, hier: 93ff.; „Heideggers formale Anzeige. Ein Gespräch mit Alfred Denker, Theodore Kiesel und Holger Zaborowski“, *Information Philosophie*, 2008 n. 1.

²⁷ SZ 383 = GA 2, 506.

²⁸ In seinem 1945 verfaßten Schrift *Das Rektorat 19 33/34. Tatsachen und Gedanken* heißt es: „Ich war mir über die möglichen Folgen der Amtsniederlegung im Frühjahr 1934 klar; ich war mir darüber vollends klar nach dem 30. Juni desselben Jahres. Wer nach dieser Zeit noch ein Amt in der Leitung der Universität übernahm, konnte eindeutig wissen, mit wem er sich einließ“ (GA 16, 372–394,

wie von Heidegger beschrieben (es gehe darum, „den Feind als solchen zu erspähen, ihn zur Entfaltung zu bringen, ihm gegenüber sich nichts vorzumachen, sich angriffsfertig zu halten, die ständige Bereitschaft zu pflegen und zu steigern“ – all das sei nötig, ist das Endziel ja doch „völlige Vernichtung“ und nicht nur etwa „Zurückdrängung“). Sollte einer der Schritte ausbleiben, so wäre das Erreichen des Endziels gefährdet.

Diese Theorie ist als formal-anzeigende Deskription keine schlechte Beschreibung der Art und Weise, wie man mit dem (inneren) Feind – unabhängig davon, wer er ist, umzugehen habe, wenn man mit Hoffnung auf Erfolg vorgehen will. Man muß dies zugeben selbst dann, wenn diese schreckenerregende Beschreibung den Geist des Totalitarismus atmet, also eine Atmosphäre evoziert, in der jedermann jederzeit zum inneren Feind „erklärt“ und infolgedessen „vernichtet“ werden kann. Heidegger selbst mag sich der Tragweite und der möglichen Konsequenzen seiner Theorie nicht ganz bewußt gewesen sein – der Nationalsozialismus war damals noch in einer erster Phase seiner Entfaltung –, aber daß Revolutionen in durch Schauprozesse begleitete Diktaturen umschlagen können, war am Beispiel der französischen Revolution wohl bekannt und philosophisch z.B. durch Hegel eingehend ausgearbeitet worden. wohl bekannt, philosophisch z.B. durch Hegel eingehend ausgearbeitet. Man kann in dem Zusammenhang nur an „Die absolute Freiheit und der Schrecken“ betiteltes Kapitel der Hegelschen *Phänomenologie des Geistes* erinnern; hier wird ein geistiges Reich dargestellt, in dem der Verdacht herrscht und die Freiheit „nur die *Furie des Verschwindens*“²⁹ ist. In den *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* ist Hegels Text noch eindeutiger in bezug auf den Umschlag der revolutionären Freiheit in Diktatur bzw. Tyrannei:

„Die Gesinnung aber kann nur von der Gesinnung erkannt und beurteilt werden. Es herrscht somit der *Verdacht*; die Tugend aber, sobald sie verdächtig wird, ist schon verurteilt. Der Verdacht erhielt eine fürchterliche Gewalt [...] Es herrschen jetzt die *Tugend* und der *Schrecken*; denn die subjektive Tugend, die bloß von der Gesinnung aus regiert, bringt die fürchterlichste Tyrannei mit sich. Sie übt ihre Macht ohne gerichtliche Formen, und ihre Strafe ist ebenso nur einfach – der Tod.“³⁰

hier 390). Heideggers Stellung zum sogenannten Röhm-Putsch, wie sie hier beschrieben wird, dürfte nicht seine damalige (mit dem „Putsch“ gleichzeitige) Meinung über die Geschehnisse darstellen, sondern vielmehr aus einer späteren Phase seines Denkens stammen und damit eine Rückprojektion sein, denn seine Theorie des inneren Feindes ist mit der tatsächlich erfolgten „Lösung“ des „Röhm-Putsches“ durchaus kompatibel. (Es geschah eben das, was er forderte: „völlige Vernichtung“).

²⁹ G.W.F. Hegel: *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, Theorie Werkausgabe, Bd. 3, 436.

³⁰ G.W.F. Hegel: *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, Theorie Werkausgabe, Bd. 12, 533. – So wie „Diktatur“ in SZ Diktatur der Öffentlichkeit, Diktatur des Man ist, so ist in den *Schwarzen Heften* Tyrannei „*Tyrannei der Technik*“ oder „*Tyrannei des Kleinen*“ (SZ 126 = GA 2, 169; GA 94, 363, 497.

Die von Hegel erwähnte Gesinnung und der Verdacht sind dem phänomenologischen Ausweis ebenso wenig zugänglich wie der von Heidegger zur Bestimmung des Feindes gebrauchte Begriff der *Bedrohung*.³¹ Was als Bedrohung zu gelten hat, dafür gibt es kaum feste, intersubjektiv verbindliche oder auch nur irgendwie identifizierbare Kriterien. Wie gesagt bleibt die sachhaltige Ausfüllung der formalen Anzeige jeweils vom betroffenen Subjekt bedingt, es herrscht also Freiheit, aber auch Willkür. *Daß* sie aber ausgefüllt bzw. erfüllt werden soll, scheint eine methodische Notwendigkeit oder zumindest Tendenz der formalen Anzeige zu sein.³² M.a.W.: Wer jeweils, von Zeit zu Zeit, der innere Feind ist, kann variieren, ist unsicher; *daß* es ihn gibt, ist dagegen sicher. Diese Tendenz zur Ausfüllung und die Gleichgültigkeit gegenüber der tatsächlichen Existenz sind eine inhärente Eigenschaft – wenn man will, eine Schwäche oder Schattenseite – der formalen Anzeige – die Schattenseite hat ohnehin etwas gespenstiges, schattenhaftes –, die gewisse Ähnlichkeiten hat mit dem, was in der Phänomenologie Husserls *eidos* bzw. eidetische Reduktion³³ bezeichnet wird. Formale Anzeige und eidetische Reduktion sind gleichwohl nicht dasselbe, d.h. sie sind nicht deckungsgleich, sie haben jedoch

Siehe J. Grondin, „The Critique and Rethinking of *Being and Time* in the First *Black Notebooks*“, in *Reading Heidegger's Black Notebooks 1931–1941*, 95–107, hier 96: „In his *Notebooks*, he routinely rants about the tyranny of technology (*Tyrannie der Technik*) or that of the „mediocre,“ but does not complain about the actual political tyranny the Nazis had imposed on Germany.“ Zu dieser treffenden Bemerkung läßt sich hinzufügen: es wird weitgehend vom Hauptwerk vorweggenommen, wo das politikphilosophisch klingende Wort „Diktatur“ ein einziges Mal auftaucht – als Diktatur des Man: „In dieser Unauffälligkeit und Nichtfeststellbarkeit entfaltet das Man seine eigentliche Diktatur“, heißt es (SZ 126 = GA 2, 169).

³¹ „Feind ist derjenige und jeder, von dem eine wesentliche Bedrohung des Daseins des Volkes und seiner Einzelnen ausgeht.“ (GA 36/37, 90f.)

³² Siehe hierzu Klaus Held, *Der biblische Glaube. Phänomenologie seiner Herkunft und Zukunft*, Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2018, 42: „Worum sich in seiner [Husserls] Phänomenologie alles dreht, ist das Bewusstsein. Dessen Grundcharakter ist die Intentionalität, weil es dynamisch verfasst ist; es *strebt nach Erfüllung seiner Intentionen*“ (Hervorh. I.M.F.) Vgl noch ebd., 44: „[...] folgt das Bewusstseinsleben schon instinktiv durchgängig der Tendenz auf Einstimmigkeit und Erfüllung“. Siehe auch Sebastian Luft, „Husserl's Theory of the Phenomenological Reduction: Between Life-World and Cartesianism,“ *Research in Phenomenology*, vol. 34 (2004), 198-234, hier 203: „intentionality always strives toward fulfillment.“

³³ Siehe Hua (= Husserliana) III/1, 6: „[...] die reine oder transzendente Phänomenologie [wird] nicht als Tatsachenwissenschaft, sondern als Wesenswissenschaft (als »eidetische« Wissenschaft) begründet werden; als eine Wissenschaft, die ausschließlich »Wesenserkenntnisse« feststellen will und durchaus keine »Tatsachen«. Die zugehörige Reduktion, die vom psychologischen Phänomen zum reinen »Wesen«, bzw. im urteilenden Denken von der tatsächlichen (»empirischen«) Allgemeinheit zur »Wesens«allgemeinheit überführt, ist die *eidetische Reduktion*.“ (Kursiv im Original) Siehe noch § 60, ebd., 128: es ist „gerade unsere Absicht, die Phänomenologie selbst als *eidetische* Wissenschaft [...] zu begründen.“ (Kursiv im Original.)

wesentliche Berührungspunkte. M.a.W.: Die formale Anzeige kann als Heideggers Antwort auf das, was bei Husserl die eidetische Reduktion ist und leisten soll, angesehen werden. In diesem Sinne wäre die Schattenseite der formalen Anzeige zugleich das Erbe (der Schwäche) der eidetischen Reduktion. Die Tendenz zur Ausfüllung ist zweideutig: wenn die formale Anzeige oder das infolge der eidetischen Reduktion zugänglich gemachte Wesen (εἶδος, eidos) einmal vorliegt, so kann, wie es scheint, seine Existenz nicht mehr rückgängig gemacht werden. Dies kann man veranschaulichen durch Hinweis auf ein Beispiel von György Lukács.³⁴

VIII. Lukács, Scheler und – der Teufel

Lukács hat mehrmals seine kritische Stellung zur Phänomenologie durch eine Anekdote erläutert:

³⁴ Zwischen den Denkwegen von Heidegger und Lukács bestehen wesentliche Parallelen, von denen vor allem dies hervorgehoben werden muß, daß beide ein radikales Geschichtsdenken durchzusetzen, dabei die Gegenwart als Teil der Geschichte, und zwar als Übergang zu verstehen suchten sowie – in Zusammenhang damit – totalitäre Regime unterstützt haben. Im einzelnen hierzu vgl. István M. Fehér: „Heidegger und Lukács. Eine Hundertjahresbilanz“, in *Wege und Irrwege des neueren Umganges mit Heideggers Werk. Ein deutsch-ungarisches Symposium*, hrsg. I. M. Fehér, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1991, 43–70; ders., „Heidegger und Lukács. Überlegungen zu L. Goldmanns Untersuchungen aus der Sicht der heutigen Forschung“, *Mesotes. Zeitschrift für philosophischen Ost-West-Dialog* 1, 1991, n.1, 25–38; ders., „Heideggers theologische Herkunft – Fragen der Interpretation (mit einem Anhang über Geschichte und Geschichtslosigkeit)“, in: *Auslegungen. Von Parmenides bis zu den Schwarzen Heften*, hrsg. Harald Seubert, Klaus Neugebauer (Schriftenreihe der Martin-Heidegger-Gesellschaft, Bd. 10), Freiburg/Br. – München: Verlag Karl Alber, 2017, 51–90, hier 86ff. Die Gemeinsamkeiten lassen sich in vier Punkten zusammenfassen: 1) „Right or wrong, my party“, hieß es bei Lukács, während bei Heidegger die übliche Form: „Right or wrong, my country“ durchgesetzt bzw. geltend gemacht worden zu sein scheint; 2) Einschätzung der Gegenwart als Zeitalter der „vollendeten Sündhaftigkeit“ bzw. Zeitalter der „vollendeten Sinnlosigkeit“; (siehe Lukács, *Die Theorie des Romans. Ein geschichtsphilosophischer Versuch über die Formen der großen Epik*, Darmstadt – Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1984 [Sammlung Luchterhand 36], 12, 137, 168; Heidegger, GA 96, 93, 106, 149 [„Zeitalter der vollendeten Sinnlosigkeit“], 191 [„Zeitalter der vollendeten Seinsverlassenheit.“]); 3) radikales Geschichtsdenken (siehe Anm. 16 im ersten Teil dieses Aufsatzes); 4) Positive Einschätzung der Barberei (siehe GA 94, 194; „Der Nationalsozialismus ist ein barbarisches Prinzip. Das ist sein Wesentliches und seine mögliche Größe“ [vgl.ebd., 225]; während für Lukács angesichts des kulturellen Verfalls und der die modernen Zeiten auszeichnenden Dekadenz „die einzigen Hoffnungen auf das Proletariat, den Sozialismus gesetzt werden könnten, darauf, daß Barbaren kommen und mit kruden Händen alles Raffinement zerschlagen werden“ [Lukács György: *Ifjúkori művek (1902–1918)*, hrsg. Árpád Tímár, Budapest: Magvető Kiadó, 1977, 428]).

„Die Nachfolger Husserls gründen die Ontologie gerade auf die phänomenologische Methode. Um sogleich in die Mitte der Problematik einzuführen, sei es mir gestattet, nochmals ein Gespräch, das ich mit Scheler hatte, zu zitieren: »Als mich zur Zeit des ersten Weltkriegs Scheler in Heidelberg besuchte, hatten wir hierüber ein interessantes und charakteristisches Gespräch. Scheler vertrat den Standpunkt, die Phänomenologie sei eine universale Methode, die alles zum intentionalen Gegenstand haben könne. >Man kann zum Beispiel<, führte Scheler aus, >über den Teufel phänomenologische Untersuchungen machen, man muß nur zunächst die Frage der Existenz des Teufels in Klammer setzen.< – >Freilich<, antwortete ich, >und wenn Sie dann mit dem phänomenologischen Bild über den Teufel fertig geworden sind, dann öffnen Sie die Klammern – und der Teufel steht leibhaftig vor uns.< Scheler lachte, zuckte mit den Achseln und antwortete nichts.«”.³⁵

Um den inneren Feind dürfte es ähnlich bestellt sein wie um den Teufel in der zitierten Anekdote. Die formalanzeigende oder eidetische Deskription des inneren Feindes und des richtigen Umgangs mit ihm kann sehr wohl von seiner tatsächlichen Existenz absehen, diese in Klammer setzen. Wenn die Deskription fertig ist, dann öffnen sich plötzlich die Klammern, und der innere Feind, wer auch immer, „steht leibhaftig vor uns“. Die formale Anzeige bzw. die eidetische Reduktion verlangt – mit welchem Inhalt auch immer – ausgefüllt (d.h. auch entformalisiert) zu werden. Der sinnliche Inhalt (das sachhaltige Was³⁶) kann variieren, der formale Rahmen steht für die Ewigkeit unverändert da. *Muß* es aber so etwas wie den inneren Feind als formale Anzeige oder eidetische Deskription, die nach Ausfüllung verlangt, überhaupt geben? (Hier scheint die Phänomenologie überfragt zu werden.)

IX. Die Größe der großen seinsgeschichtlichen Abhandlungen

Von Heidegger gegenüber positiv-affirmativ eingestellten Seite wird immer wieder behauptet oder versichert, das seinsgeschichtliche Denken der zweiten Denkperiode Heideggers, d.h. die zwischen 1936 und 1944 verfaßten großen seinsgeschichtlichen Abhandlungen, seien von den auf Juden oder auf das Judentum

³⁵ Georg Lukács, *Prolegomena. Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins*, ders., *Werke*, Bd. 13, I. Halbband, hrsg. Frank Benseler, Darmstadt und Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1984, 377f. Die Quelle des Zitats ist G. Lukács: *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?* Berlin 1951, 36f.

³⁶ Zu diesem Begriff siehe SZ 12 = GA 2, 16: „[...] die Wesensbestimmung dieses Seienden [des Daseins] [kann] nicht durch Angabe eines sachhaltigen Was vollzogen werden [...]“. Vgl. noch ebd. 27, 34 bzw. 37, 46.

bezogenen Textstellen in den *Schwarzen Heften* nicht betroffen. Das ist durchaus möglich – diese Behauptung oder Versicherung sollte jedoch nicht *vor*, sondern *nach* einer vergleichenden Prüfung der infrage kommenden Texte erfolgen inklusive vieler Bände der GA, ist es einmal so, wie Hegel schreibt: „*ein* trockenes Versichern gilt aber gerade soviel als ein anderes“.³⁷ Abgesehen davon stellt sich aber auch die Frage: Worin besteht eigentlich die besagte Größe der „großen seinsgeschichtlichen Abhandlungen“? Eine Antwort dahingehend, ihre Größe bestehe darin, daß sie von den judenkritischen oder auch antisemitischen Bemerkungen nicht betroffen seien, wäre offensichtlich ungenügend, weil sie eine bloße Negativität enthielte, wo doch eine Bestimmung des Wesens einer Sache aufgrund dessen angeben sollte. Der Mangel an antisemitischen Bemerkungen ist noch kein Zeichen philosophischer Größe.

Die seinsgeschichtlichen Abhandlungen enthalten zwar viele tiefgreifende und beachtenswerte Überlegungen und Gedankengänge. Ihr systematischer Charakter liegt jedoch wegen ihrer aphoristischen Struktur nicht so sehr auf der Hand. Der Ort einzelner Diskussionen könnte auch anderer sein. Z.B. ist das Stück 76 der *Beiträge*, das die Überschrift „Sätze über »die Wissenschaft«“ trägt³⁸ und sich durchaus als eine kleine Abhandlung ansehen läßt, oft genug Gegenstand eingehender Diskussionen. Dabei wird aber kaum erörtert oder auch nur danach gefragt, warum sich ihr systematischer Ort eben in der „Fügung“ „Der Anklang“ findet. Mit dem „Systematischen“ hat es im Übrigen im Hinblick auf das seinsgeschichtliche Denken ein eigenes Bewenden, indem der Verzicht darauf zum einen ausdrücklich gemacht, zum anderen aber selber „systematisch“ – und das besagt hier: seinsgeschichtlich – „begründet“ wird. „Die Zeit der »Systeme« ist vorbei“,³⁹ heißt es anfangs in den *Beiträgen*. Als Explikation kann folgende Überlegung dienen: „Denn das Denken hat nicht mehr die Gunst des Systems«, es ist geschichtlich in dem einzigen Sinne, daß das Seyn selbst als Ereignis jede Geschichte erst trägt und deshalb nie errechnet werden kann. An die Stelle der Systematik und der Herleitung tritt die geschichtliche Bereitschaft für die Wahrheit des Seyns.“⁴⁰ Was den Begriff „Abhandlung“ angeht, so nimmt Heidegger ihn als Bezeichnung seiner seinsgeschichtlichen Texte, soweit ich

³⁷ Siehe G.W.F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, Theorie Werkausgabe, hrsg. E. Moldenhauer, K.M. Michel, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1970, Bd. 3, 71: „Die Wissenschaft [...] kann ein Wissen, welches nicht wahrhaft ist, weder als eine gemeine Ansicht der Dinge nur verwerfen und versichern, daß sie eine ganz andere Erkenntnis und jenes Wissen für sie gar nichts ist, noch sich auf die Ahnung eines besseren in ihm selbst berufen. Durch jene *Versicherung* erklärte sie ihr *Sein* für ihre Kraft; aber das unwahre Wissen beruft sich ebenso darauf, daß *es ist*, und *versichert*, daß ihm die Wissenschaft nichts ist; *ein* trockenes Versichern gilt aber gerade soviel als ein anderes.“

³⁸ GA 65, 145–159.

³⁹ GA 65, 5.

⁴⁰ GA 65, 242.

sehe, nicht in Anspruch; dieses Wort taucht bei ihm sehr selten auf, und wenn es erscheint, dann fehlt oft ein distanzierender Ton auch nicht.⁴¹

Hier sehen wir uns mit Problemen konfrontiert, die gelegentlich auch in der neueren Forschung angesprochen werden. „Man muss nüchtern konstatieren“, schreibt hierzu in einem kürzlich erschienenen Buch Reinhard Mehring, „dass der Nachlass der letzten beiden Abteilungen die hohen Erwartungen nicht erfüllt“.⁴² Mehring spricht in diesem Zusammenhang über den „Leerlauf der dritten Abteilung“. Anderswo faßt er die Editions- und Rezeptionslage wie folgt zusammen: „Während die zweite Abteilung der Vorlesungsbände intensiv rezipiert und diskutiert wurde, lief die Publikation der dritten Abteilung, die die seinssemantische Revolution des »anderen Denkens« als Ereignis verhieß, am Mainstream des philosophischen Diskurses relativ wirkungslos vorbei und auch die ersten Seminarbände der vierten Abteilung wurden nicht als epochale Texte extensiv und intensiv rezipiert.“⁴³ Rainer Thurnher spricht in diesem Zusammenhang davon, daß er die zweite Denkperiode, „Heideggers seinsgeschichtliches Denken nicht für anschußfähig“ hält.⁴⁴

Die Frage nach der Größe der seinsgeschichtlichen Abhandlungen führt mithin zu der Frage nach der zweiten Periode von Heideggers Denkweg, nach dem seinsgeschichtlichen Denken im Allgemeinen und nach dessen Verhältnis zum ersten, fundamentalontologischen Ausarbeitungsweg der Seinsfrage – und damit aber motgedrugen zum *Neudenken des ganzen Denkweges* selbst. Der Hinweis darauf, daß nicht zuletzt eben dies ein wichtiger Ertrag der *Schwarzen Hefte* sein könnte,

⁴¹ Siehe GA 66, 62: „Das denkerische Erfragen des Seins als Ereignis kann nur als geschichtliches Durchdenken der Seinsgeschichte beginnen und dieses wiederum muß sich in die unscheinbare Gestalt einer historischen Betrachtung der abendländischen Metaphysik zurückstellen. Und diese Historie selbst begnügt sich mit der »Behandlung« einzelner – scheinbar zufällig aufgegriffener – »Abhandlungen« und Werke, weil schon eine Gesamtdarstellung zu aufdringlich ausfiele und sich nur noch in den Betrieb der Philosophiehistorie einreichte.“ Ferner GA 70, 134: „Stimmung – Ihr Wesen denken, kann nur heißen, denkend die Stimmung der Stimme hören. – Nicht aber im allgemeinen, als sei dies ein vorhandener Gegenstand, über Stimmungen und ihre Arten *Abhandlungen* verfassen.“ (Hervorhebungen I.M.F.) Im „Ein Rückblick auf denWeg“, „Beilage Zu Wunsch und Wille (Über die Bewahrung des Versuchten)“ taucht „Abhandlung“ oder „Abhandlungen“ nicht auf. Sofern Bezug auf sie genommen wird – gesetzt, daß sie das Gemeinte sind, nicht die *Schwarzen Hefte* –, werden sie pauschal (ohne Benennung ihrer Anzahl und Titel im einzelnen) als „Vorarbeiten zum Werk“ (nämlich zu den *Beiträgen*) oder einfach „Vorarbeiten“ namhaft gemacht (GA 66, 420, 424).

⁴² Reinhard Mehring, *Heideggers „große Politik“. Die semantische Revolution der Gesamtausgabe*, 305. Zum folgenden ebd., 306.

⁴³ Reinhard Mehring, „Postmortaler Suizid. Zur Selbstdemontage des Autors der Gesamtausgabe“, in *Heidegger und der Antisemitismus. Positionen im Widerstreit. Mit Briefen von Martin und Fritz Heidegger*, 289–299, hier 298.

⁴⁴ Rainer Thurnher, „Sondierungen zu Heideggers »Privatnationalsozialismus«“, in *Heidegger und der Antisemitismus. Positionen im Widerstreit. Mit Briefen von Martin und Fritz Heidegger*, 373–383, hier 373.

fehlt in der neueren Forschung auch nicht. Im letzten Teil des vorliegenden Beitrags soll diese Anregung aufgegriffen werden. Es wird äußerst kurz eine Interpretationsmöglichkeit skizziert, die meines Wissens in dieser Form noch nicht vorgelegt wurde und der ich mich *nicht* verbindlich verpflichtet weiß. Ich überlege versuchsweise und lege eine Möglichkeit vor, die ich für interpretations – bzw. diskussionsfähig erachte.

X. Zum Neudenken von Heideggers Denkweg

Thomas Sheehan has said that the controversy over the Notebooks should be seen as an opportunity to “rethink, from scratch, what [Heidegger’s] work was about.”⁴⁵

Es könnte sogar notwendig erscheinen, das Gesamtwerk Heideggers einer kritischen *Relecture* zu unterziehen.⁴⁶

Thomas Sheehan⁴⁷ und Holger Zaborowski haben die Möglichkeit und die Notwendigkeit betont, „das Gesamtwerk Heideggers einer kritischen *Relecture* zu unterziehen“.⁴⁸ Der Vorteil einer Relektüre des Gesamtwerks besteht darin, daß dabei Größe und Bedeutung eines Denkers völlig neu thematisiert werden können. Die fortschreitenden Editionen klassischer Autoren laufen oft Gefahr, völlig im Betrieb philologisch-hermeneutischer Kleinarbeit aufzugehen und Fragen umfassender und grundsätzlicher Art nicht mehr zu stellen. Bei dem Betriebscharakter selbstvergessener Forschung, den Heidegger als Charakter der Neuzeit so beeindruckend dargestellt und zugleich einer leidenschaftlichen Kritik unterzogen hat,⁴⁹ werden Sinnfragen zurückgestellt. Angesichts dieses Charakters der Wissenschaft – die Heidegger-*Forschung* selbst dürfte wohl keine Ausnahme bilden⁵⁰ – ist es ein zu begrüßendes Bestreben, die jeweils edierten Texte nunmehr nicht als „Beiträge“ zu etwas

⁴⁵ Ingo Farin and Jeff Malpas, „Introduction“, in: *Reading Heidegger’s Black Notebooks 1931–1941*, edited by Ingo Farin and Jeff Malpas, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England: The MIT Press, 2016, x-xiv, hier xi.

⁴⁶ Holger Zaborowski, „Licht und Schatten. Zur Diskussion von Heideggers *Schwarzen Heften*“, in *Heidegger und der Antisemitismus. Positionen im Widerstreit. Mit Briefen von Martin und Fritz Heidegger*, 427–440, hier 430.

⁴⁷ Siehe Anm. 45.

⁴⁸ Siehe Anm. 46.

⁴⁹ Siehe z.B. „Die Zeit des Weltbildes“, GA 5, 75–115, hier bes. 83ff., ferner GA 65, 152ff.

⁵⁰ Neben diesem bekannten negativen Sinn des Begriffs *Forschung* beim späten Heidegger gibt es aber – obwohl dieser Aspekt seines Werks in der Heidegger-*Forschung* bis heute weitgehend unbemerkt geblieben ist – eine durchaus positive Verwendung dieses Begriffs beim *jungen* Heidegger, bei dem statt „Philosophie“, „Wissenschaft“ oder „Phänomenologie“ mehrmals die Begriffe „philosophische *Forschung*“, „wissenschaftliche *Forschung*“ oder „phänomenologische *Forschung*“ zu finden sind. Siehe hierzu István M. Fehér, *Schelling – Humboldt: Idealismus und Universität. Mit Ausblicken auf Heidegger und die Hermeneutik*, Frankfurt/Main – Berlin – New York: Peter Lang, 2007, 62–69.

Festgelegtem zu betrachten, sondern sie im Blick auf die Frage nach der Bedeutung und Größe eines Autors neu zu thematisieren (dies wohl auch damit die Forschung nicht betriebsmäßig „stumpf“ werde, wozu sie ja jedenfalls eine Neigung hat). Im Hinblick auf die Radikalität dieser Bestrebung könnte Heidegger selbst ihr zustimmen, versuchte er doch immer systematisch zu den Quellen zurückzugreifen, z.B. Aristoteles nach dessen eigenen Texten, nicht auf Grund der *Aristoteles-Forschung* anzueignen oder zu erschließen. Wird gegen die Kant-Literatur Kant selbst bevorzugt,⁵¹ so gibt es allerdings ein Problem: Wenn unsere Beschäftigung mit Kant oder Heidegger bzw. der Sache selbst in gedruckten schriftlichen Texten ihren Niederschlag finden soll – und was anderes könnte das Ziel der Bemühung, der Untersuchungen, sein? –, dann wird sie mit einem Schlag zum Teil der Kant- oder Heidegger-Forschung, etwas, von dem Heidegger am entschiedensten abraten wollte. Heideggers Forderung nach Radikalität kann an diesem Punkt, wie es scheint, kaum entsprochen werden.

Gesamtausgaben gibt es üblicherweise bei Autoren, die sich zu Lebzeiten einen Rang bzw. die Berühmtheit „große Denker“ erworben haben und deren ganzes (Lebens-) Werk demnach für würdig befunden wird, ediert zu werden. Das ganze Lebenswerk schließt dabei nicht nur sämtliche zu Lebzeiten veröffentlichten Werke, sondern allerlei nachgelesene Texte, Aufzeichnungen und Briefe ein. Den Rang bzw. die Berühmtheit eines „großen Denkers“ kann man sich am ehesten und gebräuchlichsten durch die Veröffentlichung „großer Werke“ erwerben: z.B. im Falle Kants durch die *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* oder in dem Heideggers durch das Werk *Sein und Zeit*. Zu den Erwartungen, die sich an eine Gesamtausgabe knüpfen, gehört ja vor allem die Hoffnung, den Autor – und das heißt im wesentlichen: dessen zu Lebzeiten veröffentlichte „große Werke“ – besser zu verstehen. Die im Rahmen einer Gesamtausgabe erstmals zugänglich werdenden Texte oder Manuskripte sollten mithin zunächst in dieser Funktion gelesen und interpretiert werden. Sie können dabei grob in zwei Gruppen eingeteilt werden: unselbständige und selbständige Texte, wobei die Ersteren ihren Sinn vorwiegend nur in Funktion der „großen Werke“ erhalten, die Letzteren sich aber auch unabhängig von ihnen als sinnvoll erweisen. Es ist nun eine eigentümliche Versuchung oder zumindest Tendenz der jeweiligen, durch die Gesamtausgaben oder anderen Editionen eröffneten Forschung, zunehmend esoterisch zu werden, das heißt, Fragmenten, Nachschriften oder Aufzeichnungen aller Art eine Bedeutung beizumessen, die ihnen einfach nicht gebührt. Das ist eine natürliche Anomalie, die auch aus dem

⁵¹ Siehe GA 32, 41: „Die Kantliteratur ist dann nicht nur wichtiger als Kant selbst, es ist vor allem erreicht, daß keiner mehr an die Sache kommt.“

Bedürfnis der Forschung nach Selbstlegitimierung entspringt⁵². Es wird vergessen bzw. übersehen, daß die größtenteils unselbständigen Texte ihren Sinn zunächst und vor allem aus ihrem möglichen Bezug auf die „großen Werke“ erhalten; gäbe es diese nicht, so wären die unselbständigen Texte bezug-, wert- und sinnlos, und würden weder gelesen noch ediert. *Nur* weil es einen Hegel und Schelling, d.h. den deutschen Idealismus überhaupt, gegeben hatte, ist uns heute z. B. der als das sog. „Älteste Systemprogramm des deutschen Idealismus“ bekannte Text von Wichtigkeit. Um zu Heidegger zu kommen: der so genannte Natorp-Bericht ist ein sehr beeindruckender Text – vorausgesetzt, daß wir *Sein und Zeit* und die Vorlesungen der zwanziger Jahre schon kennen.⁵³

Die Thematik, die hier skizzenhaft berührt ist, wurde in einem vor mehr als zwanzig Jahren veröffentlichten Aufsatz ausführlicher erörtert. Es sei erlaubt, aus diesem ein Zitat anzuführen.

“[...] to speak about anticipations of Heidegger’s postwar hermeneutic perspective – such as, for example, the presence of several proto-hermeneutic elements in his student and academic writings – [...], is not to speak about the adoption of an autonomous philosophical stance [...] Had he [Heidegger] not published a work with the title *Being and Time* in 1927, the student and academic writings would presumably have no importance today. In other words, the importance they have is hardly on their own [...]. True, there are some programmatic claims about the being-question at the end of the dissertation, and the closing chapter of the *Habilitationsschrift* urges a return to metaphysics and a confrontation with Hegel. These are nevertheless nothing more than sketches and hints and anticipations – anticipations which take on significance only in the light of what was to come [...]”⁵⁴

Ist diese Argumentation plausibel, so fragt es sich, ob das Gesagte über die für die vor der Veröffentlichung von *Sein und Zeit* verfaßten Schriften hinaus nicht auch für die Schriften der Periode danach zutrifft. Würden die „großen seynsgeschichtlichen

⁵² Diese Bedeutung soll zudem mehr oder minder nur den Eingeweihten (die üblicherweise mit den Editoren oder Herausgeber zusammenfallen) zugänglich sein.

⁵³ Dem steht nicht entgegen, daß Natorp und seine Marburger Kollegen den Text ebenfalls beeindruckend gefunden haben; dies folgt aus der damaligen philosophischen Atmosphäre in Marburg Anfang der 1920er Jahre.

⁵⁴ Siehe István M. Fehér, "Heidegger's Postwar Turn: The Emergence of the Hermeneutic Viewpoint of His Philosophy and the Idea of 'Destruktion' on the Way to *Being and Time*". In: *Phenomenology and Beyond: Selected Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy*, vol. 21, eds. John D. Caputo, L. Langsdorf. *Philosophy Today*, vol. 40, n. 1, Spring 1996, 9–35, hier 9f.

Abhandlungen“⁵⁵ unsere Aufmerksamkeit und unser Interesse auf sie ziehen, wenn ihr Autor nicht ein Jahrzehnt vorher ein Buch mit dem Titel *Sein und Zeit* veröffentlicht hätte? *Sein und Zeit* – bzw. die fundamentalontologische Ausarbeitung der Seinsfrage – kommt hier nicht nur wegen seiner (bzw. ihrer) eigenen Bedeutung in Betracht, sondern auch deswegen, weil ohne es (bzw. sie), d.h. sein (bzw. ihr) eigentümliches Scheitern,⁵⁶ die spätere Rede über den Entzug des Seins sinnlos wäre.

Die Bezeichnung „große seynsgeschichtliche Abhandlungen“ legt implizite eine bestimmte Auslegung des Verhältnisses der zwei Denkperiode Heideggers nahe, auf die kurz einzugehen sich gerade dann als unumgänglich erweisen dürfte, wenn es um ein Neudenken von Heideggers Denkweg geht. Die erste Generation großer

⁵⁵ Diese oder analoge Bezeichnungen tauchen vielfach auf in: Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, „Notwendige Erläuterungen zu den *Schwarzen Heften*. Über die naive Instrumentalisierung hinaus, die aufgrund der Mutmaßungen bequemer Einsichten inszeniert wurde“, Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann / Francesco Alfieri, *Martin Heidegger. Die Wahrheit über die Schwarzen Hefte*, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2017, 26–48, hier 34 („große Abhandlungen“), 35 („große Abhandlungen“, „große wegbahnende Arbeiten“), 39 („große Arbeiten des seynsgeschichtlichen Denkens“), 40 („die sieben großen seynsgeschichtlichen Abhandlungen“, „die sieben großen Abhandlungen“, „die großen Abhandlungen“), 48: („die sieben großen seynsgeschichtlichen Abhandlungen“). Siehe auch anderswo, z. B. das Nachwort des Herausgebers in GA 71, 343: „Folge von sieben großen seynsgeschichtlichen Abhandlungen“.

⁵⁶ Scheitern ist für Heidegger nicht notwendig negativ, er spricht gelegentlich auch von einem „echten Scheitern“, oder davon, „in echter Weise [zu] scheitern“ (SZ 148, 174, 178 = GA 2, 197, 231, 236; des Weiteren, ohne „echt“ SZ 233, 317 = GA 2, 310, 420); siehe hierzu J. Grondin, *Von Heidegger zu Gadamer*, Darmstadt: WB, 2000, 45, der über ein „lehrreiches Scheitern“ redet. Obwohl die geplante Kehre, wie sie nach dem Systementwurf von *Sein und Zeit* hätte durchgeführt werden müssen, nicht vollzogen werden konnte, setzte sich eben in diesem „Scheitern“ und dank seiner die tatsächlich vollzogene Kehre allmählich durch (siehe hierzu István M. Fehér, „»Das zureichende Sagen dieser Kehre«: Heideggers Rückblick auf *Sein und Zeit* in seinem Humanismusbrief“, in: *Heidegger und der Humanismus, Heidegger-Jahrbuch*, Bd. 10, hrsg. Alfred Denker und Holger Zaborowski, Freiburg/München: Verlag Karl Alber, 2017, 79–101, hier 99f.). Die wichtigsten Textstellen über das Scheitern, die diesen Begriff zu einem Schlüsselbegriff seines Denkens avancieren lassen, finden sich aber in Heideggers Schelling-Vorlesung aus dem Jahr 1936, in der dieser Begriff nicht nur in bezug auf Schelling und Nietzsche verwendet wird. Scheitern scheint Heideggers eigenen Denkweg und auch die Philosophie selbst als solche schlechthin zu charakterisieren. Vgl. GA 42, 5: „Schelling aber mußte [...] am Werk scheitern, weil die Fragestellung bei dem damaligen Standort der Philosophie keinen inneren Mittelpunkt zuließ. Auch der einzige wesentliche Denker nach Schelling, Nietzsche, ist an seinem eigentlichen Werk, dem »Willen zur Macht«, zerbrochen, und das aus dem gleichen Grunde. Aber dieses zweimalige große Scheitern größter Denker ist kein Versagen und nichts Negatives, im Gegenteil. Das ist das Anzeichen des Heraufkommens eines ganz Anderen, das Wetterleuchten eines neuen Anfangs.“ Scheitern vermittelt hier zwischen erstem und anderem Anfang und eröffnet so den Weg zum anderen Anfang (nicht nur der Seinsgeschichte, sondern gerade auch des eigenen Denkwegs, d.h. zum seynsgeschichtlichen Ausarbeitungsweg der Seinsfrage). Siehe noch ebd., 169: „Schelling [mußte] trotz allem mit seiner Philosophie scheitern [...], d.h. in der Weise scheitern [...], wie er scheiterte; denn jede Philosophie scheitert, das gehört zu ihrem Begriff“, vgl. noch ebd., 279.

Intepreten dieses Denkwegs – beispielsweise Otto Pöggeler und Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann –, konnte in den 1960er und 1970er Jahren noch im persönlichen Umgang mit dem Denker selbst ihre Heidegger-Interpretationen entwickeln und gegebenenfalls von Heidegger selbst Auskunft über seinen Denkweg und das (Haupt-)Werk *Sein und Zeit* erhalten. Sie dürften sich dabei Heideggers rückblickende Denkperspektive auf *Sein und Zeit* wie naturgemäß zu eigen gemacht haben. Anders gesagt war der Denker, der ihnen entgegentrat, nicht einfach Martin Heidegger, sondern vielmehr – um mich der Redeweise des Richardson-Briefes zu bedienen – „Heidegger II“.⁵⁷ So hat Otto Pöggeler 1983 in einem Nachwort zur 2. Auflage seines 1963 erschienenen Buches *Der Denkweg Martin Heideggers* im Rückblick auch ausdrücklich anerkannt, das Buch sei „mitgeprägt durch die Weise, wie Heidegger damals den Weg seines Denkens sah“, wobei er selbst „die Beiträge für [sein] Hauptwerk“ hielt, und er „das angekündigte Spätwerk, in dem Heidegger als in dem eigentlichen Hauptwerk seine Gedanken im Zusammenhang darstellen wollte“, erwartet habe.⁵⁸ Auch für Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann ist *Sein und Zeit* zwar Heideggers „Grundwerk“ und „Hauptwerk“, aber nicht „sein einziges Hauptwerk“,⁵⁹ denn als „das zweite Hauptwerk Heideggers“ gelten die *Beiträge zur Philosophie*.⁶⁰ Aber, könnten wir fragen, was wären die *Beiträge zur Philosophie* ohne *Sein und Zeit*? Könnten sie dessen Berühmtheit und weitreichendes hohes Ansehen erlangen? Wo doch *Sein und Zeit* ohne die *Beiträge* sehr wohl bekannt und anerkannt werden konnte und auch wurde. Daß das seinsgeschichtliche Denken „ursprünglicher“ ist als das fundamentalontologische,⁶¹ läßt sich nur sagen, wenn wir als Maßstab zur Beurteilung des Spätwerkes immer schon das frühere Werk gesetzt haben. Nun kann man sich natürlich zur Beurteilung von Heidegger völlig legitim auch Heidegger II als wichtige Quelle heranziehen, aber zur Beurteilung von Heidegger I ist er keineswegs die *einzig* (oder einzig mögliche), und dazu keine

⁵⁷ Martin Heidegger, „Preface“, in: William Richardson S.J., *Heidegger. Through Phenomenology to Thought*, Den Haag 1963, XXIII. = Martin Heidegger, „Ein Vorwort. Brief an Pater William J. Richardson (1962)“, GA 11, 143–152, hier 152.

⁵⁸ Otto Pöggeler, *Der Denkweg Martin Heideggers*, 2. Aufl., Pfullingen: Neske, 1983, 349 und 353f.

⁵⁹ F.-W. von Herrmann, *Hermeneutische Phänomenologie des Daseins. Eine Erläuterung von 'Sein und Zeit'*. Band 1., 'Einleitung Die Exposition der Frage nach dem Sinn von Sein', Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 1987, XI.

⁶⁰ F.-W. von Herrmann, „Die Gottesfrage im seinsgeschichtlichen Denken“, *Auf der Spur des Heiligen. Heideggers Beitrag zur Gottesfrage*, hrsg. G. Pöltner, Wien – Köln: Böhlau, 1991, 23–39, hier 31. Die Bevorzugung des seinsgeschichtlichen Denkens tritt auch anderswo zu Tage, z.B. in ders. „Technik, Politik und Kunst in den 'Beiträgen zur Philosophie'“, *Wege und Irrwege des neueren Umganges mit Heideggers Werk*, 29–41, hier 32, wo die Formulierungen „ursprünglicher“, „erst“ und „noch nicht“ ganz klar diese Tendenz zeigen.

⁶¹ F.-W. von Herrmann, „Technik, Politik und Kunst in den 'Beiträgen zur Philosophie'“, 32.

vorurteilsfreie Autorität (die Idee einzig möglicher Autorität ist übrigens ein eher unhermeneutischer Begriff). Aus der Tatsache, daß es nur für Heidegger II möglich war, zu Heidegger I Stellung zu nehmen,⁶² folgt noch nicht, daß ein Perspektivenwechsel nicht lehrreiche Folgen zeitigen kann. Heidegger II in die Perspektive von Heidegger I zu versetzen. Heidegger II mit den (ggfs. kritischen) Augen von Heidegger I zu betrachten kann aber nur – und muß vielleicht sogar – Sache der Heidegger-Forschung sein, sonst bleibt diese in wortwörtlichem Sinne ein-seitig, d.h. in der Selbstinterpretation Heideggers gefangen. Anders und zugespitzt gesagt: Es ginge darum, Heidegger I von der Perspektive von Heidegger II zu befreien,⁶³ die in *Sein und Zeit* ausgearbeitete existenziale Analytik mit Richardson in die neuzeitlich-kantische Überlieferung zu versetzen, mit dem einzigen, aber natürlich wichtigen Unterschied, daß "Heidegger shifts the emphasis from an investigation of man's reason (Kant) to an investigation of man in his totality".⁶⁴

Eine Gesamtdarstellung philosophischer Denkwege großer Denker kann zu unterschiedlichen Gebilden führen. Als ich in den achziger Jahren Stipendiat am Croce Institut in Neapel war, war es eine der maßgebenden Interpretationsströmungen die, welche gegenüber dem Spätdenken Croces sein Jugendwerk bevorzugte, und zwar mit der Begründung, Croce habe damals auf der Höhe der europäischen philosophischen Kultur und im engen Kontakt mit der zeitgenössischen deutschen Philosophie gestanden, das Spätdenken stelle dagegen – vielleicht wegen seiner persönlichen Isolierung während des Mussolini-Regimes – einen Rückfall in einen substantiellen Hegelianismus dar. Der *topos* Rückfall taucht auch beim Erklärungsversuch

⁶² Zum Verhältnis von Heidegger I und Heidegger II detaillierter siehe meinen in Anm. 56 oben zitierten Aufsatz „»Das zureichende Sagen dieser Kehre«...“ 82f. und bes. Anm. 13.

⁶³ Die Bestrebung, Heideggers Selbstinterpretation nicht ohne weiteres anzunehmen, dürfte für sich beanspruchen, auf Heidegger'schen Boden zu stehen. Es heißt nämlich in seiner Kant-Vorlesung 1925: „[...] das faktische Vorgehen Kants [ist] weit besser als sein eigenes Wissen darum, und das wird bei jedem produktiven Denker notwendig so bleiben – auch dort, wo eine größere Durchsichtigkeit in dem Wissen um die Methode lebendig ist, auch dort weiß dieses Wissen nicht die eigentlich treibenden Anliegen der Fragestellung. GA 25, 324.) Vor diesem Heideggerschen Hintergrund läßt sich berechtigt fragen, ob Heidegger II „die eigentlich treibenden Anliegen der Fragestellung“ von Heidegger I habe angemessen einschätzen können.

⁶⁴ William J. Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*. Preface by Martin Heidegger. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1963, 31. Siehe auch den wichtigen Aufsatz von Walter Schulz, „Über den philosophiegeschichtlichen Ort Martin Heideggers“, *Philosophische Rundschau*, I. Jg., 1953/54, 65–93, 211–232, Wiederabdruck in: *Heidegger. Perspektiven zur Deutung seines Werks*, hrsg. O. Pöggeler, Köln/Berlin: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1969, 95–139, hier bes. 106: „'Sein und Zeit' ist in der Tat ein Werk der Philosophie der Subjektivität [...]“. Siehe hierzu noch Anm.75 unten.

des Denkwegs von Lukács auf,⁶⁵ und Heidegger selber bedient sich des *Topos* „Rückfall“ in bezug auf Schelling.⁶⁶ Mit Bezug auf Heidegger selbst wäre allerdings zu fragen, ob das seinsgeschichtliche Denken nicht einen Rückfall in die Metaphysik in seinem Sinne – oder beispielhaft in die negative Theologie – darstellt.

Es spricht also zweierlei dafür, diesen Punkt einer eingehenden Prüfung (wie sie in den hier vorliegenden Notizen allerdings nicht unternommen werden kann) zu unterziehen. Erstens handelt es sich um eine Interpretations- bzw. Gedankenfigur, deren sich Heidegger in bezug auf andere Denker sehr wohl bedient hat. Daher dürfte es möglich wie nützlich sein, der Frage nachzugehen, ob sich Heideggers Interpretationsfigur nicht auf fruchtbringende Weise auf sein eigenes Denken beziehen läßt. Zweitens stellt der Gedanke des Verfalls bzw. der Verfallsgeschichte, bei dem jede Entfernung vom Anfang oder Ursprung auf neuplatonische Weise mit Wertverlust bzw. Degeneration einhergeht,⁶⁷ einen der zentralsten Gedanken Heideggers dar, sodaß auch von daher eine Prüfung nahegelegt bzw. veranlaßt wird.

Ist bei Heidegger mit Bezug auf Schelling von einem Rückfall „in die starr gewordene Überlieferung des abendländischen Denkens“ die Rede, so fragt es sich, ob Heideggers Rückgriff auf platonische Wesen oder Ideen wie „Judentum“, „Russertum“, „Chinesentum“, „die Deutschen“, etc. in den *Schwarzen Heften* nicht in diesem Sinne als Rückfall in die („starr gewordene“) metaphysische Tradition angesehen werden

⁶⁵ Siehe z.B. Giuseppe Bedeschi, *Introduzione a Lukács*, Bari: Laterza, 1970, 80: „Der Marxismus wird bei Lukács zu dem, was er bei Marx am wenigsten war, zu [...] Wissenschaft des Seins, [...] also zur Metaphysik“.

⁶⁶ Schellings Scheitern erwirkt, „daß Schelling in die starr gewordene Überlieferung des abendländischen Denkens *zurückfällt*, ohne sie schöpferisch zu verwandeln“ (GA 42, 279; Hervorh. I.M.F.). Ähnlich GA 66, 263: „Schelling entwarf die tiefste Gestalt des Geistes innerhalb der Geschichte der deutschen Metaphysik, ohne sie freilich in sich zum Stehen zu bringen; denn die negativ-positive Philosophie ist *Rückfall* in die rationale Metaphysik und Flucht in die christliche Dogmatik zugleich.“ (Hervorh. I.M.F.). Vgl. auch in Bezug auf die Spätphilosophie Schellings GA 88, 142: „Inwiefern trotz allem, auch abgesehen von der Christlichkeit der Theologie, ein *Rückfall* und keine ursprüngliche Frage?“ (Hervorh. I.M.F.).

⁶⁷ Siehe hierzu z.B. GA 24, 438: „Alles Entspringen und alle Genesis im Felde des Ontologischen ist nicht Wachstum und Entfaltung, sondern Degeneration, sofern alles Entspringende *entspringt*, d. h. gewissermaßen entläuft, sich von der Übermacht der Quelle entfernt.“ Der „Ursprung [ist] notwendig reicher und trächtiger als alles, was ihm entspringen mag“ (ebd.; beide Textstellen sind im leicht abweichenden Kontext in Anm 62 des ersten Teils dieses Aufsatzes zitiert). Zu den neuplatonischen Bezügen der Seinsfrage Heideggers siehe Franco Volpi, *Heidegger e Brentano: L'aristotelismo e il problema dell'univocità dell'essere nella formazione filosofica del giovane Martin Heidegger* (Pubblicazioni della Scuola di Perfezionamento in Filosofia dell'Università di Padova, Quaderni di storia della filosofia, Bd. 7) Padova: Cedam 1976, hier bes. 13, 113f., wo vom „Neuplatonismus des späten Heidegger“ die Rede ist. Die Möglichkeit, ja Notwendigkeit, des Rückfalls hängt innigst mit Heideggers Konzept des Anfangs zusammen; siehe hierzu Anm. 62 im ersten Teil dieses Beitrags..

kann. Wie steht es mit der phänomenologischen Fundierung des seinsgeschichtlichen Denkens und der im Frühwerk so fruchtbaren Tendenz einer hermeneutisch-kritischen Destruktion der Ontologieggeschichte? Existenzialien von *Sein und Zeit* wie „In-der-Welt-sein“, „Sich-vorweg-sein“ bzw. „Sorge“, „Befindlichkeit“ usw. erweisen sich als phänomenologisch einleuchtend. Zur Zeit von *Sein und Zeit* hatte das Dasein noch kein „Wesen“ (dieses lag ja in seiner Existenz) und war ganz als Möglichkeit bzw. Möglichsein bestimmt. Dagegen erwecken die Bestimmungen des Menschen aus der seinsgeschichtlichen Denkperiode den Eindruck, Wesensbestimmungen darzustellen. Aus welcher phänomenologischen Perspektive ergibt sich denn die für Heidegger II wesentliche Charakterisierung des Menschen als „Wächter“ des Seyns oder „Hirt des Seins“?⁶⁸ Beeindruckend sind sie schon, aber fraglich bleibt, ob sie phänomenologisch ohne weiteres gut nachzuvollziehen sind. Sie scheinen in das zu gehören, was als – nicht so sehr die Philosophie als vielmehr – die Mythologie der Seynsgeschichte genannt werden kann.

Diese – in eine Ferne zur Phänomenologie führende – Entwicklung der Heidegger'schen Phänomenologie wurde aber als Möglichkeit von der Forschung früh gesehen, ja auch vorhergesagt, und zwar interessanterweise zunächst von einem englischsprachigen Philosophen, der später zu einem der Gründungsväter der analytischen Philosophie werden sollte: Gilbert Ryle. Dieser hatte in seiner Besprechung von *Sein und Zeit* in der hoch angesehenen Fachzeitschrift *Mind* Jg. 1929 das Werk durchaus positiv bewertet, machte jedoch auch einige kritische Bemerkungen, u.a. die folgenden, die sich aus unserer Sicht als besonders relevant erweisen “[...] it is my personal opinion that *qua* First Philosophy Phenomenology is at present heading for bankruptcy and disaster and will end either in self-ruinous Subjectivism or in a windy Mysticism”.⁶⁹ Die Bezeichnung „windy Mysticism“, wäre,

⁶⁸ Zu „Wächter“, „Wächterschaft“ („des Seyns“, „der Wahrheit des Seyns“, usw.) siehe GA 94, 334, 335, 382, 410, 449, 480; GA 95, 38, 259, 327, 329, 341, 368, 378, 426, 439; GA 96, 34, 35, 51 („das Wesen [!] des Menschen als des Wächters des Seyns“ [Hervorh. I.M.F.]), 52 („Wächterschaft des Seyns“), 59 („Wächterschaft des Seyns“), 81 („Wächterschaft des Seyns“), 156, 267; GA 97, 4. Zum Menschen als „Hirt des Seins“ siehe den Humanismusbrief in GA 9, 331, 342.

⁶⁹ G. Ryle, „Heidegger's Sein und Zeit“, *Mind* 38 (1929), 355–370, wiederabgedruckt in: *Heidegger and Modern Philosophy. Critical Essays*, ed. Michael. Murray, New Haven – London: Yale University Press, 1978, 53–64, hier 64. Siehe hierzu auch Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction*, 3rd revised and enlarged ed., The Hague: Nijhoff, 1994, 408: „As to Heidegger's phenomenology, Ryle anticipated remarkably the trend toward an increasingly mystic position.“ Und Spiegelberg meint seinerseits: „At least to some extent this modest prophecy, read with all its qualifications, has come true.“ Heideggers „abandonment of the title 'phenomenology' could be interpreted as the liquidation if not as the bankruptcy of the Movement.“ Übrigens beginnt Ryles Besprechung mit folgendem Satz: „This is a very difficult and important work, which marks a big advance in the application of the 'Phenomenological Method' -though I may say at once

in bezug auf Heideggers seinsgeschichtliches Denken zwar ungenau und übertrieben, jedoch nicht völlig abwegig und irreführend. Die Kehre und das Entstehen des seinsgeschichtlichen Denkens auf Heideggers Denkweg, in dessen Zentrum nunmehr das Seyn und sein jeweiliger Entzug bzw. Sichentziehen steht, so könnte man die These formulieren, ist mehr Frucht des phänomenologiefreien Rasonierens⁷⁰ als des der Phänomenologie eigenen aufweisenden Sehenlassens.

Es ergibt sich der folgende Zusammenhang: Wenn das fundamentalontologische Denken das Niveau des Seins nicht erreicht und dazu keinen Zugang findet (das kann als Scheitern bezeichnet werden), dann, so scheint Heidegger zu denken, ist das mit einem Entzug des Seins und mit dessen Abkehr vom Menschen zu *erklären*. Das eine Versagen läßt sich durch das andere Versagen erläutern. Seinsvergessenheit läßt sich mit Seinsentzug erklären, und Seinsentzug manifestiert sich in Seinsvergessenheit. Die Abkehr des Menschen vom Sein, die in der Seinsvergessenheit ihren Ausdruck findet und darin vollzogen wird, läuft parallel mit dem Entzug des Seyns.

Der soeben kurz und vereinfacht skizzierte *Erklärungsversuch* ist nicht implausibel, ganz im Gegenteil. Er bleibt immerhin *eine* mehrerer möglicher Erklärungen – also Ergebnis eines rasonierenden Denkens und nicht eines unmittelbaren Erfahrens. Der Entzug des Seins ist zudem Rede über das Sein, etwas, was der Systementwurf von *Sein und Zeit*, d.h. das fundamentalontologische Denken, zwar bestrebte, aber nicht vollziehen konnte. Es fragt sich, ob diese plötzliche Rede legitim ist, oder ob sie nicht einen Rückfall in etwas darstellt, was als vorkantischer Dogmatismus genannt werden kann.⁷¹ Es wird – wohlgemerkt – nicht gesagt, „aus phänomenologischer

that I suspect that this advance is an advance towards disaster” (G. Ryle, „Heidegger's Sein und Zeit“, *Heidegger and Modern Philosophy*, 53). Wenn „Kehre“ nicht nur Thema von Heidegger II ist, sondern sie charakterisiert ebenfalls das dieses Thema diskutierende Denken, so ist hier ähnlich „Katastrophe“ („disaster“) nicht nur Kennzeichen der Seinsgeschichte (siehe hierzu Anm. 12 oben), sondern auch des diese thematisierenden Denkens.

⁷⁰ Rasonieren wird hier im Sinne von „darlegen, Schlüsse ziehen“ verwendet. Siehe https://www.korrekturen.de/beliebte_fehler/raesonieren.shtml: „Das Fremdwort rasonieren kann sowohl »sich wortreich [überflüssigerweise] äußern« heißen als auch »darlegen, Schlüsse ziehen«“.

⁷¹ Wenn in *Sein und Zeit* gesagt wird, „Das pure »daß es ist« zeigt sich, das Woher und Wohin bleiben im Dunkel“ (134), so ist diese Formulierung eine phänomenologisch durchaus angemessene Redeweise; das Dunkel mit dem Sichverbergen des Seyns bzw. mit dessen Entzug, usw. zu erklären, das Dunkel auf diese Weise aufzulösen, läuft dagegen schon Gefahr, unphänomenologisch zu werden. Dasselbe betrifft eine Stelle der *Beiträge*, die insbesondere auch zur Erläuterung der von Heidegger vollzogenen Kehre oft verwendet/herangezogen wird. Sie behauptet, „daß der Werfer des Entwurfs als geworfener sich erfährt, d. h. er-eignet durch das Seyn. Die Eröffnung durch den Entwurf ist nur solche, wenn sie als Erfahrung der Geworfenheit und *damit* der Zugehörigkeit zum Seyn geschieht.“ (GA 65, 239, Hervorh. I.M.F.) Fraglich aus der Sicht von Heidegger I sind hier die Bezeichnungen „d.h.“ und „damit“, denn diese implizieren wie selbstverständlich eine schlichte Identität, eine solche, die freilich nur aus der

(phänomenologisch-hermeneutischer) Perspektive (für den phänomenologischen Blick usw.) sieht es so aus, als entzöge sich das Sein“, sondern es wird einfach nur assertorisch-kategorisch behauptet: „Das Sein entzieht sich“. ⁷² Streng genommen, gemessen an puren phänomenologischen Maßstäben, sollte nur so viel gesagt werden können: Das fundamentalontologische Denken erreicht das Niveau (die Dimension, die Ebene) des Seins nicht und bleibt gefangen in der Dimension des Seienden. Woran dies liegt, ist dem phänomenologischen Blick nicht zugänglich. Es mag u.a. sicherlich auch am Entzug des Seins liegen. Das ist eine mögliche Erklärung, es kann aber auch andere mögliche Erklärungen geben. ⁷³

Perspektive von Heidegger II zu Recht besteht, diese Perspektive selbst also bereits voraussetzt (und somit nicht erklärt). Was im Text *nach* den Formulierungen „d.h.“ und „damit“ steht, scheint aus der Sicht von Heidegger I eher eine unphänomenologische, im schlechten Sinne „metaphysische“ Konstruktion zu sein. Siehe noch GA 65, 251, 261, insbes. 304: „Der Werfer selbst, das Da-sein, ist geworfen, er-eignet durch das Seyn.“ (Siehe dann auch im Humanismusbrief, GA 9, 337: „Überdies aber ist der Entwurf wesenhaft ein geworfener. Das Werfende im Entwerfen ist nicht der Mensch, sondern das Sein selbst [...].“) Daß der Entwurf geworfener ist, war aber dem Autor von *Sein und Zeit* gar nicht unbekannt, diese Einsicht allein vermag also Heideggers Kehre nicht zu erklären. Vgl. SZ 145: „Und als geworfenes ist das Dasein in die Seinsart des Entwerfens geworfen“; ebd. 148, 199: „Der »Doppelsinn« von »cura« meint *eine* Grundverfassung in ihrer wesenhaft zweifachen Struktur des geworfenen Entwurfs“; ebd., 223, 285: „Der Entwurf ist nicht nur als je geworfener durch die Nichtigkeit des Grundseins bestimmt [...] Die Sorge – das Sein des Daseins – besagt demnach als geworfener Entwurf [...]“; ebd. 406.

⁷² Vgl. GA 5, 337 („Das Sein entzieht sich, indem es sich in das Seiende entbirgt“); *Nietzsche* II, 355 („Das Sein selbst entzieht sich. Der Entzug geschieht“), 368 („Das Sein selbst entzieht sich“), 383; GA 10, 83ff. (= *Der Satz vom Grund*, 5. Aufl. Pfullingen: Neske, 1978, 99ff); GA 9, 369f.; GA 45, 189, 210 („Das Seyn ist nicht einfach nur verborgen – sondern es entzieht und verbirgt sich“), GA 14, 12, 27f., 50, 62; GA 7, 134f. (= *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, 129: „das Sichentziehen ist nicht nichts [...] Was sich entzieht, scheint völlig abwesend zu sein. Aber dieser Schein trägt. Was sich entzieht, west an, nämlich in der Weise, daß es *uns* anzieht [...]“ [Hervorh. I.M.F.]; mit dem kursivierten „*uns*“ erscheint plötzlich das ohnehin zum Verschwinden verurteilte Subjekt). Zu Recht läßt sich sagen, daß für Heidegger der fundamentale Zusammenhang „von »Entbergung« und »Entzug« zum Leitthema in seinem ganzen späteren Denken wird“ (Hans Köchler, *Skepsis und Gesellschaftskritik im Denken Martin Heideggers*. Monographien zur philosophischen Forschung. Bd. 158. Meisenheim/Glan: A. Hain, 1978, 4).

⁷³ In Sachen Metaphysik, schreibt in seiner phänomenologischen Ontologie Sartre, können höchstens Hypothesen aufgestellt werden. Es versteht sich von selbst, daß diese Hypothesen immer nur Hypothesen bleiben, sie können weder bestätigt noch widerlegt werden. Siehe Sartre, *Das Sein und das Nichts. Versuch einer phänomenologischen Ontologie*, 1061: „Die Ontologie kann [...] lediglich feststellen, daß *alles so geschieht, als wenn* sich das An-sich in einem Entwurf, sich selbst zu begründen, die Modifikation des Für-sich gäbe. Der Metaphysik kommt es zu, die Hypothesen aufzustellen, die es ermöglichen, diesen Prozeß als das absolute Ereignis zu begreifen, das individuelle Abenteuer, nämlich die Existenz des Seins, krönt. Es versteht sich, daß solche Hypothesen bleiben, weil wir keine letzte Bestätigung oder Nichtbestätigung erwarten können. Ihre Gültigkeit wird allein darin liegen, ob sie uns die Möglichkeit bieten, die Gegebenheiten der Ontologie zu vereinigen“ (Hervorh.).

Um Mißverständnissen vorzubeugen: Die Behauptung, wenn das fundamentalontologische Denken das Niveau des Seins nicht erreicht, so sei es vernünftig (oder bleibt nichts anderes übrig als) anzunehmen, daß sich das Sein entzieht, ist durchaus sinnvoll, sie ist aber nicht gleichbedeutend mit der Behauptung schlechthin, daß das Sein sich entzieht. Die Rede vom Entzug des Seins ist nämlich (zumindest teilweise) eine Schlussfolgerung – keine unmittelbare (intuitive) phänomenologische Evidenz –, gewiß schlüssig, aber als solche bedingt, abhängig von einer Voraussetzung, nämlich der des Scheiterns des fundamentalontologischen Denkens bzw. von dessen Unfähigkeit, das Niveau des Seins zu erreichen. Die Unfähigkeit des fundamentalontologischen Denkens, das Niveau des Seins zu erreichen, ist als Scheitern, als Nicht-Weiterkommen (als „Holzweg“) gänzlich Ertrag phänomenologischer Erfahrung, der Entzug des Seins dagegen stellt ein Mischphänomen phänomenologischer Erfahrung, d.h. unmittelbarer Einsicht, und rationalen Denkens dar. Der Entzug des Seins wird nämlich zunächst und hauptsächlich in der besagten Unfähigkeit des fundamentalontologischen Denkens *und als solche* erfahren. Daß die Rede vom Entzug des Seins durchaus schlüssig ist, ändert nichts daran, daß der nämliche Entzug nicht als volle, unabhängige phänomenologische Einsicht erfolgt. Es sei wiederholt: Die Rede vom Entzug des Seins ist als *Erklärung* für die Unfähigkeit bzw. das Scheitern des fundamentalontologischen Denkens, das Niveau des Seins zu erreichen, zu dieser Ebene Zugang zu finden, durchaus sinnvoll und schlüssig, aber sie ist als Erklärung *eine* mögliche, d.h. nicht die einzig mögliche.

Heidegger hätte sagen sollen: aus phänomenologischer Perspektive sieht es so aus, wird es so erfahren, als entzöge sich das Sein. Stattdessen wird einfach gesagt: Das Sein entzieht sich – wer aber ist der Sprecher dieses Satzes? Oder was für ein Sprecher spricht hier überhaupt? dies bleibt unklar.

I.M.F.). In dem Zusammenhang kehrt bei Sartre charakteristischerweise mit einer gewissen Häufigkeit der Ausdruck „alles geschieht als ob/als wenn“ wieder. Über die zitierte Stelle hinaus siehe hierzu ebd., 41, 283, 397, 398, 473, 534, 953, 1064.

⁷⁴ Das Subjekt, „verbirgt sich“ aber auch in einem weiteren Sinne im seinsgeschichtlichen Denken, und zwar in der grundsätzlichen Behauptung, „das Sein verbirgt sich“. So etwas wie Sichverbergen setzt nämlich die Existenz von jemandem voraus, für den eine bestimmte Richtung der Bewegung eben als „Sich-verbergen“ erscheint. Dieses ist für-andere-Sein. Sichverbergen setzt die Existenz des anderen voraus. In meiner Einsamkeit könnte ich nichts verbergen, nicht einmal mich selbst. Ebenso wie „die Scham [...] in ihrer primären Struktur Scham *vor jemandem*“ ist, „sich seiner vor Anderen schämen“ (Sartre, *Das Sein und das Nichts. Versuch einer phänomenologischen Ontologie*, 406f., Hervorh. im Original), ebenso ist Sichverbergen Sichverbergen vor jemandem. In meiner solipsistischen Einsamkeit könnte ich mich nicht vor niemandem verbergen, ich könnte mich also überhaupt nicht verbergen. Das Sein kann deshalb niemals „an sich“, sondern lediglich einem Anderen, dem Menschen verborgen sein, wenn es verborgen ist und sich verbirgt.

Dazu kommt eine weitere Überlegung. Der Entzug ist eine Art Zug. Als dieser zeigt er eine Bewegung, eine Bewegtheit – und als Bewegung eine bestimmte Richtung. Diese Richtung bewegt sich „weg ... von“. In diesem „weg ... von“, ist ein Ort impliziert, und zwar – trotz Heideggers Bemühungen, das Subjekt völlig verschwinden zu lassen – das menschliche Dasein, das es, um das transzendental-horizontale Denken zu verlassen, zu überwinden gälte. Um es in der Sprache Heideggers auszudrücken: in der (oder hinter der) zitierten Formulierung („Das Sein entzieht sich“) *verbirgt sich* das Dasein, jedoch so, daß dieses Sichverbergen selbst sich wiederum zu verbergen sucht. Daß dieser Versuch nicht gelingt, wollten die obigen Bemerkungen herausstellen. Für Heidegger II sollten wir unmittelbar auf der Ebene des Seins sein und den Ausgang vom seinsverstehenden Dasein hinter uns gelassen haben. Das Subjekt, das verschwinden sollte, „verbirgt sich“ aber, wie wir sehen, in den charakteristischen Behauptungen des seinsgeschichtlichen Denkens,⁷⁴ welches deswegen Gefahr läuft, dogmatisch zu werden und im Vergleich zu *Sein und Zeit* einen Rückfall darzustellen.⁷⁵ Heideggers sozusagen „selbstverständliches“ Aufgreifen antisemistischer Klichés und Gemeinplätze in den *Schwarzen Heften* (wobei aber Gemeinplätze anderer Art auch nicht fehlen)⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Das Subjekt, „verbirgt sich“ aber auch in einem weiteren Sinne im seinsgeschichtlichen Denken, und zwar in der grundsätzlichen Behauptung, „das Sein verbirgt sich“. So etwas wie Sichverbergen setzt nämlich die Existenz von jemandem voraus, für den eine bestimmte Richtung der Bewegung eben als „Sich-verbergen“ erscheint. Dieses ist für-andere-Sein. Sichverbergen setzt die Existenz des anderen voraus. In meiner Einsamkeit könnte ich nichts verbergen, nicht einmal mich selbst. Ebenso wie „die Scham [...] in ihrer primären Struktur Scham vor jemandem“ ist, „sich seiner vor Anderen schämen“ (Sartre, *Das Sein und das Nichts. Versuch einer phänomenologischen Ontologie*, 406f., Hervorh. im Original), ebenso ist Sichverbergen Sichverbergen vor jemandem. In meiner solipsistischen Einsamkeit könnte ich mich nicht vor niemandem verbergen, ich könnte mich also überhaupt nicht verbergen. Das Sein kann deshalb niemals „an sich“, sondern lediglich einem Anderen, dem Menschen verborgen sein, wenn es verborgen ist und sich verbirgt.

⁷⁵ Ein Hinweis soll genügen, um anzudeuten, daß unsere obige Auslegung eine grundsätzliche Kritik von Heideggers Kant-Interpretation impliziert, welche Kritik hier nicht unternommen werden kann. Es sei nur soviel angedeutet, daß Heidegger gegenüber einem „kritizistischen“ Kant einen „metaphysischen“ Kant bevorzugt und sucht die kopernikanische Wende bzw. die kopernikanische Tat so weit wie möglich umzuinterpretieren, herunterzuspielen oder sogar herabzusetzen. Siehe hierzu GA 25, 55f., 213 („die beiläufige Rede Kants von der Kopernikanischen Wendung [wurde] zu einem mißverständlichen Schlagwort aufgesteigert“), 303 („»Transzendendale Deduktion«, »quaestio iuris« – das sind wie die Rede von der »Kopernikanischen Tat« Schlachtrufe [...]“), ferner GA 3, 12, 17, 265, 293. Die antijüdische Motiviertheit des Angriffes gegen den Neukantianismus und damit des Ausgangspunktes der eigenen Kant-Interpretation und deren Gestaltung ist eine nicht implausible Annahme, die hier nicht zur detaillierten Diskussion gestellt werden kann.

⁷⁶ Dazu gehören auch positiv zu bewertende Allgemeinplätze wie z.B. der über die (Selbst-) Charakterisierung der Deutschen als Volk oder Land der „Dichter und Denker“ (siehe GA 94, 519; GA 95, 339; GA 96, 175; GA 97, 82). Diese Bezeichnung stammt tatsächlich von einer Französin, Madame de Staël (ihr vollständiger Name lautet: Baronin Anne Louise Germaine de Staël-Holstein),

dürfte wohl auch mit der allgemeinen Tendenz seines seinsgeschichtlichen Denkens, phänomenologische Kriterien zugunsten und vor dem Hintergrund einer Mythologie der Seinsgeschichte preiszugeben, in Zusammenhang stehen. Man kann sie von dieser Tendenz her zumindest teilweise erklären.

Ein weiterer Punkt, der eine detaillierte Untersuchung verdienen würde, aber hier nur kurz als Aufgabenstellung angedeutet werden kann, ergibt sich aus der Einsicht, daß der zentrale Begriff des seynsgeschichtlichen Denkens, der des (anderen) „Anfangs“ ein – kantisch gesprochen – antinomischer Begriff ist. Meines Wissens wurden bisher in der Forschung die möglichen Zusammenhänge zwischen Heideggers Begriff des Anfangs in seinem seynsgeschichtlichen Denken und Kants Begriff des Anfangs in seiner Antinomienlehre nicht eigens zum Thema gemacht. Der antinomische Charakter des Begriffs „Anfang“ besteht mit Blick auf das in der ersten Antinomie entfaltete Verhältnis von Thesis und Antithesis (KrV B 454ff.) darin,

ist also – streng genommen – eine Fremdbestimmung Das im 19. Jahrhundert in Europa vorherrschende Deutschlandbild wurde maßgeblich vom Deutschlandbuch der französischen Literatin geprägt, das die Formel vom Land der „Dichter und Denker“ verbreitet hatte (*De l'Allemagne*, 1810, 1813, deutsch 1814, ein berühmt-berüchtigtes Deutschlandbuch, in dem vom „*peuple des poètes et penseurs*“ die Rede war). Siehe hierzu Viktor Žmegač, „Deutschlandbilder von der Romantik bis zur Gegenwart“, in: *Neohelicon*, vol. 32, n. 2, November 2005, 343–355. Siehe auch Hans Mayer, „Das Wort von den Dichtern und Denkern. Von guten und schlechten Traditionen deutscher Sprache und Literatur“, in: *Zeit Online*, 10. April 1964. Internet: <http://www.zeit.de/1964/15/das-wort-von-den-dichtern-und-denkern>. Die von Heidegger aufgegriffene Formel ist also ursprünglich eine Fremdbestimmung, nicht Selbstbestimmung. Das besagt: Im innigsten Kern des Selbstverständnisses deutschen Wesens liegt eine Fremdbestimmung. Ironisch mag diese Tatsache vor allem da wirken, wo diese Bezeichnung von maßgebenden Persönlichkeiten im feierlichen Ton, mit tödlichem Ernst ausgesprochen wird: als Bekenntnis zum innigsten Wesen, als handle es sich um die tiefste und deutscheste oder urdeutsche Bestimmung der Deutschen. So sagte z.B. Heidegger im Wintersemester 1942/43: Der „ursprünglichere Anfang kann sich nur so wie der erste Anfang in einem abendländisch geschichtlichen *Volk der Dichter und Denker* ereignen. [...] Daher gilt es zu wissen, dass dieses geschichtliche Volk, wenn es überhaupt hier auf ein ‚Siegen‘ ankommt, schon gesiegt hat und unbesiegbar ist, wenn es das *Volk der Dichter und Denker* ist, das es in seinem Wesen bleibt, solange es nicht der furchtbaren, weil immer drohenden Abirrung von seinem Wesen und so einer Verkennung seines Wesens zum Opfer fällt.“ (GA 54, 114 [Hervorh. I.M.F.]; siehe noch z.B. GA 55, 123; GA 39, 290). War Heidegger – großer Meister der Destruktion, des Zurückgehens zu den allerersten Ursprüngen und Anfängen – sich wohl bewusst, daß das den Deutschen zugesprochene, für die Deutschen beanspruchte Eigenste *ursprünglich* einem Blick aus Paris zu verdanken ist? Ausführlicher zu dieser Thematik siehe István M. Fehér, „Deutschland und Europa: Idee, Identität, Selbstverständnis“, in *Blicke auf Deutschland! Pädagogisch-politische Schlaglichter zur Flüchtlingsfrage von 2016 und 1948 • Orientierungen, Statements migrationspädagogische Beiträge und Interviews • Die Deutschlandbroschüre (1948) des Holocaust-Überlebenden Emil Utitz*, hrsg. Tereza Matějčková, Reinhard Mehring, Emeti Morkoyun (Schriftenreihe der Pädagogischen Hochschule Heidelberg, Band 60), Heidelberg: Mattes Verlag, 2016, 143–160, hier 154ff.

daß das Denken eines absoluten Anfangs notwendig und gleichzeitig unmöglich ist. Es ist notwendig, weil – apagogisch – die Welt nicht unendlich, ist aber zugleich auch unmöglich, weil die Welt nicht endlich sein kann. Dasselbe läßt sich auch so ausdrücken: das Denken muß einen absoluten Anfang denken, kann es aber zugleich auch nicht. Es läßt sich nun fragen, ob Heideggers Denkbemühungen in seiner seynsgeschichtlichen Periode, den Begriff „Anfang“ und seinen anfänglichen Charakter durch das „Denken“ „richtig“ darzulegen, nicht in bestimmter Weise mit der antinomischen Stellung des von Kant erörterten Anfangsbegriffes zusammenhängen.

Vorwiegend zeit- und kulturkritische Bemerkungen ins Seynsgeschichtliche eingebettet – darin könnte man vielleicht zusammenfassend, kurz und formal den allgemeinen Charakter der *Schwarzen Hefte* erblicken. Die denkerische Auseinandersetzung mit ihnen hat eben erst begonnen.

PHENOMENOLOGY AND THE 'LEVITATION-FLOATING' FEELING IN MUSIC'S NOSTALGIA. AN ENDLESS {'INTO'}-FALLING

MARIA ROXANA BISCHIN*

ABSTRACT. The essay focuses on completing one of Husserl's signitive theory with a new perspective. The discussion of the signitive theory is based more on the apperception's function than to the perceptive one. We have observed that music produces for the 'Self' different feelings. But one of the most seductive feelings we want to discuss related to music is the perpetual floating-feeling, which is quite similar to the levitation process and it has connections with the idea of the lightness of the Being in some circumstances. Despite these, stays nostalgia. We are introducing a model based on two terms, as permanent {'into'}-falling Self's condition into the sounds and the *signitive-apperceptive-intuition*. The basic assumption is that music is a continuously phenomenological-fall which extends the Husserlian theory more, completing it day by day. We hope that our concepts proposed here, *signitive-apperceptive-intuition* and the {'into'}-falling will bring a new light in modelling the sound in a phenomenological manner.

Keywords: *music, consciousness, floating, levitation, falling, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Gustav Mahler, Max Richter, Jonathan Dawe, phenomenology, absorption, sounds, nostalgia, sadness, existentialism, existence.*

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Motto:

“It evokes birds lost in the oppressiveness of a very dark forest during the hottest hours of summer.”

(Ravel, *Oiseaux tristes*)

§ The spreading of the concept of {‘into’}-falling and, especially of the ‘levitation-floating’ concept and the possibility of a signitive-apperceptive-intuition related to music

In this paper, we introduce the term {‘into’}-falling¹ for the music’s field of consciousness. But starting with the Husserlian idea of the signitive intention², from Husserl’s sixth *Logische Untersuchungen/ Logical Investigations*, we follow a new path for the signitive intuition. The signitive intuition should unify the matter, the form and the improper laws of the thinking processes, meaning the beginning of the consciousness’ endless circularity. Having these two premises, we can develop a theory about music based on two dynamic aspects: the music should be both an (i) endless signitive intuition and (ii) {‘into’}-fall process. The levitation-floating derives from this. In this essay, we collide levitation and floating and make a single concept under the umbrella of the term “levitation-floating”. More than this, Christian Ferencz-Flatz observed a multiplication of the functions of apperceptions³ related to Husserlian theory⁴. Starting with this observation, music is a multiplication of the intuitional character of the apperception, but more than this, the temporal-processes are based on an instability of the original consciousness’ flow.⁵ The matter of the sonorous floating acts in this way too.

¹ We prefer to mark along the paper the term in this way, using accolades: {‘into’}-falling.

² The signitive intention describes the conditions of the senses which consciousness receives from the exterior world, but the purpose is to show that what comes from exterior transforms itself in *intuitional*-apperceptive condition for the judgment. For more details, see also Maria Roxana Bischin, “The critique of the judgement of perception in Husserl’s dual theory of the apperception”, *Saeculum (founded by Lucian Blaga)*, “Lucian Blaga” University, section – Faculty of Journalism, Communications and Public Relations, Sibiu, no. 1 (july 2018): 106.

& Maria Roxana Bischin, «*Hebrew Melody in A Minor, Op. 33*’ by Joseph Achron. The dehiscence of temporalities between “[in]-flesh-ization” and “holding[s]-still” phenomenon in musicalized mournfulness», *Studia UBB Musica*, no. 1, “Babeş-Bolyai” University, National Academy of Music “Gheorghe Dima” (2021): 285–302. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.24193/subbmusica.2021.1.19>.

³ Christian Ferencz-Flatz, ch. “Objects with a past: Husserl on “ad-memorizing apperceptions”, in *Continental Philosophy Review*, vol. 45, Springer (2012): 171–188.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 171-173.

⁵ Luis Niel, „Das Problem des Urprozesses in der *Bernauer Manuskripten* Edmund Husserls“ [trans. “The Problem of Primary Process in *Bernauer Manuscripts* of Edmund Husserl”], *Studia UBB Philosophia*, no. 2, “Babeş-Bolyai” University, Faculty of History and Philosophy, Cluj-Napoca (2009): 48.

When we think to music, we should feel it as a long walk on a long boulevard, not necessarily feeling the time's pressure: our mind tries to feel the rhythm of the small steps, our sensations connect with the steps. If we pay attention to this mood-of-being, we will observe that between our thoughts we can feel an inconsistent pressure of what we receive from our sensations: this pressure is nostalgia. From where does the nostalgia derives, if not from a mixture between the feeling of floating and levitation? But, in a spectral field, we cannot separate those feelings. They should be combined, because as the thinking processes, feeling the music in depth means *to fall-'into'* – something that happens to each step.

Sometimes we feel the floating atmosphere, other times we feel a levitation as a disconnection of the 'Self' by its contact with the material world. In both cases, the rhythm of the 'states-of-the-being' generates nostalgia:

Matter and fulness are, however, by no means unrelated and, when we range an intuitive act alongside a signitive act to which it brings fulness, the former act does not differ from the latter merely by the joining on of a third distinct moment of fulness to the quality and matter common to the two acts.⁶

Sonorous 'matter' should be understood as a substance's functionality which creates the material for the apperception. More than that, Husserl insists on the idea of the "purely signitive" mood of the fulfillments⁷. We should complete the idea that a pure act is filled only when the apperception becomes filled too. This already means that, especially when we refer to music, we need to introduce the idea of an "apperceptive-intuition" with a *signitive* conduct. This term defines the apperceptive moods in thinking the pitches and chords. As an example, first, the {'into'}-falling is related with the fulfillment. Each time the fulfillment of a sound reactivates through an emotional state of mind (as a metaphysical nostalgia or a feeling of a burning emotion etc.), it activates the {'into'}-falling action/act too.

Signitive intentions are not empty by the intuitive content as Husserl once observed.⁸ Here is the counterpoint in which we can complete his theory with the idea of the apperceptive-intuition with signitive conduct and call her "signitive-apperceptive-intuition". Separately, we can introduce the idea of signitive-sounds

⁶ Edmund Husserl, ch. "Fullness and intentional matter", *Logical Investigations*, in Dermot Morat (ed.), translation by N. Findlay, vol. 2 (London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2013 [first published for Routledge, 2001]), 241.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 240.

⁸ Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen. Erster Band. Prolegomena zur reinen Logik* (Halle A.D.S.: Max Niemeyer, 1913), 199.

which will collide with the intuitive-sounds. So, our analysis is based on a counter-Husserlian perspective based on some of the last observations of Thomas Byrne.⁹ Starting with these perspectives, we can design a phenomenological *engaged* model for music where the intuitive register for signitive soundlessness is changing radically. More than this, our new model of engagement is a counter-Husserlian model, in according to complete the Husserl's theory.

Sometimes it is not easy to think to music as something that heals. But, there is a split between what Self feels, what consciousness sees and understands, and the alive matter of the sounds. But, when it comes to express feelings that seems to be „outside“ us – as floating or nostalgia's levitation (very present in Tchaikovskian themes) – the mechanisms of the perceptual 'aspects' of Husserl change. Ravel, Tchaikovsky, Mahler explored in these ways the abyss of the sounds. The 'floating-levitation' feeling derives from a primary process of temporality which is unified with the sounds' spatialization opened in extenso for the consciousness. The liquidity of the temporalities makes possible the sonorous floating generated by the sonorous matter.

The signitive-sounds are also pure intentions. Thus, there are ascending series of the {'into'}-falling of the 'Self' into the sounds. {'Into'}-falling equals the signitive content with the intuitive content, filling them through intertwining. From this intertwining are deriving the floating, the levitations or the constant nostalgia's pressure felt inside the sounds.

§ Between levitation and floating as phenomenological state of being when it is touched by the sounds

We sustain that nostalgia feeling derives from a combination between the levitation mood and sonorous floating. Not only nostalgia or anger, but life. There is life beside the cruelty of an anger too: "Life, but particularly musical life, is "warm" not cold, and our encounter with musical phenomena must be "subjective" and personal"¹⁰. Joseph Smith sustains the idea that when it comes about feelings, music is not subjective in a sentimentally way, but it is the heart of all the possible feelings ever imagined.

⁹ Thomas Byrne, "Husserl's Theory of Signitive and Empty Intentions in *Logical Investigations* and its Revisions: Meaning Intentions and Perceptions", *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* (March 2020): 16–17.

¹⁰ Joseph F. Smith, *The Experiencing of Musical Sound. Prelude to a Phenomenology of Music*, first edition (London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 1979, [secondly 2019]), 91. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315025315>.

There is a substance of sadness in each thing of rare beauty that cannot be denied. Sometimes music comes to show us this deliberately. In this way, the importance of the Husserlian matrix of time-consciousness is validated. This matrix is filled with a lot of subjectivity, and inter-subjectivity. The Self's loss into the sound's carnation is what causes nostalgia in front of music. From a loss of self, from a dissipation of the Self into sound and to the total disappearance of the Self, there is a small step. Phenomena such as levitation or floating occur; in this signitive plane, they are identical, because they are part of the same seduction carried into the sound matter.

Having this analysis of an signitive-intuitional apperceptive model, we can say that we shaped a new Husserlian model of {'into'}-falling apperceptions – apperceptions referring to into-falling events for consciousness. Thus, *Oiseaux tristes*¹¹ (Ravel & Demets, 1904-1906) is an example for these multiple {'into'}-falling apperceptions. Maurice Ravel was a creator of apperceptive conditions for piano sounds. In this respect, we remember a precise observation noted by Ruti Abramovitch:

We can also learn a lot from the piano roll recordings of Ravel himself performing his *Oiseaux tristes*, recorded in London on June 30, 1922, and La Vallée des Cloches. In observing these recordings it is interesting to note a few things: In the recording of *Oiseaux tristes* Ravel's indication to play the bird-like arabesque figure in the opening faster than the original tempo is very audible through his playing; however the lingering on the longer dotted note (as he suggested to do) is not so audible and it's played in a rather straight forward manner.¹²

Despite this example of creating the {'into'}-falling functions for the *poetized-narrative* apperceptions, we can go to the Tchaikovskian alternative of "Variations on a Rococo Theme for Cello and Orchestra, Op. 33"¹³ and to "Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 in B Flat Minor op. 23" interpreted by Yuja Wang¹⁴. Inside the

¹¹ Maurice Ravel, "II. Oiseaux tristes", Eb minor, in *Miroirs*, composed, 1904-1905, first published, by Eugène Demets (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1906).

¹² Ruti Abramovitch, *Maurice Ravel's Miroirs for Piano: Historical Background and som Performance Related Aspects* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University, Jacobs School of Music, 2012), 6.

¹³ Pyotr Tchaikovsky, 1877, "Variations on a Rococo Theme for Cello and Orchestra, Opus 33", in Viktor Kubatsky's complete edition, *Complete Collected Works*, vol. 30B., plate M. 25739 (Moscow: Muzgiz, 1956 & reprinted, New York: E. F. Kalmus, 1965). See Tchaikovsky, Wilhelm Fitzenhagen, (holograph manuscript), *The Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33*, 1876, in Nikolai Rubinstein's (conductor) orchestra, November 30, 1877.

¹⁴ Yuja Wang, "Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 in B Flat Minor, Opus 23", in album, *Peter Tchaikovsky* [Piano Concert No. 1. Hamlet. Fatum], Petersburg Recording Studio, performed on stage, Manhattan (New York: Carnegie Hall, July 23, 2017).

Tchaikovskian signitive-apperceptive-intuition, "sound contrasts movingly with the vulnerability and dignity"¹⁵. Accordingly to Zajaczkowski's observation, "Tchaikovsky uses similar methods to glimpse beyond human tragedy into another realm"¹⁶. More than this, we have a register full of chromaticism in Mahler's *Symphony No. 4*.¹⁷ We should mention that during the epoch, stylistic influences from Mahler's works transited Tchaikovskian themes and works, and viceversa. The shaping of the signitive-apperceptive-intuition is based on processes as suffering, or vulnerability of the Being:

[...] the suffering that this has caused can be assuaged only by moving literally into a different realm – that of sleep and the fantastical, imaginary world of dream ('sleep quietly descends upon my sad eyes and at this moment my soul begins to converse with the past'). In this way, parallels emerge between the original text and the mastery and appropriateness of the musical interpretation of it. Tchaikovsky's response to the text is profound and far-reaching symbolical metaphor in *itself*. The music absorbs and keeps faith with the original text but then also goes beyond it, exploring deep psychological regions, and creates a far more profound life of its own.¹⁸

Accordingly to Jacques de Plessis, the Mahler's *Quartetsatz* manuscript should be investigated through Husserl's theory of consciousness¹⁹, but there is no doubt that *Symphony No. 4*²⁰ should be treated this way too:

Mahler's *Quartetsatz* will be used as the basis on which to probe the possibilities inherent in experiential analysis from a performer perspective.²¹

Jacques du Plessis continues:

¹⁵ Henry Zajaczkowski, *An Introduction to Tchaikovsky's Operas* (Westport, Connecticut and London: Praeger, 2005), 53.

¹⁶ Rudeforth Elizabeth Helen, *Words, Ideas and Music: A Study of Tchaikovsky's Completed Work, The Six Songs, Opus 73*, PhD thesis (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, School of Humanities, Departments of Russian Language, & Literature, and Music, 1998), 132.

¹⁷ Gustav Mahler, *Symphony No. 4*, November 1905, in Iain Farrington's arrangements (Aria Editions, 2018), length 16:28.

¹⁸ Rudeforth, 1998, 133.

¹⁹ Jacques du Plessis, *Analysing from Experience: Gustav Mahler's 'Quartetsatz' for Piano and Strings* [research thesis] (London: 2014), 38–47. Online source, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/145055798.pdf>, accessed in May 18, 2021.

²⁰ Mahler, 1905 & Farrington, 2018, *Symphony No. 4*.

²¹ Du Plessis, 2014, 38.

The unstable tonal structures particular to the nineteenth century (and very much present in the *Quartetsatz*) represent the tendency towards emotional expressiveness and drama.²²

Once sunk inside the sound, the 'Self' cannot return, and from here opens a whole matrix of time-consciousness that works accordingly to sound's laws rather than common laws. Our attention, was captured by Félix Ardanaz's interpretation of Franz Liszt's *Transcendental Etude No 12 Chasse Neige, S 139*²³. On the other hand, a special musical piece relevant for our phenomenological model is *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 27*, by Marc Mígo Cortés²⁴. The «allegro» coloristic structures in opposition with the structures from the first part of the Marc Mígo's *Concertino* are making visible the instability of the intuitional character of the flow, as Luis Niel observed in his analysis. The immersion into the sound's-flow is the most beautiful thing that can happen to a person, and the desire to discover the sound's flourish goes far beyond life. If there had been no seduction of nostalgia, many compositions would not have existed. In this regard we take a look at Gustav Mahler, Tchaikovsky. At the same time, we can take as a landmark the seductive chords. From complicated chords to a simplification of them, the distance of time-consciousness – signitivity is crossed by the same substance. The property of the apperception's signitivity it completes itself to the next level with the data layer that the apperception contains.

Beside these aspects, there is a phenomenon: the sonorous seduction. Nostalgia is almost poisonous seduction (in positive sense), for the listener, but also for the singer. From it derive the feelings of floating, of levitation. But for this to happen, it means that from the signitive pulsation we can say that there is an intuition raised by another intuition, which also has structures of the extra-signitive corpus. It is easy to see the articulation of Mozart, or Tchaikovsky towards nostalgia and a floating-feeling.²⁵ The curvature of the bow should follow these acts too.

²² *Ibid.*, 43.

²³ Félix Ardanaz (pianist and conductor), complete edition of *Franz Liszt: Piano Music* (New York: Orpheus Classical, 7 June 2014); more details, Franz Liszt, *Transcendental Etude No 12 Chasse Neige, S 139*, in Félix Ardanaz (piano), January 14, 2021, online archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBCNh4j1UXk>, accessed in May 16, 2021.

²⁴ Marc Mígo Cortés (composer & musician, The Juilliard School), *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 27*, Cesare Della Sciucca conductor, Sergi Pacheco pianist (Florence, 2016). Online archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-4O3M2SDpRg>, accessed in May 17, 2021.

²⁵ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Violin Concerto No. 5, A Major, K. 219, 1775*, in Walter Goehr (direction), violinist Manoug Parikian, Orchestre de Société Philharmonique d'Amsterdam (edited in Paris: Guilde Internationale de Disque, 1953) MMS 2206. Mozart, *Violin Concerto No. 5, A Major, K. 219*, so-called 'Turkish' (Salzburg: December 1775).

More than this, we should move the eye on the music of some recent composers, as Max Richter²⁶ or Jonathan Dawe²⁷, which is a simplified proof of what nostalgia designs through sounds. Classicism and minimalism can rewrite poeties through some articulations. The sound is thrown in a double recollection²⁸.

The signitive content/background is "fuller" in meanings than the purely intuitive background. In the case of music, meaningful content is always "filled" by the substantiality of the sound. In the world of sounds, signitive content and the intuitive content are identical. The signitive sounds are pure intentionalities too.

§ The {'into'}-falling condition of music. The endless circle between consciousness and sound – an endless engagement & conclusions

At the end of this paper, we can say that music is an endless engagement between the apperceptive-intuition and the {'into'}-falling sensation. From a phenomenological perspective, music remains an endless engagement for the Being with consciousness.

Diving is a pretty important feeling for the Self. To achieve the permanent state of {'into'}-falling, the Self should sink itself every moment when a sound activates the circularity of nostalgia. It's like a total abandonment with no way back. The inner storms from Tchaikovsky or Mahler makes us understand music better. Once, Leonard Bernstein said that music:

It's the way that makes you feel when you hear it... We don't have to know a lot about sharp and flats and chords and all that business in order to understand music. If it tells us something, not a story or a picture but a feeling, if it makes us change inside – to have all of those good feelings that music can make you have – then you're understanding it. And that's all there is to it. Because those feelings aren't like the stories and the pictures we talked about before. They're not extra, they're not outside the music.

²⁶ Max Richter's musical style is representative for neo-classicism, and minimalism too.

²⁷ Jonathan Dawe, professor of composition to The Juilliard School, New York, more details, <https://www.jonathandawe.com/>. The influences from Alfred Schnittke's aesthetic are very present in his creations, such as *Fiori Musicali* (1992), *Symphony of Imaginary Numbers* (2008), *Gagliarda* (1993).

²⁸ Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger *et. al.*, in Martin Heidegger (ed.), *The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness*, translated by James S. Churchill (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019), 77-78.

They belong to music. They're what music is about... We can't always name the things we feel. Sometimes we can, but every once in a while we have feelings that are so deep that we have no words for [...] ²⁹.

In its perpetual inconsistency, generated by the time-substance variable, consciousness has no limits. Especially when it comes to talk about a signitive-apperceptive-intuition which overpasses the judgment and turns it into a 'non-judicative' ³⁰ emotional experience. There is a remnant that remains from this sum, not outside of the consciousness, but in its expanse. Music should be the engagement's 'Self' with the sound at each step. Gustav Mahler's and Tchaikovsky's music is characterized by a signitive-apperceptive-intuition. The origin of the sound is not a category, but something which belongs to the inner apperceptive field of consciousness. In this way, the chromaticism puts us in front of some psychic processes, as the endless nostalgia or the feeling that one can contemplate the same acoustic sound or the same view for hours entirely. The idea of the apperceptive-condition completes itself through the inner intuition of a judgment marked by emotive sonorous facts.

Once the sound is present, the tracking of the signitivity towards the intuitional-apperceptive zone becomes a natural fact. Plus, the *apperceptional[ization]* is possible through signitivity too. But, what more precisely happens to this level? Is something missing from the carnation of the chords? Or the unity between apperception-signitivity surpasses the intuitional-*consciousnessial* field?

As an example, Tchaikovsky's palette is a gap to a cruel reality of the consciousness, where the anger or sadness poses the field, but the thick application of a chord and the carnation of the juxtaposition changes towards a space where there is Beauty in anger, sadness or emotive storms. Mozart's palette from *Violin Concerto in A Major*, K. 219, metaphorically creates an atmosphere of joyful, where the signitivity becomes very closer to the apperceptionally data of consciousness. The flow of the {'into'}-falling is a commitment that reaches all the richness of a sound's palette. In Max Richter's composition *November*, the register seems changed, but the nostalgia is there. The floating is there too. There are retentions mixed with harmonic chords in "November's" recorded in the *Memoryhouse* ³¹ album by Max

²⁹ Allen Shawn, "What Does Music Mean?" [156-170], in *Leonard Bernstein. An American Musician* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2014, 2016), 162-163.

³⁰ The theory was developed by Viorel Cernica, in *Judecată și timp. Fenomenologia judicativului* [trans. *Judgment and Time. The Phenomenology of the Judicative*], Romanian first edition (Iași: European Institute, 2013).

³¹ Max Richter, "November", in *Memoryhouse*, Jane Carter (executive producer), 2002, length 6:21, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Bb0k9HgQxc>, accessed in May 25, 2021.

Richter. If someone would try to drink his cup of coffee he could drop the liquid on himself, but also try to turn it over in the same time. Richter creates such unexpected moments, interspersed with timelessness. Even in the context of the Kantian idea of the *Ewigkeit*, from a Husserlian perspective, the Self is placed also in temporality. The melodic structures of the violin change the register of sadness with the one of joy and life. Max Richter manages to bring-together life and death, death and the overcoming of it, the unborn put together with apperceptive-intuitive signitivity, in a word, all the synaesthesia of the Self (from a phenomenological point of view). The tension in the 5:06 minute is similar to the Tchaikovsky tensions, even if it is simplified. Inside the composition "Last Days"³², Max Richter proves to us that into-falling is irrevocable and that it turns into a seductive flight when the becoming of the Being is marked by uncertainties, anger or fear. Here, Richter relies on the same principle of Edmund Husserl's retentions filled with subjectivity, marked by inconsistency too; the narrative from the minute 3:40 overlaps with the harmonious retentions. Richter's *Last Days* seems similar to Mahler's *Klavierquarttet A minor*³³. The seduction of nostalgia conducts the most subtle structures of the apperception.

What is constructed and induced by a sound, is transformed, viewed from another angle, in the signitive-apperception's-intuition and ends up being transmitted by the signitive part to "appear" for the apperception as it is. Each sound and sonorous corpo[reality] of it is a network of partial intuitions that merges with the signitive part. From here, derives the [atemporalizationary]-moments of the sounds and its parts. In this way, we understand the way in which consciousness goes beyond of what it is lived and what it must be lived in the same temporal syncope for the 'Self'. From here, the fulfillment had begun. It can be something beyond the Self and it can be completely fulfilled.

The {'into'}-falling is a doubling of levitation with nostalgia. Apart from this emotional side, there is a doubling of Husserlian types of judgments, perceptual, and analytical. Sublimation takes place through the interweaving of all these functions over which the coat of apperception is added. To this entire corpus, it remains, in the end, the most beautiful substance of music, namely, her ascending seduction to endlessness. For this reason, the falling is always towards an [in³⁴], towards an interiority which exists even in a temporality's exteriority towards the consciousness' spatialization pushes. The musicalized Self is an endless {'into'}-falling circle. To separate it from the sounds it is quite impossible. We may say that {'into'}-falling is

³² Idem, "Last Days", minutes [3: 40–4: 18]. See "Lines on a Page (One Hundred Violins)" too.

³³ Mahler, *Klavierquarttet A minor [Piano Quartet in A minor for Piano and Strings Trio]*, in Cristoph Flamm (editor), Klaus Schilde (fingering to piano & violin) [Vienna: Urtext Edition, 1973].

³⁴ We maintain the idea of the [in] as a preposition.

the condition of the so-called “apperceptive interweavings”³⁵. The skin of the music, every inch of the music must produce a sparkle. The into-falling’s sparkle will have an apperceptive echo, being back tied to the perceptive plane by the sonorous matter in a substantialist way. In this continuously musicalized space, apperception and perception become mirrors, but not symmetrical, but one following after the other. It’s like when you go one step forward and one hand pulls you another steps back, and then you go forward again progressively. This issue transposed to the level of fractal geometry, shows us that music is an indefinite substance in continuous growth to the indefinite. Music is what goes beyond-[outside] of consciousness.

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³⁵ Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, translation by W. R. Boyce Gibson, first ed. 1931, by George Allen & Unwin Ltd. (London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2013, 2014), 165.

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GEORG LUKÁCS IN THE LABYRINTH OF COEXISTENCE

CRISTIAN NICHITEAN*

ABSTRACT. This text attempts to trace the evolution of the political and philosophical thought of Georg Lukács, after his magnum opus *History and class consciousness*, as well as the influence that historical events had on this evolution. Against the dominant consensus that dismisses Lukács's late work as an effect of his alleged "reconciliation with reality", I argue that the line of continuity in his thought was the idea of peaceful coexistence, derived from the objective conditions – the isolation of the Soviet Union and the stabilization of Western capitalism. So, rather than explaining his choice to defend coexistence, or "socialism in one country" as a consequence of his reconciliation with, or surrender to Stalinism, one should see his compromise with Stalinism as a consequence of this choice. His commitment to the coexistence thesis shaped his final version of Marxism in a number of ways. From a political perspective, a readjustment of the temporal scale of the transition to socialism in post-revolutionary society constrained him to advocate a more realist strategy that combined revolutionary movements with evolutionary processes – this was reflected in his option for the Popular Front strategy and later in his support for the Western pacifist movements. His late philosophical work also bears the marks of this enduring political choice.

Keywords: *Coexistence, Marxism, irrationalism, Stalinism, democratization, socialism*

The publication of *History and class consciousness* earned Georg Lukács a solid reputation, as one of the founders of Western Marxism. In contrast, his subsequent work lies in obscurity, because of his compromises with Stalinism. Although Lukács withdrew from active politics after the party line he supported in the *Blum Theses* was defeated, although in 1949-50 he was targeted again by the Hungarian party leadership (the so called "Lukács debate" concerning the realism of literature in socialist society), although his last political intervention was to accept a position in the government of Imre Nagy, the cloud of mistrust that hovered over Lukács prevented a

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fair reception of his ideas. This is hardly a surprise, since even authors with Marxist credentials issued irrevocable verdicts. The most famous is Adorno's 1961 attack on Lukács's "official optimism", denouncing his alignment with the official ideology of Soviet communism (Adorno 1980: 167). In Adorno's pamphlet, Lukács's "reconciliation" with the regime appeared as the abdication of thought under ideological pressure and its substitution with a dogmatic simulacrum. H. Marcuse also saw in *The Destruction of Reason* an example of the deterioration of Marxist critique. For J. Gabel, Lukács's later philosophy was a never-ending ritual of penitence for his former "heresy", a "long and humiliating Canossa" (Gabel 1966). If we agree with these statements, we may think that the Hungarian thinker ended up in a deadlock, unwittingly repeating Hegel's failed intellectual journey: from tragedy to utopia, then to reconciliation.

Could perhaps Lukács's attitude towards Soviet-type socialism rather be seen as a sign of resignation? That at least seems to believe G.M. Tamás, who reads *The Young Hegel* as "Lukács's own intellectual autobiography in disguise: between its lines, he concedes defeat" (Tamás 2017). Others saw in his work neither reconciliation nor defeat, but an expression of intellectual resistance. Ostracized from politics, where his insights were ignored or even suppressed, Lukács had to content himself with aesthetic and philosophical matters – here, at least, he had some autonomous space. For instance, N. Tertulian asserted that, far from offering philosophical legitimation to the communist parties in power, Lukács's late work was an example of "critical ontology" called to question the complex relations between economy, law, politics and ethics, the status of ideology, the dialectic between alienation and disalienation (Tertulian 2016: 48). But the dominant framework of interpretation became that of reconciliation, understood as alignment, submission or even capitulation. Matteo Gargani astutely summarized Lukács's late contribution to philosophy as a " 'testament' without heirs" (Gargani 2016): although his late political, cultural and philosophical practice was radically extraneous to Stalinism, the suspicions raised by his compromises in the 1930s virtually condemned his later ideas to oblivion.

This paper attempts to advance a different framework of interpretation, by examining the impact that one of the main tenets of the Soviet international policy – the idea of peaceful coexistence – had on Lukács's thought. It argues that his position and actions can be better understood as a result of his agreement with and internalization of the peaceful coexistence thesis, rather than as a consequence of his alleged reconciliation with Stalinism. Lukács's late thought cannot be exclusively derived from its indebtedness to the idea of coexistence. There were other factors at play that influenced his final version of Marxism, some internal (his ethical perspective, his particular brand of Hegelianism, his rather conservative aesthetics), some attributable to historical circumstances. But features like the projection of his

universal revolutionary aspirations into a distant future, or the formulation of the main ideological conflicts of his era as a *Kulturkampf* between reason and irrationalism were surely consequences of his internalization of the coexistence principle. The empirical reality of coexistence compelled Lukács to emphasize more and more the role of evolutionary processes and secondary contradictions – these were new categories that he introduced in order to investigate the new socio-political landscape, especially in the 1950s and 1960s.

By the end of the Civil War, Lenin had to abandon the assertive doctrine of world revolution and switch to a more defensive strategy of “peaceful coexistence” with the West. It was a retreat determined by facts: as Russia lay in ruins, the motor of world revolution ran out of steam. It was argued that this new orientation aimed only for a temporary and limited cooperation in order to gain a necessary “breathing space” for the proletarian state to consolidate, a respite in the struggle with capitalism. Anyway, the coexistence doctrine was a response to a set of international circumstances dominated by the defeat of the German revolution, the stabilization of capitalism, the relative weakness of the Soviet State and the relative decline of class struggle and working-class militancy in the West. Inevitably, it prioritized the interests of the Soviet Union, at the expense of those of the international communist movement. It had to postpone world-revolutionary ambitions and design alliances with bourgeois forces in the capitalist world. Later in the 1930s it had to choose between an anti-fascist and an anti-capitalist strategy, and finally settled for the former, lending its support to the “Popular Fronts”.

Coexistence imposed a readjustment of hopes and expectations. Conceptually, for Lukács the new reality meant that the era dominated by the “actuality of the revolution” was coming to an end. What remained was the war torn, economically destitute Soviet state in need of peace for its consolidation. In the 1967 *Preface to HCC*, he briefly summarized his thoughts around that turning moment in history: “Lenin died in 1924. The party struggles that followed his death were concentrated increasingly on the debate about whether socialism could survive in one country. That it was possible in theory Lenin had affirmed long before. But the seemingly near prospect of world revolution made it appear particularly theoretical and abstract. The fact that it was now taken seriously proved that a world revolution could not be held to be imminent in these years... Moreover, after 1924 the Third International correctly defined the position of the capitalist world as one of ‘relative stability’. These facts meant that I had to re-think my theoretical position. In the debates of the Russian Party, I agreed with Stalin about the necessity for socialism in one country and this shows very clearly the start of a new epoch in my thought” (Lukács 1971: xvii–xviii). There is always a risk with this type of autobiographical

statements, *a posteriori* reconstructions that may be intended to project an organic development, an artificial continuity in one's views. But it can be proved that, by and large, Lukács's trajectory was consistent with his own assessment of it. Good or bad, the coexistence idea was his "existential choice" (to use Agnes Heller's words), and he stood by it until the end.

"So I rejected the Hegelian thesis that all the stages of historical development must be considered right, which led to his reconciliation with reality"

The tendency to read Lukács allegorically was popular among his critics. They seek to uncover a deeper meaning, hidden in his work but still accessible to a select few, revealing Lukács's true attitude towards the social and political events of his day. As mentioned above, G.M. Tamás reads *The Young Hegel* as a confession of defeat. For Ferenc Fehér the reconciliation theme was a new dialectic in historical disguise. This is what he has to say about Lukács's situation: "It was a very contradictory position. He always tried to reveal the system's 'ideal type' as opposed to its empirical reality ... it also meant an acceptance of the regime's basic principles, i.e., a reconciliation with reality" (Fehér 1979). A strange way to define reconciliation as allegiance to the "regime's basic principles", although it acknowledges that Lukács generally preserved a critical distance to its empirical reality. (Rather he resigned himself with this gap between ideal and empirical reality, as long as he thought that it was only temporary). But in the end, this autonomous space, this distance from Stalinism was for Fehér just an illusion. Lukács sided with Weimar (the moderate but – by and large – progressive ideas of Goethe or Hegel) against Potsdam (the *Ancien Régime*), while remaining sceptical towards more utopian radicals (Hölderlin, Georg Forster) who, for all their heroism, failed to understand that in the backward Germany there were no objective conditions, no material and social base for their ideals. In Fehér's translation: Lukács enacted an impotent cultural opposition against Stalinism, while also opposing both capitalism and a more radical, "utopian" communism.

As for Agnes Heller, she saw in Lukács's own repudiation of *HCC* not so much reconciliation, but an expression of his supposed paradoxical relationship with the "absolute" (i.e., the "existential choice that bound him to the then existing communist parties, and – in consequence – to the Soviet Union and the Third International"), a relationship characterized by Heller, in a predictable Kierkegaardian fashion, simultaneously as faith and despair (Heller 1979). Of course, to pose the

problem in theological terms absolves one of the effort of examining more closely Lukács's ideas. In this way, concrete circumstances can be abstracted out, everything can be grasped in terms of ideological blindness, faith, illusion or mythology. These allegorical readings are simplifications that don't take into account the social, political and historical context: the Soviet Union of the 1920s and 1930s was different from Germany at the turn of the XIX century. The "faith in the absolute" expressed itself differently in different individuals. Lukács's thought was not unilaterally determined. He did not follow blindly the party, but based his decisions on his own independent, early assessment of the events. Also, in 1926-1928 there was not yet the need for faith to be opposed to empirical reality, and no duress that could have determined his defense of "socialism in one country".

In *Lukács and Stalinism*, Michael Löwy wrote that "a decisive re-orientation in the life and work of Lukács began in 1926; a profound theoretical and political break with all his former revolutionary ideas, and in particular with *History and Class Consciousness*", and adds that "after 1926 his writings are characterized by an identification with Stalinism, albeit with many reservations and qualifications" (Löwy 1975). This identification was actually a process that took Lukács from "revolutionary realism" to "realism pure and simple" and, "politically, closer to the non-revolutionary *Realpolitik* of Stalin". Löwy states that from 1926 to 1968, the idea of reconciliation "had formed – implicitly or explicitly – the 'philosophical' basis of his unstable and difficult compromise with Stalinism". In Löwy's account, this reconciliation was a two-stage process. The first step was mainly theoretical but with "far-reaching political implications", and it began with the 1926 article *Moses Hess and the problems of idealist dialectics*, that set the "methodological basis for his support for the Soviet 'Thermidor'". By siding with Hegel's "dialectical realism", against the "abstract utopianism" of his contemporaries, Lukács allegedly alluded to his own tendencies towards reconciliation. The fact that in the same piece the Hungarian thinker stated explicitly that "the question of 'reconciliation' reveals in fact the most problematical aspect of Hegelian philosophy" (Lukács 2014: 189) is not mentioned. Having contended that by 1926 Lukács's methodological roots of his reconciliation with Stalinism were in already in place, Löwy tried then to prove that subsequently Lukács followed blindly the official line (so blindly that he even failed to notice when the line has changed). So, the *Blum Theses* were just "an application to Hungary of the right turn of the Comintern; Lukács was only following the 'general line' of 1924–7". This interpretation denies to Lukács any independent position, and conveniently depicts this instance of inconformity as an accident caused by a lack of synch with the party.

It is important to grasp the context as much as the contents of the *Blum Theses*. Drafted in 1928, these theses reflected the position of the Landler faction, opposed to the Moscow-backed party leader Béla Kun. An example of political realism, the *Theses* advocated for a broad coalition of democratic forces and warned against maximalist actions, considering that in Hungary there were no immediate conditions for a new revolutionary insurgency. What could be accomplished at the time was a mass movement “beyond the confines of the proletariat”, which would lead to the overthrow of the Bethlen regime and the establishment of a “democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry”, in view of a “transition to the revolution of the proletariat”. That for Lukács was in line with the “Marxist view – that bourgeois democracy is the best battlefield for the proletariat” (Lukács 2014: 241). It would be more logical to ascribe Lukács’s position in the *Blum Thesis* to a genuine reorientation in his thought, rather than to him inadvertently following the obsolete party line. With their projected alliance between the proletariat and the progressive faction of the bourgeoisie, against a reactionary and oppressive dictatorship, the *Theses* can be seen as an application of the coexistence principle, an anticipation of the Popular Front strategy. There is one strong reason to ascribe Lukács’s position to an autonomous development in his thought, rather than to a spontaneous alignment behind the party line: the coexistence theme accompanied him constantly from then on. On the contrary, at times Lukács found himself outside of the “correct” party line, for which he was severely reprimanded. (To say that Lukács reserved for himself the right to think freely, i.e., that he had an independent position, is not to deny his tactical compromise with Stalinism, in order to survive, or to keep himself relevant).

In 1926, when he was praising Hegel’s realism and allegedly was setting the stage for his reconciliation, Lukács was very much active in the clandestine Hungarian party. So, if he used “Hegel” as a code-word for himself, what was the reality that he was preparing to reconcile to, since Stalinism as such had not yet been developed? By then, the only reality that Lukács could have been reconciled to (or, rather, resigned to) was that of the peaceful coexistence, or socialism in one country. And *this* was indeed the reality reflected in the *Blum Theses*. As Isaac Deutscher explained, after Lenin died in 1924 – just as the European revolutionary wave was receding – the Bolshevik leaders (but also rank and file communist militants) inherited a dilemma.¹

¹ See Deutscher 1953: ‘The dilemma to which this gave rise was in the centre of the struggle between Stalin and Trotsky... Bolshevism had to decide whether it should go on staking its future on the ‘liberation’, that is on the self-emancipation, of foreign working classes or whether it ought to aim at ‘containing’ capitalism at the frontiers of the Soviet Union. The policy of ‘liberation’ appeared to have exhausted its possibilities: the working classes in foreign countries were neither ready nor willing to overthrow capitalism. Soviet policy moved slowly but irresistibly towards ‘containment’, which involved a radical revision of Leninist assumptions and attitudes.’

And the trend in the Party that contradicted the Leninist internationalist principles and pushed for a retreat of the revolution within national boundaries had already emerged victorious by 1928.

Löwy tries to frame Lukács as a “rightist Stalinist”, stating that “What Lukács could not accept was Stalinist policy in the so-called ‘left’ periods, which considered bourgeois democracy (or social-democracy) to be the prime enemy rather than fascism”, and that “Lukács was in opposition whenever Stalinism was in sharp conflict with Western (bourgeois) democracy and culture”. Even the anti-Stalinism of the late Lukács was allegedly “rightist”, because he “inclined towards defining Stalinism as essentially a ‘leftist’ deviation, a ‘sectarian subjectivism’”. (Actually, in the *Ontology* Lukács defined Stalinism as a type of dualism, a heterogeneous mixture of voluntarism and mechanical necessity, of subjectivism and objectivism). For Löwy, “the Stalinist period which he criticizes most vigorously is 1928–33. The orientation of the USSR between 1948 and 1953 seemed to him, in the last analysis, to be a relapse into the same basic errors”. However, it could be argued that what bothered Lukács was not so much the alleged “left” content of the Stalinist policies during the incriminated intervals, but the inflammatory “sectarian” rhetoric that threatened peaceful cohabitation with the West, especially after the Second World War. Also, the fact that “Lukács totally supported ‘Khrushchevism’, both in its internal aspects (partial criticism of Stalinism) and its external ones (peaceful co-existence as the international strategy of the Communist movement)”, only shows the continuity in his beliefs and confirms that it was the underlying idea of coexistence, rather than his alleged reconciliation with Stalinism, that fundamentally shaped Lukács’s position.

Contradicting his own interpretation of the *Blum Theses*, Löwy has to concede that “Lukács did not automatically follow the ‘general line’ dictated by Moscow. He had his own line, which sometimes coincided with and sometimes clashed with the ‘Centre’”. The cornerstone of this independent position was a political realism that went against his former utopianism. Löwy writes, correctly, that “while he accepted the fundamental premises of Stalinist politics (socialism in one country, the abandonment of revolutionary internationalism), Lukács was not a blind follower: whatever the circumstances, he refused to give up his own special popular-frontist ideology”. But he does not attach much importance to this conclusion, and does not interpret Lukács’s popular-frontism as a tactical application of the coexistence principle. Instead, he sees Lukács’s realignment as a consequence of his affinity for the bourgeois culture. He goes as far as concluding that “Lukács’s political and intellectual career from 1928 onwards was coherent: it was a consistent attempt to ‘reconcile’ Stalinism with bourgeois-democratic culture”. In fact, Lukács was very selective in his embrace of “bourgeois culture”, reserving his praise for the small fraction that he saw as progressive.

Of course, his later criticism of Stalinism was incomplete. As Löwy shows, “he never grasped the roots of the Stalinist phenomenon or sought to develop a Marxist analysis of the Soviet bureaucracy, but confined himself to denouncing its ‘superstructural’ aspects: brutal manipulation, predominance of tactics over theory, etc.” It is true that Lukács “refused to question some of the basic elements of Stalinist policy, such as socialism in one country”. But as I stated above, it makes little sense to explain his defense of “socialism in one country”, i.e., his “existential choice”, as a consequence of his reconciliation with, or surrender to Stalinism. Rather the other way around, one should see his compromise with Stalinism as a consequence of this choice, which incidentally was also Stalin’s basic political guideline. In the final analysis, Lukács perceived his situation as a dilemma: either he accepted Stalinism (even if internally he disagreed with it), or he broke up with it and abandoned the organized labour movement. He did not envisage other options, so he chose to stay in. As Perry Anderson wrote, to Western Marxists in general, “the official Communist movement represented the sole real embodiment of the international working class with meaning for them – whether they joined it, allied with it or rejected it” (Anderson 1979: 92). In other words, for these intellectuals Stalinism may have been accepted or opposed, but it was the only significant partner of conversation. It is a too broad definition of the term “Stalinism” that allows Löwy to say that Lukács identified with Stalinism. (As I tried to show, actually he was committed to the principles of a communist society and identified with peaceful coexistence and socialism in one country). Not everyone that agreed with one principle or another of Stalin’s policies was doing so out of abject submission. As Costanzo Preve put it, we can label Lukács as a “Stalinist” only if we include in this category all the twentieth-century communists which did not explicitly break with Stalin’s “official” Communism (Preve 2013: 485). But for Preve this criterion has no significance, as it does not take into account the concrete alternatives available for Lukács at the time.

As with everything he wrote in the 1930s, one can only guess to what extent his ideas were influenced by an instinct of self-preservation. Those were years when Lukács, working at the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow, preferred not to take too many ideological risks. He found refuge in his literary studies, and yet the spirit of *Blum Theses* was reflected in his aesthetic conception, in his affinity with bourgeois ‘critical’ realism and perhaps in a somewhat less than enthusiastic attitude towards socialist realism. And his beliefs were not abandoned after 1945 when, back in Hungary, he received an academic position and assumed the leadership of the *Forum* journal. As he recalled the events in the “autobiographical sketch”, he explicitly based his editorial strategy on the idea of the Popular Front, in the hope that it would lead to the dictatorship of the proletariat (Lukács 1983: 117).

In retrospect, Lukács considered that, with the *Blum theses*, his Marxism had reached maturity. He disowned his early pre-Marxist work and tried to project his late views as the result of an organic development, of a continuous theoretical evolution. His detractors saw in this an attempt to cover up inconsistencies and, perhaps, sins. However, as it emerges from the above analysis, there was an element of continuity in his late philosophy, one that, having altered Lukács's perspective in the 1920s, shaped the main lines of his thought for the rest of his life. But it was not his alleged surrender to Stalinism – it was the idea of coexistence, derived from the “objective conditions”, from the isolation of the Russian Revolution and the defeat of the other European revolutionary movements, an attempt to deal with the new “geopolitical” reality of the stabilization of the capitalist world and the two rival social systems existing side by side. The coexistence theme – quite ubiquitous in Lukács's writings after 1945 – was an adaptation of the direction inaugurated by the *Blum Theses* to the new circumstances. The Popular Fronts were designed mainly as an antifascist strategy. After the war, the USA replaced fascism as USSR's main antagonist. Lukács disliked the bellicose factions on both sides and sided with the moderates who were hoping for a *détente*. He regarded the “progressive” forces in the West, communist and non-communist, including religious currents opposed to war, as presumptive allies. This new type of Popular Front had, in Lukács's opinion, an even more important mission than the interwar one: to secure the peaceful coexistence in the atomic era.

To prove his point, Lukács resorted to a somewhat Maoist-like conception of contradiction. More specifically, he saw a dialectical relationship between the main historical contradiction of an era and the “secondary” contradictions that determine the concrete flow of events in the shorter term. In his view, one cannot always approach the main contradiction directly, as it is sometimes mediated by secondary ones. Reaffirming – in the spirit of Marxist Orthodoxy – that “the fundamental historical opposition of our age is that between capitalism and socialism”, he immediately pointed out that however, “since Lenin's death there have been two periods when the strategy of struggle for progress has not been directly conditioned by this problem” (Lukács 1968b: 91). The first such secondary contradiction was that between fascism and anti-fascism. For Lukács, the main strategic error of the Communist parties was precisely their inability to deal adequately with this new situation. In 1917 the main historical contradiction manifested itself directly in the immediate struggle for power between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. But then the theoretical and practical solutions that resulted in the victory of the Soviets were generalized and applied inappropriately “at a time when the fundamental strategic problem was not the immediate struggle for socialism, but a test of strength between fascism

and antifascism” (Lukács 1968b: 91). Written in 1956, this article – *The fight between progress and reaction in today’s culture* – incriminated Stalin’s theoretical ignorance of the nature of historical contradictions, which led to the ill-fated political actions of the Comintern in the third period, delaying the organization of the Popular Fronts and thus unintentionally enabling the rise of Nazism.

So, if the contradiction between fascism and anti-fascism was “the true dialectical contradiction, the expression of the real historical movement” (Lukács 1968b: 93) of the previous decade, after the war Lukács identified a new “great historical opposition” – between the cold warriors and those who struggled for peaceful coexistence. He believed that finding a solution to this new secondary contradiction was of vital importance, and advocated for the creation of a broad alliance of the social and political forces that opposed the conflict. Accordingly, he thought that the decisive confrontation had to be avoided, as the conditions were still unfavourable to socialism (Lukács 1968b: 92–3). Although in *The Destruction of Reason* he pointed out that the Soviet policy of that time had a defensive character, he believed, however, that this struggle had not been adequately managed during Stalin’s life, since “the main axiom that determined Stalinist politics, namely the inevitability of a continuous upsurge in contrasts, dominated not only Soviet internal politics, but necessarily involved the prospect of a third world war” (Ibid.). But what did Lukács mean by the term “coexistence”? “The peaceful coexistence of both social systems must be understood literally, in the sense that both worlds can exist within their own laws of internal development” (Lukács 1968b: 94). It was a mutual recognition as the basis upon which contacts could be established at political, economic and cultural level. Thus, by the mid-1950s, he provided a clear theoretical formulation of coexistence, and implicitly stated its continuity with the Popular Front strategy of the *Blum Theses*.

“An innocent reactionary ideology cannot exist”

It’s easy to see this conceptual constellation reflected in Lukács’s more theoretical works of the period – *The Destruction of Reason*, for instance, drafted in Moscow in the fourth decade, but completed and published in the early 1950s. As the title suggests, in this work Lukács approached the history of modern philosophy from the angle of a secondary contradiction, between reason and irrationalism, abandoning for the moment the “canonical” duel, materialism vs. idealism. Hence the hostile reception of the book, even in the Eastern Bloc, as he remarked in the *Note to the Italian edition*: “From this dogmatic-sectarian point of view, the conclusion

of my book, the peace movement as the insurrection of millions of people for the defence of reason in the historical reality, must necessarily appear as ‘idealism’” (Lukács 2011: x). Lukács viewed even this philosophical contradiction in terms of the imperative of coexistence, stating that “this movement for the restoration of reason and the safeguarding of peace... are inseparable” and asserting that the protection of reason is “taking the form of a mass movement” (Lukács 1980: 851). In short, he advocated for a united front for peace under the banner of reason.

In Lukács’s account, originally this contradiction between reason and irrationalism took place within idealism: both Hegel and his irrationalist opponents were idealists. But the reasons for this conflict were to be found outside philosophy. Rejecting the possibility of an immanent history of philosophy, Lukács emphasized the importance of productive forces, social evolution, and class struggles as primary driving forces that determine the fundamental lines of philosophical thought (Lukács 1980: 3–4). Therefore, the nature of the arguments is determined first of all by their genesis and social function (Lukács 1980: 5). (Later, in the *Ontology*, Lukács wrote, in a similar manner, about the “social command” made by certain social classes for a certain theoretical content.) If the history of philosophy is not immanent, but is essentially determined by social factors, as he argued, one could move away from the subjective intentions of the various authors, and pursue the line of continuity at the level of the social command met by the philosophical content. Lukács spotted such a continuous line in philosophy, that served the social command of the reactionary bourgeoisie, and identified it as *irrationalism* – a line that included thinkers of various orientations who shared however a certain type of attitude towards reality and history: denial of progress, of objective truth and of the possibility to grasp the world as a whole. Under-estimation of intellect and reason, exaltation of intuition, aristocratic gnoseology, repudiation of historical-social progress, creation of myths etc. were, according to Lukács, the elements that defined irrationalist thought, the antithesis of materialism and the dialectical method. Behind the surface of philosophical polemics, Lukács always detected the class struggle: if the proletariat was the heir of the classical German philosophy, during the nineteenth century the reactionary bourgeoisie acquired its own ideological arsenal. Over several hundred pages Lukács investigated from this perspective the ideas of Schelling, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Max Weber or Heidegger, in order to reveal a functional continuity of irrationalism that, independent of the intentions of the above-mentioned authors, culminated in the national-socialist ideology. He considered irrationalism as an objective connection in the development of German ideology towards fascism (Lukács 1980: 632) and tried to show that all these authors provided that type of more or less ‘respectable’ arguments that were taken over in

time, albeit in a vulgarized form, by the reaction, culminating with Hitler, while also leaving society ideologically disarmed against the assault of the extreme right. Unfortunately, the post-war era did not bring about the desired *détente*, but a new escalation of tensions, the cold war and the atomic threat. Therefore, Lukács's polemic against irrationalism as the "ideology of the militant reaction" did not end with Hitler. He saw in the preservation of reason an essential philosophical project for the Socialist Bloc in its intent to appeal to the Western masses: if irrationalism was the ideology of reaction, reason was a theoretical weapon for the camp that struggled for progress, peace and coexistence.

We saw that the end of the "Messianic" period by the mid-1920s determined Lukács to revise his ultra-leftist position. Twenty years later, he concluded that the stabilization of the post-WW2 situation, dominated by the two superpowers, had postponed the prospects of a socialist revolution in the West into an indefinite future (although at some point he became once again optimistic about the future of socialism, as evidenced by his writings after Stalin's death, and especially after the 20th Congress of the Soviet Party). Nevertheless, the factual reality of coexistence with its political and ideological manoeuvres of attrition required a rethinking of the temporal horizon. Thus, Lukács's thought acquired a dimension of *longue durée*, particularly visible in the *Ontology*, the work that was intended to develop a categorical structure as a basis for his projected *Ethics*.

A key concept that Lukács employed in his polemics against what he saw as the latest avatar of irrationalism – neopositivism – was *manipulation*. The term was derived from the immediate economic existence: according to Lukács, universal manipulation of the market had become an economic necessity in advanced, consume driven capitalism. The reason why Lukács thought of neopositivism as a form of irrationalism was its attitude towards objective reality and consequently towards ontology – he believed that from the standpoint of neopositivism, the truths of natural sciences don't mirror objective reality, but only make possible its practical manipulation (Lukács 1976: 17). In his view, this aversion against ontology, dominant in the bourgeois philosophy of the time, was not at all politically neutral – philosophy became an important playground of class struggle, and ontology was intrinsically political. Therefore, although liberalism was the capitalist ideology *par excellence*, Lukács's main philosophical adversaries in the era of coexistence were those that provided a subtler defence, an "indirect apologetic" for capitalism. As "dogmatism of universal manipulation" (Lukács 1976: 53), neopositivism was the theoretical support for a degraded practice. But he also reserved a stark criticism for what he saw as the other pillar of mid-century bourgeois philosophy, existentialism, especially for Heidegger's ontology. He thought that existentialism was in fact just

an organic complement of neopositivism. Both were ways of reflecting the subjective attitude towards the destinal character of manipulation: the counterpart of neopositivist conformism was existentialist rebellion. Again, for Lukács the attitude towards reality, towards the world in-itself, towards the ontological questions, did not concern only the abstract field of metaphysics, but had political implications. He intended to recover ontology as a key domain of philosophical research for Marxism. In his view, neopositivism took from beneath the feet of the individuals the firm ground of reality and delivered them to the implacable destiny of manipulation. So, even the recovery of the ontological autonomy of nature could serve to restore the sentiment of reality and thus help in the ideological struggle against the alienated capitalist society. By regaining an ontological basis for science, Lukács sought to extend the scope of Marxism, from a theory of revolution (in *HCC*) to a social ontology, with a firm basis in a general ontology. At the very least, the social universality of historical materialism was a basic premise of Lukács's late philosophy, as he wrote in the 1967 *Postscript* to his old *Lenin* study (Lukács 2009: 87).

To summarize Lukács's theoretical views at this point: philosophy is not politically neutral; it has a class content, so it is an *ideology*. Therefore, one can speak of a 'bourgeois philosophy'. In its most refined form, bourgeois philosophy formulated an indirect apologetic of capitalism. Its line of continuity was irrationalism. Its social function is to be a weapon against socialism and the labour movement. In its contemporary forms, it provides theoretical legitimacy to the manipulated society, which appears in bourgeois thought as the ultimate destiny, as the unsurpassable horizon of human experience.

“Coexistence is a specific form of international class struggle”

One can accept that Lukács's ambiguous attitude towards Stalinism sprang from his acceptance of the thesis of socialism in one country. But as H. Marcuse pointed out in his 1958 book *Soviet Marxism*, the idea of peaceful coexistence between the two blocs had been a general theoretical principle of Soviet foreign policy ever since the last years of Lenin. Coexistence, as a theoretical statement, not just as a factual assessment of Soviet foreign policy-makers, meant an adjustment of communist theory and strategy to the conditions of a non-revolutionary majority in the western countries. According to Marcuse, “the weakness of the revolutionary potential in the capitalist world and the still prevailing backwardness of the Soviet orbit necessitate a new extended ‘respite’ and ‘coexistence’ of the two systems” (Marcuse 1958: 80). Hence the post-war desire of the Soviets to set up alliances

with bourgeois progressive forces in a new, pacifist version of the Popular Front: “The lumping together of the proletariat with other ‘peace-loving’ social groups indicates recognition of the underlying historical tendency” (Marcuse 1958: 71), namely the tendency toward class collaboration in the West. If, as Marcuse argued, Stalin and his successors were generally following the guidelines of foreign policy set up by Lenin, it is even less surprising that the Leninist Lukács agreed in principle with this strategic orientation of the Soviets. Not with all the tactical manoeuvres, though. He categorically opposed the invasion of Czechoslovakia and even sent a letter to the high communist official György Aczél, with whom he was on friendly terms, expressing his “disagreement with the solution to the Czech problem”, and asking Aczél to inform the party leader, János Kádár, about the content of the letter (Lukács 2003: 185).

Lukács’s diagnosis of the post-war international political situation was pretty straightforward: after the war, America remained the only truly independent imperialist power in the economic sense of the term, and this allowed it a considerable margin of interference in the internal affairs of other states, politically independent but economically dependent. He believed that the former imperial powers became increasingly dependent on America. As a result, US foreign policy was increasingly driven by this new economic basis (Lukács 1980: 801). At the heights of the Cold War, the hopes for a *détente* were far-off. However, the ubiquitous threat of atomic war had paradoxical consequences, as Lukács noted in a 1968 interview. In his opinion, the atomic weapons had a dissuasive effect that prevented a third world war, in spite of the inflammatory situation in Vietnam. But, if the atomic stockpiles prevented the outbreak of the war, they did not remove the causes for war (Lukács 1968a: 87–8). Nevertheless, although the US remained an imperialist state, the balance of forces made a nuclear conflict increasingly unlikely. There were other reasons to be optimistic. As mentioned above, he hoped that the long-term policy of coexistence could count on allies within the capitalist bloc, primarily the pacifist movements. Moreover, anti-communism by itself produced resistance, bringing in the foreground another old secondary contradiction – the national question: “among every people, the safeguarding of national independence and sovereignty will also mobilize those groups that otherwise would be indifferent, indeed averse to communism” (Lukács 1980: 804). All that was required was that the Communist leaders, following the Marxist-Leninist principles, be the guards and protectors of national liberty and self-determination. And by the end of the 1960s, with the aggravation of the social tensions, Lukács saw the situation in the West as the initial stage of a revolutionary insurgency against manipulated capitalism, although this revolt was still lacking in proper self-awareness. That is why, unlike Adorno, he had great

sympathy for the new left and the student movements, even though he considered them ideologically immature (Lukács 2013: 40–1). To him, the mass movements in the West served as a democratic corrective to liberal parliamentarianism, while also being the natural allies of the socialist and anti-colonial movements around the world. He thought that there were “more than enough economic, political and social reasons for a general ideological crisis” (Lukács 1968: 61), and hoped that this crisis was signalling the collapsing of the universal validity of the American way of life and the end of the cold war. In another interview dating from May 1968, *Marxism in coexistence*, Lukács remarked that the people of the capitalist society “have completely lost the confidence to live a reasonable life in the circumstances of today” (Lukács 1968a: 93). His optimism was, however, conditional: all that was needed was the example of a reasonable socialist life.

By then the international political context had been inadvertently complicated by the disagreements between China and the USSR. For Lukács, at the root of these divergences lay precisely the question of peaceful coexistence. The 20th Congress of the CPSU had created the premises of a *détente*, which is why he stood by the Soviet side, as his 1963 text *On the Dispute between China and the Soviet Union* testifies. He believed that the Chinese had copied “the most important features of Stalinist politics and organization, subjectivist-sectarian traits”: appropriating and taking to the extreme Stalin’s position at the 19th Congress in 1952, they dogmatically raised to the level of principle the idea of the “inevitability of world wars as long as imperialism exists” – for them, only the global victory of socialism could surely prevent the world war (Lukács 1968b: 148–9). According to Lukács, the “radicalism of the revolutionary phrase” displayed by the Beijing leaders was actually hiding a rigid dogmatism: they absolutized some old theses that had proved valid in the past, but by then had become irrelevant. Such was the idea of an organic link between war and revolution, valid in the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917, and even during the Chinese Revolution of 1949, but outdated in the 1960s. On the contrary, it was the resolutions of the 20th Congress that reflected the adaptation of revolutionary thought to the new world situation, and acknowledged the possibility (but not the certainty) of a transition to socialism without atomic war and without civil war (Lukács 1968b: 151–2). Like Stalin, the Chinese were not able to sense the concrete contradiction of the historical moment, and remained stuck within the main contradiction, the fundamental conflict between capitalism and socialism. The revolutionary rhetoric that urged the “immediate realization of socialism” concealed the trap of an abstract choice between capitalism and immediate socialism, and risked to commit the revolutionary and anticolonial movements on erroneous paths. Against this “abstract” Chinese “sectarianism”, Lukács reaffirmed the Leninist principle

– the concrete analysis of a concrete situation – in order to decide clearly, during the transition to socialism, which were the issues that had to be solved by the methods of civil war and which could be solved by means of a slow evolution (Lukács 1968b, p.154). The evolutionary perspective was becoming ever more important in Lukács's late thought.

Given his belief that in the new objective conditions (the atomic weapons, the balance of forces), the conflict between socialism and capitalism (the main contradiction) had to be approached with indirect means, it is no surprise that, by 1963, he was in agreement with the official thesis that peaceful coexistence was the new specific form of international class struggle. Making good use of the secondary, intra-capitalist contradiction between progressive and reactionary forces, coexistence as an indirect form of struggle tended in the long run to supersede the direct form of conflict between the two rival blocs – the Cold War (always in danger of heating up). Nevertheless, Lukács admitted that the Cold War continued to remain at the time “the predominant form of international relations between capitalist and socialist states” (Lukács 1968b: 150–1). He thought that the 20th Congress opened up the possibility of a return to legality in the Soviet domestic politics. At the same time, he believed that by discarding the Stalinist thesis of the sharpening of the class struggle as socialism advances, the Soviets signalled also the intention of a *détente* in international relations. In his view, this new realism of the Soviet policy took into account the specificity of the particular class struggles and was able to support a battle on two fronts, both against the opportunism of surrendering to neo-colonialism and against the fetishism of the revolutionary phraseology (Lukács 1968b: 155). So, the Soviet orientation opened up the perspective of peace, but long-term coexistence could only be relatively peaceful, as both capitalism and socialism were “universalistic economic systems whose internal logic aims to subject the whole world to their production mode” (Lukács 1968b: 150). Paradoxically, coexistence was therefore a means to provide a peaceful solution for a contradiction that was still “antagonistic”.

Having asserted the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism, Lukács tended initially to consider the economic competition as the main feature of coexistence: in the long run, the real rise of the living standards would prove more important than propagandistic slogans. Economic competition was to decide the winner, but only in the last instance. This was because, in the short term, the supremacy of the capitalist system could not be challenged only with economic arguments. Coexistence could not be reduced to its economic aspect, but also involved a struggle for the hearts and minds. Consequently, later Lukács emphasized the importance of the cultural front for increasing the attractiveness of socialism,

and advocated for the construction of a sort of Gramscian cultural and ideological hegemony. He criticized “one of Khrushchev's illusions” and stated that no matter how great were the economic reforms, the growth of production or the improvement of the living standards, they would not by themselves increase the attractiveness of socialism in the eyes of the West. By the late 1960s, what mattered more for Lukács was “the intensity of life itself in socialism” (Lukács 1968a: 63), which asked for a more comprehensive approach, a reorientation towards the cultural sphere and a revival of Marxism. Of course, this cultural front was supposed to cut across the capitalist states, as he indicated in the aforementioned interview, *Marxism in coexistence*: “from our perspective, from the point of view of the victory we want in the class struggle, it is important that in non-socialist states more and more widespread layers engage in the action, layers that feel that a dignified human existence is easier achievable in socialism than in capitalism. Essentially, it is for this victory we must fight; this is the victory that must be conquered in the coexistence” (Lukács 1968a: 71). So, the economic competition was relegated as a mere aspect of the competition between cultures.

In Lukács’s analysis, another factor was to increase the importance of the cultural front: the mutations undergone by western capitalism had determined the reduction of working time and the increase of the social significance of *leisure*. This opened up even more space for culture: the front line was now crossing the everyday life of the individuals. After all, he recalled, even Marx saw in *loisir* the realm of freedom, of the development of human capacities as an end in itself. In the *Ontology*, Lukács dealt extensively with the problems of everyday life, the ontological concepts and representations that were formed at this grassroots level, the role of culture and ideology in shaping up personality and overcoming alienation. The increasing social weight of leisure, the “battlefield between a meaningful and a meaningless human life”, called once again for the revival of the “international attraction of socialism”, the recovery of the lost cultural influence, and thus for vigorous measures aimed at revitalizing Marxism and turning away from “Stalinist or Maoist sectarianism” (Lukács 1968b: 161).

“Socialism is ripe for a break with the past”

After Stalin’s death, Lukács argued consistently for the de-Stalinization and democratization of the East-European countries. On the one hand, he regarded democratization as an end in itself, as a precondition for the realization of socialism. Besides, he emphasized the role of democratization in the indirect struggle: to him,

internal democratization was indispensable for winning over the Western masses. Also, he believed that the escalation of international tensions only encouraged the anti-reformist factions in the Communist parties: external contradictions perpetuated internal contradictions. Despite his positive assessment of the 20th Congress, Lukács did not ignore the ambiguities of Soviet policy and the tortuous path of de-Stalinization. In his view, the general ideological crisis had not only affected capitalism, but also socialism, as a result of the deformations suffered by Marxist theory during Stalin's era. The theoretical counteroffensive, the rebirth of Marxism, had to be accompanied in the practical-political field by a return to the proletarian democracy of the early years of the revolution, to a "general democratic policy of self-determination" (Lukács 1968a: 20). Therefore, the liquidation of Stalinism was an indispensable prerequisite for victory in the "international class struggle" during the coexistence period.

Lukács restated the importance of working-class self-management and of workers' councils for the history of the socialist movement, and related them to the problem of democratization of everyday life. In his opinion, the end of the 1960s brought about the possibility of a new beginning of socialist democratization with the prospect of a democratic self-management expanding to the most basic level of everyday life and, from there, ascending back to higher levels until the people gained the power of decision-making in the most important matters of social life. In an interview with a Yugoslav journal, Lukács expressed his hope for a renewal of the "fundamental revolutionary idea of the working council" which, in the new historical circumstances, was to become again important for socialist development (Lukács 1970: 142). In *The Process of Democratization* however, he took a different approach. Here Lukács appears to have doubted the possibility of revitalizing the workers' councils strangled by Stalinism, claiming that the new forms of democratization had to emerge from the new socio-historical context (Lukács 1991: 165). By the end of the 1960s he came out in favour of the *New economic mechanism*, the major attempt at decentralization implemented by the Hungarian party, not because he was a partisan of market liberalization, but because he believed that it would give a stronger impetus to democratic reforms. Resuscitating the working councils by decree would have only been a bureaucratic reflex. On the contrary, the economic reform was in his view the opportunity to put into practice a socialist democracy that started from the base of society, giving the interested masses the right and opportunity to intervene in the issues relevant to them, and then expanded step by step to the top (Lukács 1970: 158).

In his review *György Lukács and Critical Realism*, Isaac Deutscher launched a sharp attack against Lukács, denouncing the latter's "genuine surrender" to Stalinism, "voluntary and therefore in a sense irrevocable" (Deutscher 1965). Moreover, to him

the Hungarian critic was “perhaps the only important expounder of the ‘aesthetic ideal’ of Zhdanovism.” Lukács’s conservative aesthetics was not an accident either: politically, he “identified himself wholeheartedly with the ‘moderate’ and rightist aspects of Stalinism, in particular with the Popular Fronts of the 1930s and their prolongations in the 1940s”. Therefore, Lukács’s essays on Thomas Mann were “a *pendant* to the Stalinist ‘struggle for allies’” and his “assignment” was to “establish a common ideological front with those ‘intellectual forces’ of whom [Thomas] Mann could be regarded as spokesman” – the liberal, antifascist bourgeoisie. Deutscher was probably right when he wrote that Lukács idealized the liberal bourgeoisie and its antifascist commitment, and especially when he concluded that Lukács “elevated the Popular Front from the level of tactics to that of ideology: he projected its principle into philosophy, literary history and aesthetic criticism.” However, as the *Blum theses* show, Lukács’s “rightist” position cannot be attributed to his surrender to Stalin, as it pre-dates the reorientation of the Soviet policy in support of the Popular Front. So, whether Lukács’s affinity to the “great realism” of the 19th century reflected an “original” alignment with the Zhdanovite canons – as Deutscher believed – or, on the contrary, a veiled repudiation of socialist realism, it had as a political substrate a long-lasting and independent conviction: his early embrace of coexistence and the Popular Front strategy. For this conviction Lukács came under the attack again in the late 1940s – as the party ideologues decreed that the Popular Front was only a tactical manoeuvre, a historical detour caused by the Nazi threat, acceptable before the war but not after.

However, there are important similarities between Deutscher and Lukács, regarding their diagnosis of the political situation in the final years of the Stalin era and immediately after. They both saw Stalinism as a “phenomenon of social transition” and not as “the quintessence or the final shape of the post-capitalist or socialist society” (Deutscher 1967). Both believed that Soviet foreign policy had fundamentally a defensive character. Both underestimated the possibility of the collapse of communism and of capitalist restoration. And after 1953 both counted on the possibility of de-Stalinization, of the democratization of the USSR and the Eastern Bloc. Deutscher concluded that “Stalinism had exhausted its historical function” (Deutscher 1953), as it had created the conditions of its own supersession. Not very different were the ideas that Lukács developed in *The Process of Democratization*. While Stalinism proved to be economically viable in the period of reconstruction, as a propeller of rapid industrialization, it lost its effectiveness once the Soviet economy advanced to a higher level, as it failed to adapt to the new economic reality that itself had created. On the one hand, it was impossible for the economy to keep focusing exclusively on heavy industry and neglect the consumption needs of the population.

On the other hand, the education system had already produced a new scientific and technical *intelligentsia* that, without necessarily being communist in the militant sense of the term, was loyal to the Soviet regime. These new professional strata, indispensable to the system, aspired to recognition and did not accept the authoritarian administrative methods of Stalinism. Thus, Stalin's final years represented a divorce between the new socio-economic order and the obsolete political methods, between politics and society (Lukács 1991: 147–8). Antiquated authoritarian production relations came in contradiction with the productive forces developed by these authoritarian means. Last but not least, both Lukács and Deutscher believed that industrialization, in spite of the detestable means of Stalinism, had nevertheless created a material base for socialism.

Regarding the topic of Soviet prospects, Marcuse's ideas were not very different either. In *Soviet Marxism* he pointed out that, from the Soviet ideologues' perspective, the rigours of coexistence made it necessary to postpone the withering away of the state until the arrival of the world revolution and the final victory of socialism (Marcuse 1958: 181). Coexistence was to provide that breathing space and respite for the accelerated development of the productive forces, an industrial policy that could only be run by the state. So, it implied a preservation of the bureaucracy. On the other hand, as the industrialization progressed in competition with the West, terror as a means of administration became unprofitable and unproductive, for it was not a "durable substitute for the productive and rational coordination which a highly developed industrial society requires" (Marcuse 1958: 251) or, in other words, "the development of the productive forces in the Soviet system may tend to 'overflow' its repressive regimentation" (Marcuse 1958: 255). The latter was also one of Lukács's main conclusions and clearly pointed to a limitation of the power of bureaucracy, while also revealing a space for political intervention and democratic reforms.

In *Beyond Capital*, István Mészáros subjected Lukács's work to a thorough criticism. If the inconsistencies in Löwy's account are caused by his indebtedness to the reconciliation framework of interpretation, Mészáros's reading avoids these inconsistencies, only to conclude that Lukács's project was doomed right from the start. He agreed that Lukács's resignation after the reflux of the revolutionary wave and the defeat of *Blum Theses* was responsible for the change in the temporal scale of his expectations, as this projection into the distant future allowed Lukács to circumvent the momentary impasse and remain faithful to the Marxist vision of a radical socialist transformation of society: if he could detect a tendency for socialism to consolidate (however slowly), Stalin's decades were not of decisive importance.

So this world-historical perspective provided Lukács a substitute for a radical critique of post-revolutionary society (Mészáros 1995: 387). Moreover, only this perspective could validate his option of ‘coexistence’ with the regime, his oscillation between compromise and ‘guerrilla warfare’. His capacity to influence the party decisions was very limited, but the bright future offered compensation for the disappointments of the present (Mészáros 1995: 390–1).

Unlike Deutscher or Löwy, Mészáros did not assess Lukács’s complicated relationship with Stalinism as a kind of accommodation or capitulation. Not even as reconciliation. He acknowledged the importance of the *Blum Theses* as a turning point in Lukács’s evolution, but only regarding a change in the temporal horizon of the realization of socialism. The real causes and the origins of Lukács’s “tragedy” had to be found somewhere else, namely in the early years of his adhesion to the revolutionary project: he committed himself and remained stuck to the idea of operating within the narrow limits allowed by the revolution at the weakest link of the chain, and by “socialism in one country”. Thus, he could not question the negative consequences caused by these limits for the real socialist movement (Mészáros 1995: 400). The internalization of these constraints proved to be decisive for Lukács’s general conception and prevented him from producing a more radical critique of the post-revolutionary order. Accordingly, Lukács’s condemnation of the bureaucratisation and “brutal” manipulations of Stalinism remained ineffective precisely because they could not function as causal explanations for the perversion of socialist ideals (Mészáros 1995: 406). To Mészáros, these causes that Lukács could not grasp were related to the intimate structure of the immediate post-revolutionary society, to its institutional configuration. The new institutional order failed to emancipate the working class, and only offered a new version of the old capitalist contradictions with new forms of “personification of capital”, an “authoritarian mode of control of the socio-economic metabolism”, and a “politically enforced – highly antagonistic – extraction of surplus labour” (Mészáros 1995: 414). In his view, Lukács’s work lacked an analysis of the post-revolutionary state formation, and a radical critique of the forms of socio-economic and political mediations. There was no mention of the ‘material mediations’, there was no indication of the mode of social reproduction that would lead to a socialist democracy, to an egalitarian society, there was no indication of how to eliminate the hierarchical division of labour between producers and the party apparatus. Moreover, in his last years Lukács abandoned altogether the old Marxist principle of the abolition of the division of labour, which showed not only his resignation to the permanence of the party hierarchy, but also his acceptance of hierarchy in the society at large (Mészáros 1995: 415–16). In the post-Stalin context, he became a reformist within the communist regimes, pleading for the return to the democratic sources of Leninism, sources

that Mészáros considered inadequate. Moreover, Lukács's position in 1968 was even inferior to his Leninist sources: he ceased to plead for the overcoming of the division of labour, and even renounced the idea of workers' councils.

Mészáros makes some valid points. But one must always have in mind the concrete alternatives that Lukács had at the moment – the choice between capitalism and real existing socialism was not an abstract one. So, what was the alternative to his limited criticism? Was there in the 1960s a revolutionary movement able to challenge the government from the left? Should Lukács have broken with the regime and chosen to live in the West? He was invited to leave by party officials, but declined. How could he have left, if he thought that capitalism was worse? Actually Lukács, assessing the mood of the masses as one of indifference, explicitly adopted a cautious reformist position. He no longer believed in the short-term overcoming of the division of labour, and definitely did not contest the legitimacy of the party, but favoured some alternative forms of democratic organization that did not disturb the “coexistence” with the central authorities. Mészáros rejected these forms too, considering them insufficient; consistently, he rejected the idea – very important to Lukács – that the Soviet post-capitalist regime had created the material base for socialism. For Mészáros actually existing socialism was unreformable, a dead end, a doomed system. He rejected the Leninist thesis of the revolution at the weakest point of the capitalist chain: the Soviet system could not be a foundation for socialism, everything had to be started from zero elsewhere. But although keen to denounce the “illusions” of coexistence, Mészáros was not free of illusions himself: his hope that the collapse of the communist parties in 1989 and the capitulation of the Western Social-Democratic parties to liberalism would create the conditions for a revitalized radical extra-parliamentary mass movement proved to be unfounded.

For István Eörsi too, Lukács's late thought was based on an article of faith, rather than on sound political grounds. In the introductory essay to *Record of a Life*, Eörsi wrote that for Lukács faith had the role of “providing the encouraging assurance that ideological, economic and organizational reforms from above could open a route from the austere Marxist present into an authentic Marxist future” (Lukács 1983: 14). Eörsi noticed an apparent paradox: although in his last interventions, Lukács pointed out the role of discontinuity in history, he was at the same time advocating for a reform of real existing socialism, not for overthrowing it. In a kind of Engelsian manner, Eörsi revealed an alleged contradiction between the conservative ontological and aesthetic “system” and the “method” that pushed Lukács to radical conclusions – the dialectical method that favoured discontinuity had revolutionary implications and was incompatible with Lukács's “solidarity with actually existing socialism”, with his “reformist critique of existing economic and political conditions in the socialist states” (Lukács 1983: 25).

So, should Lukács have called for the abolition of the regime? From the fact that, by the late 1960s, he came to state the importance of discontinuity in history, it does not necessarily follow that he (or anyone else) should have acted to instigate a new, immediate discontinuity by supporting a rebellion against real existing socialism. Actually, as it clearly follows from an interview with the *New Left Review*, what Lukács had in mind when he highlighted the importance of discontinuity was a total break with Stalinism, not an exit from Leninism: “Should continuity with the past be emphasized within a perspective of improvements, or on the contrary should the way forward be a sharp rupture with Stalinism? I believe that a complete rupture is necessary” (Lukács 1983: 172–3). In the laconic *Notes towards an Autobiography*, he wrote that the “tendency towards democracy [is] already making itself apparent, relatively speaking. I approve of this tendency (for all the obstacles and difficulties in its path), view it as a possible foundation; hence not opposition but reform”. But he immediately added that the reform had to provide a “genuine solution to the basic problems of democracy” (Lukács 1983: 168).

It is not hard to imagine why Lukács preferred to compromise with the Kadar regime in the 1960s, rather than engage in a new revolutionary enterprise. At the time of the 1956 uprising, he situated himself in “opposition to Rákosi, to any illusions of a particular internal reform of his regime, and opposition also to bourgeois liberal reforms (which were widely advocated even in circles close to Imre Nagy)” (Ibid.). Distancing himself equally from Stalinism and liberal reforms, he thought he had a platform for a democratic regeneration of existing socialism. He drew a pessimistic lesson from the experience of 1956, as he realized the difficulty of keeping what he saw as a “spontaneous (and highly heterogeneous) movement” advancing in a socialist direction (Ibid.). So, he feared that the return to bourgeois-democratic forms of government would very probably lead to an immediate restoration of capitalism (in this he was not mistaken). That is why he proclaimed emphatically that the bourgeois democracy promoted by some Eastern European “reformers” and their sympathizers was a false alternative, and implied that western interference would bring about a right-wing dictatorship – “another Greece” (Lukács 1991: 88). Therefore, by the end of the 1960s, he reached the conclusion that the only alternatives left to contemplate for the Eastern Bloc was Stalinism or socialist democracy. At the same time, he was aware that, in the absence of a democratic opening, there was a strong possibility that the apathy and indifference of the working class would give way to protests like the Polish spontaneous strikes. Undoubtedly, he saw Kadar’s regime as a lesser evil than the restoration of capitalism, and in view of this belief one can understand his compromise with the regime, his option for a limited criticism, notwithstanding the tensions between the opposing tendencies of his thought, between system and method. After all, his

hopes of reform were not unreasonable, he was not the only one who had high expectations regarding the democratization of the socialist states. In his analysis, as in those of Deutscher or Marcuse, the hopes for democratization were grounded in social and economic tendencies, in the concrete material conditions existing at the end of the Stalin era.

“I have always thought that the worst form of socialism was better to live in than the best form of capitalism”

I tried to challenge the dominant “reconciliation” collection of *clichés* and suggest an alternative interpretation, one that takes into account the complexity of the historical context and views Lukács’s commitment to peaceful coexistence as a form of political realism, grounded in the concrete alternatives available for him at the time. If we accept the reconciliation framework, Lukács appears as deprived of any sort of autonomy, and his work is susceptible to being reduced, as F. Jameson warned, to “external signs of arbitrary positions, symptoms meaningless in themselves and comprehensible only in terms of shifts in the party line” (Jameson 1974: 161). More or less explicitly, some of these interpretations suggest an analogy: Stalin was to Lukács what Napoleon had been to Hegel. But, notwithstanding the occasional ritualistic praise to the leader, there are no reasons to believe that Lukács intended to make such an argument, that he supported Stalin *because* he believed that the Soviet dictator was the embodiment of the world spirit or something of that order, as is the case with Hegel’s view of Napoleon.

In the end, the “reconciliation” framework of interpretation is inconsistent, if only because sometimes Lukács allowed himself to deviate from the party line, seriously endangering his position, if not more. If we focus instead on the pivotal idea of peaceful coexistence as his existential choice, we can then analyze Lukács’s thought as a relatively autonomous space and point out the elements of continuity in his philosophy. As I stated before, one sensible reason to adjust our perspective is the fact that his allegiance to this idea remained virtually unchanged – indeed his reasons to support the party had much to do with his agreement with this basic premise of the Soviet policy. He realized quickly that in the 1930s Soviet Union there was no place for democratic socialist ideals. Still, he did not break with Stalinism, but most likely saw it as an “infantile disorder”, a transitory stage towards a more mature socialism. Adherence to the theses of “socialism in one country” and peaceful coexistence implied a renunciation (at least temporary) of international revolutionary politics, as shown in Lukács’s support for the Popular Fronts. (Actually, socialism in one country, the Popular Fronts and peaceful coexistence obey the

same political logic, emerging from an assessment of the relative weakness of the Soviet state and of the international socialist movement). He lived through the Stalin years with resignation, but somehow managed to avoid drawing the ultimate conclusion of defeat, perhaps because he never lost hope that actually existing socialism could be reformed. When he figured out that, because of the convergence of two factors (the backwardness of the Russian society and the hostility of the West), the transition to socialism was to be much longer than anticipated, all he could do was to double down on the long-time game – essentially, he saw time as an ally of socialism. So, in the post-war universe, the chances of the socialist project were for him still intimately linked to the prospects of peaceful coexistence – he believed that, given enough time, and without outside interference, the “internal laws of development” were to push the Eastern Bloc towards socialism. As the West became a consumer society, he tended to think of coexistence more as a competition between cultures rather than a simple economic contest, and believed that for this extension of the domain of struggle the regeneration of Marxism was an essential prerequisite. Victory in the coexistence had to be won by intellectual means and a renewed Eastern European Marxism had the ideological mission of supporting the Western progressive movements in their actions.

He certainly wrote from a perspective of solidarity with real existing socialism. His criticism of the democratic deficiencies of the Communist parties was aimed at reforming the East-European regimes, not at replacing them. He never left the perimeter of the Leninist proletarian democracy of the early years of the Soviets and even in 1956, as a member of the short-lived Imre Nagy government, he voted against Hungary exiting the Warsaw Treaty. He refused to emigrate to the West, out of solidarity with the socialist cause. But he was not a party ideologue, his critical stance and repeated “heresies” disprove this accusation. He internalized the strategic guideline of Soviet foreign policy – coexistence – and the projection into an indefinite future of the global victory of socialism, a peculiar kind of “historical optimism”, had in turn a major impact on the style and substance of his philosophy. He thought that Marxism could no longer be conceived simply as a particular theory of revolution, or of capitalist contradictions – it had to become a more comprehensive theory capable of providing solutions to the socio-political, aesthetic or ethical dilemmas of the age. Written in a period of relative *détente*, the *Aesthetic* and *Ontology of social being* are major expressions of “Marxism in coexistence”. He identified clearly his philosophical adversary: an irrationalist and nominalist particularism which, in his judgement, dominated both rival bourgeois currents, existentialism and neopositivism. Had he lived a few years longer, he might have pointed out poststructuralism as well, for the same reasons, as the newest and most sophisticated indirect apologetic of capitalism.

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THE EASY APPROACH TO GROUP AGENCY. A SIMPLE REALIST VIEW ON GROUP AGENTS

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ABSTRACT. We talk about groups as *doing* something, we talk as if groups have agency. Is our talk legitimate? Are there group agents? Is there something like group agency? In this paper, I discuss two ontological frameworks concerning existence questions: the Quinean framework and the Thomasson-Carnap framework. I apply them to the problem of group agency. I review the Quinean-oriented literature debating the existence of group agents and its methodological background. I argue, via Thomasson's easy approach to ontology, that deflationism can simplify the debate surrounding group agents. Thus, I argue for a Thomasson-Carnap framework and show that it is better suited to answer the particular question whether there are group agents. More specifically, I argue for a non-reductive simple realist view on group agents, i.e. I argue for the truth of "There are group agents," via analytic entailments, by truths about the actions and deeds of groups.

Keywords: *Analytic Entailments, Deflationism, Group agency, Group agents, Simple Realism*

1. Introduction

When discussing political matters, we often say that the Parliament or that the Government did this and that. We also talk about corporations, saying that their decision to focus on a certain product is good or bad for their production. For short, we talk about these entities and their actions in an analogous way to the way we talk about the different deeds of individuals. When discussing individual actions, we also talk about individual agents who performed those actions. Then, if we keep the analogy, when discussing actions performed by groups (institutions, corporations), we must also talk about group agents who performed and are responsible for those

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actions. As soon as we leave behind our colloquial talk about institutions and corporations and their deeds, and enter in a philosophical realm, our attribution of agency to such entities becomes problematic. Can we attribute to such entities conative and cognitive states? Do they also have a moral status?

There is a substantial literature on the epistemology and the moral responsibility of group agents. However, there is also a metaphysical side of the problem: Are there group agents? Is there something like group agency? I show two ways in which we can discuss group agency: as a property (agency) predicated of an entity (groups), or as a property whose extension is non-empty, i.e. group agency, and as a class of entities which have this property, i.e. group agents. I differentiate between the question whether there are group agents and whether there are social groups. In this paper, I discuss the first question.

Thus, I tackle the metaphysical discussion surrounding the existence of group agents. Namely, whether such entities exist, whether reference to such entities can be explained away, whether reference to such entities is a metaphor, whether they are entities *per se*, or whether group agency is just individual coordinated agency. I argue for a *non-reductive simple realist view* concerning group agents and group agency. Thus, I argue that group agents exist and they are entities *per se*. I provide a metaphysical background to think of group agents as non-reducible to other entities, such as individual agents.

I follow Thomasson (2015a, 2015b) on her simple realist view and her general easy approach with respect to existence questions. In this paper, I show how the easy approach to group agency and group agents should deliver an easy answer to the problem whether group agents exist. Thus, there will be two important layers of the discussion.

The first layer concerns the traditional framework in which existence questions are discussed. Thomasson (2015b) argues that existence questions are asked in a Quinean tradition. In addition, I show how the traditional debates concerning the existence of group agents and group agency is framed in a Quinean manner. As opposed to a Quinean framework, Thomasson (2015b) argues for a Carnap-oriented ontological discussion of existence questions, defending the view that existence has a simple nature. I side with Thomasson and argue for a Thomasson-like ontological framing of the discussion regarding group agency and group agents. Furthermore, I hold that this Carnap-Thomasson framework simplifies the debate concerning group agents and group agency. Thus, I argue for a Thomasson-like metaontological deflationism with respect to the debates concerning group agency.

The second layer consists in applying the easy arguments and analytic entailments as formulated by Thomasson (2007, 2015b) to show that there are group agents and group agency. I rely on her analytic entailments (2007) and her

easy arguments (2015b) to argue for a simple realist view concerning group agents and group agency. Given an uncontroversial truth, such as “The Parliament adopted that bill,” by analytic entailments, we can argue there are group agents, and no other further specification is needed, i.e. that they are reducible, or that they should be explained in individual terms. Here I rely on a deflationist view on existence, i.e. existence has a simple nature. The analytic entailments are paired with application conditions in order to deliver existence statements. Analytic entailments derive the truth of certain sentences in virtue of the meaning of the terms in the premises, while application conditions are rules of use for the terms in our language.

The paper is structured in the following way. In Section 2, I discuss the problem of group agency. Why it is a problem and how we should approach it: as a property or in terms of entities, i.e. group agents. I argue that the existence question whether there are group agents is different from the question whether there are social groups. In Section 3, I present two ontological frameworks in which existence questions are discussed: the Quinean framework and the Thomasson-Carnap framework. In sections 4 and 5, I present Thomasson’s easy approach to ontology, her deflationist view of existence, and her ontological views of social groups. In Section 6, I discuss the Quinean-oriented literature on the existence of group agents and some of its methodological traits. I show how a deflationist approach can simplify the debates. For instance, in Section 7, I show how List and Pettit’s (2011) approach to group agents can be an easy one, without the complications inherited from the Quinean tradition. In sections 8 and 9, I provide three easy arguments or analytic entailments for the existence of group agents and argue for a simple realist view on group agents. Finally, in Section 10, I consider a possible criticism and provide an answer to it.

2. The problem of group agency

Why is group agency a problem? Group agency seems to be problematic because there cannot be any group agents in the sense there are individual agents. Let’s take for instance the following two examples. “I’ve made a decision” and “The Parliament has made a decision.” The “I” in the first sentence is an indexical which refers to the singular subject of the sentence. In a similar manner, “the Parliament” refers to the subject of the second sentence. If the first sentence is true, then we can safely say that the subject to which “I” refers exists. In the second case, there is a vast literature on whether institutions (or other kind of social groups exist) and

their status¹. An easy approach to ontology grants the existence of institutions and other kinds of social groups (Thomasson 2016). However, there is something more concerning the two sentences—both sentences express something the subject did, i.e. that they've made a decision. In the first case, as an expression of her agency, the subject decided something. The second case is also an expression of the subject's agency (of the Parliament) that it did something, i.e. it made a decision. Thus, since actions require agency, we must have the following symmetry: if we predicate agency to the individual, then we must also predicate agency to the institution as well². If the individual is an agent, then the institution is an agent as well, namely a group agent. Granting that institutions exist in the same sense individuals exist, it is important to keep in mind that we are predicating the property of being an agent to the institution, and not to the individuals composing the institution. Thus, the question whether there are group agents and whether there is group agency is different (and with other metaphysical commitments) than the question whether there are social groups. Arguing for group agents appeals to other conceptual resources than arguing for the existence of social groups, i.e. arguing for group agents or group agency implies that groups have certain cognitive and conative states, that they are morally responsible etc. Group agents are groups with intentional states, while social groups are not necessarily endowed with such intentional states, for instance, the group constituted by the people who had secondary reactions to the COVID-19 vaccine. Institutions, on the other hand, are described as having intentions and performing actions. Of course, many social groups are group agents, but they aren't necessarily so. Thus, arguing that there are social groups does not necessarily entail that there are group agents, since some social groups are not described with intentional states.

There are two ways the sentences expressing group agency can be approached. First, we can frame it in terms of a property, i.e. agency is a property which can be or cannot be predicated about groups. Is this a legitimate ascription? If it is, then we can say there is a certain property, i.e. group agency. Thus, the theses would be: a) we can predicate agency about groups; b) there is a certain kind of agency, i.e. group agency. Second, we can approach sentences expressing group agency by asking whether there are group agents. This is also how the problem is formulated in the debates concerning group agency. For instance, Schmitt (2003) talks about a supraagent in case of joint actions, with the supraagent being additional to the individual agents taking part in the action. Ludwig (2016, 2017) talks about an agent over and above the individual agents taking part in the collective action (singular group agents like institutions, corporations, mobs). List and Pettit (2011) talk about

¹ (Uzquiano 2004), (Effingham 2010), (Ritchie 2015).

² This symmetry is invoked and discussed by Ludwig (2016, 2017) and Chant (2018).

group agents. Thus, we get a third thesis, namely that there are group agents. Group agents are the entities falling under the concept of group agency. They are those groups on which we can predicate agency.

Why are these theses problematic? Our talk about group agency shows we are somehow compelled to accept there are group agents. On the other hand, an agent must possess some mental states (cognitive and conative) to be considered an agent, and it is problematic whether institutions do have such states. Therefore, we have the tension between our use of language and our intuitions, the intuition being in this case that a group cannot be an agent on its own right as an individual is. However, authors such as Gilbert (1989) and Pettit (2011) argue that group agents are capable of cognitive and conative states. Furthermore, corporate agents are attributed a moral status, they are ascribed moral responsibility, and even reactive attitudes (Björnsson and Hess 2016), even though there is also the other side of the coin, attributing moral status to non-agential groups (Bloomberg 2020). Such views tell us that the intuition that groups cannot be ascribed an intentional content seems to be problematic and that it is not trivial that we should rely on this intuition after all.

It is not the incredulous stare that seems to bother us concerning the existence of group agency and group agents, but there is something else. What seems to bother us is how we understand existence when talking about group agency and group agents. What does it mean that group agents *exist*? In the next section I will deal with two frameworks in which existence questions can be formulated and in which the nature of existence can be explained: the Carnapian and the Quinean approaches to existence questions.

3. Two Ontological Frameworks

The central questions of the paper are whether there are group agents and whether there is group agency. These are existence questions and they are part of a wide gallery of such concerns regarding different entities. Is there a possible child of Wittgenstein? Are there unicorns? These questions are treated in a somewhat analogous manner, and the reason for this is that our concern can be taken to a higher order and ask what does it mean that something exists and how should we answer existence questions. A great deal of philosophical inquiry disputes both specific existence questions, and the nature of existence as well. Thomasson (2015b) argues that this philosophical inquiry has gone on a wrong path which will only lead to more entanglements and difficulties. In her view, the seeds of these entanglements are to be found in Quine's view on ontology, while the metaphysical meadow can

be reached with the help of Carnap's view on ontological questions. Thus, Thomasson proposes a different framework in which these questions should be treated: an easy approach to existence questions. This is a Carnap-Thomasson framework, while the difficult path framework is the Quine framework³.

The Carnap-Thomasson framework is argued by Thomasson (2015b) to be more faithful to the philosophical endeavour pioneered at the end of the 19th century by Frege or Husserl. The distinctive feature of philosophy was the method of conceptual analysis, in contrast to science, which was concerned with the empirical world. Thus, there is, for Thomasson (via Frege, Husserl etc.) a clear distinction between science and philosophy.

Unlike the Carnap-Thomasson framework, the Quine framework is based on blurring the borders between science and philosophy (Thomasson 2015b, 51). There is not a clear distinction between philosophy and science, and we need to see which are the ontological commitments of any theory. This framework is based on the idea that ontological disputes are meant to establish what ontology a theory must adopt and that there is an ontological standard to which a theory must conform.

“The issue is clearer now than of old, because we now have a more explicit standard whereby to decide what ontology a given theory or form of discourse is committed to: a theory is committed to those and only those entities to which the bound variables of the theory must be capable of referring in order that the affirmations made in the theory be true.” (Quine 1948, 33)

Quine discusses about rival theories between which we need to adjudicate. The ontological standard is meant to help us choose between them. Quantification and the value of the bound variables within a theory tell us what there is according to that theory. But, unlike Carnap, who would stop here, Quine says that the ontological disputes are meant to establish which ontology is to be adopted. A theory is judged by its conformity with an ontological standard.

The core of the Carnap-Thomasson framework is that we do not need to go into ontological disputes. Carnap (1950) says that they are problematic. There, he distinguishes between internal and external existential questions, and argues that

³ Thomasson acknowledges that the way ontological questions are disputed now is different from what Quine initially proposed, even though he is responsible for the initial push. For this reason, the proper label would not be a “Quine framework,” but a “(Pseudo)Quine framework.” However, for reasons of simplicity, I will continue to label the framework as a “Quine framework,” and hope that I am not making an injustice to Quine.

only internal questions are answerable, since only such questions are meaningful (Carnap 1950, 22). They are meaningful because they are asked within a framework and they can be answered by conceptual or empirical means. The world of things, for instance, is one of these frameworks. Is there a table on which my laptop stands? The internal question is provided with an easy empirical answer. However, asking whether there *really* is a table on which my laptop sits, whether the table is just something reducible to a configuration of atoms, or just the sum of its parts, is to ask external questions. Well, why are external questions meaningless and why should we give up on them? Why should existence questions be only internally asked? An answer is that every existence question should be formulated within a certain language framework, and external questions are meant to be formulated outside any such language.

“To accept the thing world means nothing more than to accept a certain form of language, in other words, to accept rules for forming statements and for testing accepting or rejecting them [...] But the thesis of the reality of the thing world cannot be among these statements, because it cannot be formulated in the thing language or, it seems, in any other theoretical language.” (Carnap 1950, 23)

It seems that Carnap would say that accepting that something exists means to accept a certain form of language. We cannot accept that something exists outside a certain language. The general question “Is the thing world/our world real?” exceeds the semantic and syntactic rules of our language. Providing an answer to this question means going beyond the world of things framework. I will argue that, in a similar manner, asking existence questions concerning group agency falls outside the world of social facts, and the easy approach to existence questions Thomasson proposes seems suited to answer these questions.

4. Thomasson’s easy approach to ontology

On Carnap’s theoretical background, Thomasson (2015a, 2015b) constructs an easy approach to ontology. Her approach is based on the internal/external questions distinction with respect to existence, since existence questions can be answered only by conceptual and empirical means. Thomasson deflates in this way our views with respect to problematic entities. What are the coordinates of her account, besides the Carnapian views already mentioned?

Her main idea is that existence has a simple nature and existence questions can be answered easily. She rests on a univocal meaning of existence, since otherwise, its simple nature would be diminished. The simple nature of existence also excludes any substantive criteria used to establish whether a certain entity exists: mind-independence, causal-efficacy etc (Thomasson 2015b, 82). This approach to existence and the meaning of 'exist', thus, rejects the traditional debate that existence questions should be answered on the basis of existence criteria, since 'to exist' does not refer to "a substantive property the nature of which we can investigate and hope to discover" (Thomasson 2015b, 87).

Thomasson proposes "a fixed, formal rule of use" (2015b, 82), and that is the following: "K's exist iff the application conditions actually associated with 'K' are fulfilled" (2015b, 86). The rule for existence is not meant to tell us whether a certain entity exists or not, it is meant to state that existence is linked with the application conditions of terms. This further leads to the idea that there is no general and shared criterion of existence, a criterion that all existing things should share: "the conditions under which things of different kinds exist will be as various as those application conditions are" (Thomasson 2015b, 89).

The key term here is "application conditions." What are they? Thomasson (2007, 2015b) argues that terms are associated with application conditions. These are rules of use that are meaning constituting for terms⁴ (Thomasson 2015b, 89) and they tell us when a term refers or not. To use a similar example with Thomasson's (2007, 39), if I am an explorer and I search for new species, if I classify a certain being in the animalia regnum and call it "schkangaroo," when it is actually just a robot left there by an unknown civilisation, then the application conditions fail to fulfil⁵ for "schkangaroo" when I speak about the animal classified as schkangaroo. What about fictional characters such as Sherlock Holmes? If I use "Sherlock Holmes" in a game to name the best detective in the history of humanity, then the application conditions fail to fulfil since he is just a novel character, and I am under the confusion the he really existed. On the other hand, if I am asked "Who is the novel character whose best friend was Watson and whose nemesis was Moriarty?" and my answer is "Sherlock Holmes", the application conditions do fulfil and I do not fail to refer.

The application conditions will play a key role in my arguments that to the question whether there are group agents and whether there is group agency there is a simple affirmative answer.

⁴ However, they are not the only meaning constituting rules.

⁵ Thomasson (2007, 39) uses the example in order to show how application conditions are used to ground reference. In this example, she shows that some conditions (application conditions) must be fulfilled in order to ground reference for a term.

5. Thomasson's easy approach to social groups

How should we treat the entities of the social world within the framework of easy ontology? How should we treat our reference to social groups, institutions, and to the deeds of those social groups and institutions? Thomasson (2016) argues that to the question whether there are social groups we can provide an easy affirmative answer. She approaches this question as well in (Thomasson 2015b) arguing that entities such as institutions or corporations exist. The basic idea is that we can answer affirmatively to the question whether the Romanian Parliament exists: “[f]or example, institutional terms typically come with application conditions enabling us to say, for example, that if such and such paperwork is filed and the relevant fees paid, a corporation comes to exist (and ‘corporation’ comes to refer) [...]” (Thomasson 2015b, 100).

However, what sort of entities are social groups? As exemplified above, some social groups take decisions that cause different changes in the world, they act. The Romanian Parliament adopted some new changes in the laws regulating this and that aspect of our social world. If we can provide an easy affirmative answer to the question whether social groups exist, does it mean that we can also provide an easy answer to the existence question regarding group agency? The answer is not obvious, since one can accept that groups exist, without accepting they are endowed with agency.

For Thomasson it does not follow trivially either that if groups exist, they also have agency, and the problem is still open to debate:

“[o]f course many in recent years (Gilbert 1989; List and Pettit 2010) have laid out senses in which it seems apt to ascribe intentional states of certain kinds to social groups (states not reducible to those of its members) in a way that is non-spooky [...]” (Thomasson 2016, 4832)

In order to say there are group agents, then, we must accept that social groups display an intentional content that is not reducible to individual intentional content. It follows then that if there are group agents, then we must also accept collective intentionality. The argument for group agents can be approached from another point of view as well, namely from that of collective actions. Arguing that there are groups who do this and that allows for an argument that there is group agency and there are group agents.

I will discuss the argument that if groups act, then groups have agency and there are group agents. I will show that the actual debate concerning the existence of group agents is formulated within a Quinean framework, based on the Quinean

methodological features. I will show how the easy approach to ontology deflates the debate and argue for a simple realist view with respect to group agents and group agency.

6. The Quinean framework: rival ontologies of group agency

How should we approach the questions whether there are group agents and whether there is group agency from a metaontological level. I will review the debates concerning group agency and discuss their Quinean methodological features. The metaphysical discussions regarding group agency have been shaped within a Quinean framework, and the features of the framework that I will discuss are the following: there are rival ontologies and theories differ over ontologies, a theory must conform to an ontological standard, the ontological disputes establish that ontological standard (Quine 1948), and existence has a substantive nature⁶. These features can be found in the different theories taking part in the ontological debates concerning group agency and group agents. A short map of the theories is provided by List and Pettit (2011). Consider the following:

“But how should we analyze the ascription of attitudes, intentions, or agency to them [groups]? Should we understand it literally, taking it to impute a group agency that replicates the agency of individuals; and if so, should we endorse this imputation or treat it as an error? Or should we understand the language metaphorically or figuratively, taking it to suggest that while groups can simulate agency, they cannot really replicate it? On the latter view, the reference to a group’s attitudes, intentions, or agency might serve useful shorthand purposes but would not have any ontological significance; it would be a mere *façon de parler*.” (List and Pettit 2011, 1)

We see then that language and our use of language refers to collective attitudes and intentions. If language is taken literally, then we can either say that our use of language is correct, and this is List and Pettit’s thesis, or consider it wrong, using false sentences when attributing attitudes and intentions to groups. Another approach is to take our use of such attributions as metaphors. The idea is that we cannot explain away this usage, but it should nevertheless be taken just as a manner of speaking. We can also have a redundant realist approach to language, holding that our reference to group agency is reducible to that of individual agency

⁶ The last feature of a Quinean methodology in metaphysics is discussed in (Thomasson 2015a, 2015b).

(see List and Pettit 2011, 7). Our attributions of such attitudes and intentions are correct, but they can be explained away through logical analysis. In the following lines I will provide a short overview of such theories.

Schmitt (2003)⁷ argues that we must accept joint action and joint agency⁸, that there is an agent over and above the individuals who perform the action. However, this acceptance is only conceptual, just a *façon de parler*. Thus, we should accept joint agency at a conceptual level because we cannot eliminate our reference to it. However, at an ontological level, there is no joint agency. Moreover, it is more economical to speak in this way, but this does not mean that this is how things really are.

Another approach is provided by Ludwig (2016). He argues that while the surface grammar of our language appears to commit us to an agent over and above, there is actually no commitment, and this can be shown by logical analysis. Given the sentence “We built a house”⁹, Ludwig distinguishes between a distributive and a collective reading of plural sentences. His main thesis is that the collective reading is not reducible to the distributive reading. Since only the collective reading of plural sentences would commit to collective action and to an agent over and above, a group agent, it follows there are no collective actions and no agents over and above. Ludwig argues that collective actions are not actions in the primary sense because he adopts Davidson’s idea that only primitive actions are actions *per se*. Ludwig further develops the idea to argue that only individual actions are actions in the primary sense since they are direct causes of primitive actions, while collective actions are not.

Searle (1990) proposes a view of collective intentionality without group agency. He argues that collective intentionality is not reducible to the mere sum of the intentional states of the individuals, but he nevertheless rejects group minds and group consciousness. If group minds are understood as in (Pettit 2011), then group agency is rejected as well. Thus, Tuomela (2018, 28) argues that Searle seems to propose a conceptual irreducibility, but an ontological reducibility of collective intentionality. Thus, group agents are reduced to individual agents.

List and Pettit’s (2011) account of group agency takes this talk about groups at face value. They argue that there are group agents and that our talk about groups should be taken at face value, as opposed to just a *façon de parler*. They support a strong version of realism about group agents, arguing that our talk about groups is

⁷ I have also discussed Schmitt’s thesis elsewhere, in (Popescu 2020), focusing rather on his view that groups must possess a complex system of beliefs in order to accept group agency at an ontological level.

⁸ This is the term Schmitt (2003) uses. I take it to be synonymous with group agency.

⁹ “Each of us built her own house independently” is understood under a distributive reading, and “We built together a house” is understood under the collective reading.

not reducible to the talk about individuals, as opposed to the weaker form, redundant realism. However, they assume methodological individualism in order to block unwanted consequences such as committing to some mysterious forces which animate the parts of the group (animism). Methodological individualism holds that “the agency of group agents depends wholly on the organization and behavior of individual members” (List and Pettit 2011, 4) in an analogous manner to the one in which the agency of an individual is wholly dependent on her bodily parts. Nevertheless, group agency explains collective behaviour which cannot be explained only by the summation of individual agency.

The debates are configured in a Quinean fashion, and we shall see this by examining the features of a Quinean methodology present in these debates. Recall the Carnapian distinction between internal and external questions. The questions regarding group agents and group agency seem to be external and not internal to the framework.

First, the metaontological framework and the methodological features of a Quinean approach state that there are rival ontologies and people differ with respect to those ontologies. List and Pettit’s (2011) classification shows us the ontological ramifications of the rival ontologies and how theories differ with respect to those ontologies. However, in a Carnapian approach to ontology, such external existence questions are meaningless, they cannot be answered outside the framework. The questions are not internal to the framework, i.e. our talk about the world of social facts. The ontological questions do not regard what entities exist according to the framework, but what entities the framework should accept. The rival ontologies and the disputes are possible because the questions are formulated as external existence questions. The linguistic framework of the world of social facts refers to groups, the deeds of such groups and the way the groups relate to their deeds. Thus, the linguistic framework does not question these references, and we need to step outside the framework of the world of social facts in order to debate them.

Second, since the questions are not internal to the framework of the world of social facts, there are different theories answering to the questions whether there is group agency and whether there are group agents. The theories propose different ontologies: realism with respect to group agents, eliminativism or reductionism. Let’s see one of the features of the Quinean framework at work. Existence is taken to have a substantive nature. For instance, causal efficacy is one of the substantive features of existence. One theory that conforms to such a standard is the theory that only primitive actions are actions *per se* (Davidson 2001). Primitive actions are performed directly, and not by doing something else. Kirk Ludwig (2016, 2017) borrows this theory and explains individual and collective actions by means of their link with

primitive actions. Individual actions are actions *per se* since they are direct causes of primitive actions, while collective actions are not. Collective actions are not actions *per se* since a group cannot perform a primitive action (Ludwig 2019, 128). Thus, since individual actions have a direct link with primitive actions (are directly caused by them), and collective actions do not, Ludwig wants to show that our reference to collective actions is misleading since there are no collective actions *per se*. Moreover, since collective actions are not actions *per se*, there are no group agents either. The ontological standard in this case is to have a direct link with primitive actions.

Deflating the notion of existence entails deflating the metaontology (Thomasson 2015a, 2015b). Since existence does not have a substantive nature, then the existence of particular sorts of entities does not have a substantive nature either. The existence questions are now easier and the entanglement of the metaphysics of group agency gets disentangled.

What would then be the consequences of deflating the ontology and the nature of existence? For instance, a minimal ontological stance regarding group agency and the unsubstantive nature of existence helps overcoming the metaphysical discussion caused by the external questions with respect to group agency. Thomasson argues that there is something wrong with the metaontology concerning existence questions (Thomasson 2015a, 2015b). The metaontology is of a Quinean fashion and assumes a certain way of treating existence questions and a certain ontology. Eliminating the assumptions and the methodological issues helps reshape the discussion concerning group agency.

7. Another consequence: how Pettit and List's realism can be an easy approach to group agency

Some considerations are in line with an easy approach to ontology, and some in line with a Quinean approach. Taking our talk about group agency at face value is a feature of a deflationist ontology. List and Pettit's (2011) realism supposes a commitment to group agents and group agency, stating that neither are they reducible to individual agents, nor to individual agency. Thus, nothing is misleading in our language and we should accept it with the ontological commitments it has. The realism they argue for is consistent with Thomasson's view on application conditions and her rule for existence¹⁰. Application conditions should be seen as rules of use for different terms. In this case, the application conditions are linked with our talk about institutions. For instance, we want the term "Parliament" to be meaningful and

¹⁰ K's exists if and only if the application conditions actually associated with that term fulfil (Thomasson 2015b, 89).

to successfully refer to an entity, since it is part of the democratic establishment. In this sense, List and Pettit's realism is in line with a deflationist ontology of group agency.

However, List and Pettit also have the assumption of methodological individualism. By this assumption, they defend themselves from accusations of animism. However, I consider the need for this assumption as a trait of a Quinean ontological approach¹¹ and necessary only because of the threat of the animist view. Both animism, and anti-animism, through the methodological individualism assumption, are principles which seek a substantive grounding of group agency. The existence of group agency is in need for a further explanatory principle, for instance the mysterious entity animating the parts. In a deflationist ontological framework, methodological individualism is a common-sense truth, and is not a defence against animism, since there is no need for a further principle to explain the existence of group agents.

Deflationism about existence delivers a simplified metaphysical background for the realist view that List and Pettit adopts, since animism is eliminated. Thus, the account gets rid of the residual discussion regarding whether we need to accept a mysterious force that animates the group in order to act or to endow it with agency. It also guards against any criticism that List and Pettit's view is only conceptual and not metaphysical. The deflationist view makes it an ontological view, and not only conceptual, since existence of an entity, in this case, of group agents, is in no need for a further substantive explanation of its nature.

8. One man's trash is another man's treasure. How the problematic grammar is actually an argument in an easy approach to ontology

Recall that the problem concerning group agency is the fact that in our ordinary talk about groups we attribute actions, attitudes or intentions to them. There is also a symmetry between singular action sentences and plural action sentences. Given that the subject in the singular sentence refers to something that acts and displays agency, then a plural action sentence must have the same commitments, given the similar grammatical structure and given the meaning of the terms¹².

¹¹ The argument is not meant to show that the agency of group agents is not wholly dependent on individual agents. I consider it a very sensible truth.

¹² I have borrowed this talk about singular and plural action sentences from Ludwig (2016). He discusses this symmetry argument for plural agents and argues that by logical analysis, any apparent commitment to such agent is eliminated. See also Chant (2017) who criticizes a similar argumentative device used to show that there are group agents.

However, we have been told that the grammatical case for group agency is what is actually causing problems. We talk as if groups have agency, but in fact we are told they do not. This surface (for some philosophers) grammatical case for group agency is problematic because it does not seem right to accept group agents, to whom we attribute intentionality. Moreover, the metaphysical grounds for accepting group agents seem problematic and in need for further elucidations. However, what seems problematic for the Quinean-oriented metaphysician of group agency, is actually an important case for the existence of group agency and group agents. The easy approach to ontology relies on this kind of arguments to show that certain entities exist. The easy approach to existence and the unproblematic and simple nature of existence allow for easy arguments or analytic entailments regarding the existence of different entities (Thomasson 2015a, 2015b). What are easy arguments? We start from an uncontroversial truth, and a conceptual truth, and we get a derived claim proving different aspects (Thomasson 2015b, 231). Thomasson (2007), when talking about the existence of ordinary objects, appeals to analytic entailments. Easy arguments are analytic entailments. An analytic entailment supposes that given a sentence p or a set of sentences Γ , by entailment, we get to the truth of q in virtue of the meaning of the terms in p or in the set of sentences Γ and the logical principles alone (Thomasson 2007, 16). In what follows, I will employ the same kind of arguments for the claims that there are group agents and there is group agency. I consider this sort of arguments to offer the metaphysical basis for taking talk about group agents and group agency at face value. By means of this methodology of analytic entailments that Thomasson defends, I argue for a simple realist position with respect to group agency and group agents.

9. Three easy arguments (analytic entailments) and why they work. Simple realism about group agency

The first argument shows that we can predicate agency to groups. Take for instance the uncontroversial truth that “The Parliament takes decisions for us.” The conceptual truth or truths used in the argument would be that a subject acts if it is endowed with agency, or simply put: action implies agency. An uncontroversial truth would also be that taking a decision is an action. Then, from the two uncontroversial truths and the conceptual truth, we get the derived claim that the Parliament is an agent. Thus, we can predicate agency about a group.

The next step is to argue for the claim that there is group agency. Group agency is a property and there are entities that belong to the extension of this concept. The easy argument would be as follows. The uncontroversial truth is “The

Parliament takes decisions for us.” The conceptual truth is the fact that action implies agency. Thus, the Parliament is an agent. Then, the Parliament has the property of agency. Since it is also a group, then the Parliament has the property of group agency. Therefore, there is a property of group agency and some entities fall under the concept.

The argument for the existence of group agents starts as well from the uncontroversial truth “The Parliament takes decisions for us.” Another uncontroversial truth is the fact that the Parliament is a group. The conceptual truth is that action implies agency. Thus, since the Parliament is a group and acts, then the Parliament is a group agent.

The easy arguments for the existence of group agents and group agency are part of the view that existence is something that should be taken at face value, without an additional search for a deeper meaning of the nature of existence. In a Carnapian framework, the questions “Are there group agents?” or “Is there something like group agency?” are internal questions that should be answered by conceptual or empirical means. In my view, the three answers provided above rely on conceptual means, i.e. given an uncontroversial truth and a conceptual truth, we argue that there are group agents and group agency. However, we can ask the following two questions. Why is this treatment of group agents and group agency internal to a framework, and thus meaningful? For short, why are those questions internal questions? Here I think the answer should be found in Carnap’s view. Second, how do we justify the easy answers to the questions? Here I think the answer should be searched in Thomasson’s view on application conditions and analytic entailments. I will further treat the two questions separately.

Recall that internal questions are internal to a certain linguistic framework, whose rules for our use of terms are specified for the framework. Consider Carnap’s view on internal questions.

“Internal questions and possible answers to them are formulated with the help of the new forms of expressions [for newly introduced entities]¹³. The answers may be found either by purely logical methods or by empirical methods, depending upon whether the framework is a logical or a factual one.” (Carnap 1950, 22)

¹³ My addition. The more general context is the following. Carnap accepts the introduction of new entities in a language. He considers this to be the construction of a new linguistic framework. If this talk about new entities is needed, the framework is constructed with the addition of new rules of use for the new entities (see Carnap 1950, 21).

We can consider the questions of interest for us to be questions internal to the linguistic framework of the world of social facts. I consider this framework to be analogous to the world of things¹⁴. The world of things is the world of things, facts and events. The internal questions regarding the world of things receive answers based on observation. Internal questions regarding the existence of things in the world of things could be of the following kind: Are there mountains? Is there a desk under my laptop? But Carnap (1950, 22-23) rejects the meaningfulness of questions regarding the existence of the world itself. In an analogous manner, we can ask internal questions regarding the world of social facts. Is there a Parliament of Romania? Does it take decisions for us? Do we accept those decisions? These are internal questions that receive an affirmative answer based on our linguistic framework and rules of use. Note that accepting the linguistic framework also means accepting the framework of entities. Illustrative for this is Thomasson's (2015b) example that by filling this and that paper, some corporation comes into existence. Also, accepting the linguistic framework of the world of social facts, allows for accepting there are marriages when people give an affirmative answer to the question in front of the civil servant¹⁵.

Are the questions regarding the existence of group agents and group agency also internal questions? They are, as long as we do not search for a substantive understanding of existence and a deeper meaning of the nature of group agency. The answers to those questions are based on the linguistic framework of the world of social facts and the entities associated with this linguistic framework. They are derivable from the fact that institutions exist, they act and they intend to do things. For instance, a judge sanctioning a certain corporation for some illegal deeds, supposes some sort of agency from the part of the corporation. On the other hand, asking whether there really are group agents or whether there really is group agency, whether they are not reducible to some more basic facts, is to ask a substantive ontological question searching for a substantive meaning of the nature of those entities, and this is meaningless, at least according to Carnap.

The second question regarding group agents and group agency concerned the justification for the easy answers. They are provided given the properties of the application conditions for the terms. Application conditions are meaning constituting for the term, they are rules of use and the entity which the term names exists if and only if those application conditions are fulfilled. Then, what are the application conditions for terms like group agents and group agency, and when are they fulfilled? Consider the following quote from Thomasson.

¹⁴ See Carnap 1950, 22.

¹⁵ See also Austin's (1979) example of a performative. Thomasson (2015b) also uses marriages as a paradigmatic example.

“[R]ather than thinking of application conditions as definitions competent speakers (or anyone else) could recite, we should instead think of them as rules for when it is and is not proper to use a term, which speakers master in acquiring competence with applying and refusing a new term in various situations, and that (once mastered) enable competent speakers to evaluate whether or not the term would properly be applied in a range of actual and hypothetical situations.” (Thomasson 2015b, 93)

I think here the general term whose application conditions we should consider is that of “agency.” The application conditions for this term should deliver us an answer whether we use it correctly when we attribute agency to the Parliament. As seen from the application conditions for agency, it is required when performing an action. We consider it an action and not an event, if it is done in virtue of one’s agency. Agency is what distinguishes actions from mere happenings (Davidson 2001, 43). Then, when we speak about someone’s actions, we are entitled to say that she was the agent of those actions. In the same way, we speak about the actions of institutions and we distinguish actions from things that just happen to them. We speak about the correct or ruining decisions of the Parliament, and we distinguish them from things that happen to them, for instance, from it being dissolved by the President. We put our trust in the Parliament and we lose our trust in it. To sanction its decisions, we vote for a different party, hoping that the next time the structure of the Parliament will be different etc. Then, the term agency seems to be properly applied in case of institutions as well. Since the institution of Parliament is a group, we can then talk about group agency. We can properly say that the term agency applies to the Parliament: “for a term to have application conditions is for competent speakers to be able to evaluate, with respect to various hypothetical situations (ways the actual world could turn out to be), whether or not the term would apply [...]” (Thomasson 2007, 44). As competent speakers we evaluate that the application conditions for agency when applied to the Parliament fulfil, since we talk about the deeds of the Parliament and we consider it responsible for the different good or bad consequences of the laws adopted.

Also consider the following relation between application conditions and analytic entailments which deliver existence claims:

“Given the frame-level application conditions associated with singular and sortal terms, for any terms ‘p’ and ‘q,’ where the application conditions for ‘p’ are also sufficient conditions for ‘q’ to apply, claims such as ‘(A) p exists’ analytically entail claims that ‘(a) q exists,’ for example, the application conditions for ‘house’ in a situation are sufficient to ensure the application of ‘building,’ so ‘There is a house’ analytically entails ‘There is a building.’” (Thomasson 2007, 44)

What I need to show here is that the application conditions for “action” are sufficient for the application conditions of “agency.” We have seen, that agency distinguishes actions from mere events, and this is an uncontroversial truth accepted by philosophers. If a branch crashes on someone’s car, we do not say that the branch is the agent of the car’s destruction, we just consider it a misfortune and the owner can get the money from the insurance company. However, if someone intentionally drives her car into the tree to fake an accident, we get to say that she is the agent of her car’s destruction, and the insurance company would sue her if it discovered the truth. In a similar way, if we talk about the actions of the Parliament, the application conditions for “action” in this case are sufficient for the application conditions of “agency,” or “group agency,” since we are talking about a group. If they are sufficient, then “there is a certain action” analytically entails that “there is a certain agent.” Thus, if the application conditions for the term “action” apply in the case of institutions, then the application conditions for “agency” applies as well. Then “there is a certain action performed by that institution” analytically entails that “there is a certain group agent who performed the action.”

In the next section I will analyse a possible response to the easy arguments concerning group agents and group agency.

10. Possible criticism: the easy arguments are not that easy

One line of criticism against the easy approach to group agency could be the following: the three easy arguments rely on controversial claims. It is not obvious that there are groups and it is not obvious that there are collective actions either. The easy arguments relied on both truths. As in the case of group agency, collective action is argued to be reducible to individual action or not to be actions *per se* (Ludwig 2016). Social groups and institutions are also argued to be something like the sum of individuals, or the sum of individuals plus certain (social) relations that establish between them or, in any case, reducible to something else (see Effingham 2010, Ritchie 2015). It seems then that the arguments showing that there is group agency and there are group agents are not that easy after all.

My response is that the previous criticism relies on a substantive view of existence regarding groups and collective actions. Thus, the claims on which the easy arguments rest are controversial if the nature of existence is not the simple one proposed by Thomasson. The second line of my response is that a competent speaker knows and can evaluate whether the application conditions for social groups and collective actions hold, and we can say there are social groups and there are collective actions *per se*.

First, there is a similar literature concerning the metaphysics of social groups, analogous to the one concerning group agency and group agents. The literature rests on the same Quinean methodological assumptions of rival ontologies, ontological standards and substantive view of existence. Should our theories regarding social groups commit to the existence of such entities? Is the ontological standard of a theory fulfilled if we accept social groups? When we say that there are social groups, do we mean a substantive view of their existence? We have seen that Thomasson (2016) argues for an easy approach to social groups. If we reject the Quinean methodology of answering existence questions, then we get an easy ontology of social groups. Then, as Thomasson (2015b) says, filling some specific papers means a certain corporation comes into existence. An analogous argument can be provided with respect to collective actions. In a Quinean methodological framework, the claim that there are collective actions or that collective actions are actions *per se*, are controversial claims. However, in an easy approach to ontology, the simple nature of existence allows to argue that collective actions are actions *per se*. Given the sentence “The Parliament takes decisions for us,” the application conditions for the term “Parliament” are sufficient for the application conditions of “institution,” then the existence of the Parliament entails the existence of an institution. An analogous argument can be applied to collective actions, given that we acknowledge and recognize the actions of the Parliament.

11. Final remarks

Group agents and group agency have been explained in eliminativist, reductionist or realist terms. I have defended, in line with Thomasson’s approach to metaontology, the idea that the debate concerning group agents and group agency displays the traits of a Quinean framework of ontology. I have argued that the Quinean ideas of ontological standard and ontological rivalry are the fertile soil for the disputes regarding group agents and group agency. To show this, I have reviewed some of the proposals concerning group agents and group agency and I have shown in which way they display a background Quinean ontological framework.

As a positive account, I have argued that the metaphysical background for the discussions concerning group agents and group agency should be a Carnap-Thomasson framework. I have defended a simple realist view of group agents and group agency. More specifically, I have applied Thomasson’s simple realist ontology to the problem of group agency and group agents. The argumentative devices used to support a simple realist view were the easy arguments and analytic entailments

designed by Thomasson (2007, 2015b). What I have tried to show is that there are perfectly reasonable easy arguments which entail that there are group agents according to the framework of the world of social facts. The arguments have the following theoretical backgrounds. First, the questions whether there are group agents and group agency should be understood as internal Carnapian questions, internal to the framework of the world of social facts. Second, I have argued that the easy arguments work, given the application conditions for terms such as group agents and group agency. As competent speakers we can evaluate that the application conditions for group agents and group agency fulfil, since we talk about the deeds and actions of different institutions and groups.

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A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH TO SKEPTICAL THEISM

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ABSTRACT. The purpose of the present essay is to present a version of the evidential argument from evil and to propose a ‘skeptical theistic’ response from a phenomenological point of view. In a word, the problem with the evidential argument from evil is that it attempts to put forth as justified an interpretation of the moral significance of historical events which actually exceeds the limits of human knowledge and which is based on a misinterpretation of experience. The essay also corrects certain analytic-philosophical notions regarding the nature of appearance, terminating with a discussion of the familiar critiques of analytic skeptical theism and the question of whether the belief in the existence of God might not be affected by the apparent skepticism implied by the phenomenological approach to knowledge in general.

Keywords: *existence of God, argument from evil, skeptical theism, phenomenology, analytic philosophy*

The purpose of the present essay is to present a simple version of the evidential argument from evil and to propose a ‘skeptical theistic’ response from a phenomenological point of view. Such an approach is arguably superior to the more familiar analytic varieties of skeptical theism insofar as it proceeds on the basis of an elucidation of the transcendental structure of world-experience in general and clarifies how it is that the supposed gratuity of an evil event within the world strictly cannot appear in experience. In a word, the problem with the evidential argument from evil is that it attempts to put forth as justified an interpretation of the moral significance of historical events which actually exceeds the limits of human knowledge and which is based on a misinterpretation of experience. The essay also critiques and corrects certain analytic-philosophical notions regarding the nature of appearance. It terminates with an explanation of how the phenomenological approach does not fall victim to many of the familiar critiques of analytic skeptical

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theism and demonstrates how the question of the existence of God is not affected by the apparent skepticism implied by the phenomenological approach to knowledge in general.

An initial statement of an evidential argument from evil

Begin with the definition of 'God' as an all-powerful, all-knowing, and perfectly good being who is the creator of the world. Being all-powerful, He would have the raw ability to prevent the occurrence of evil. Being all-knowing, He would certainly also possess the necessary knowledge to prevent the occurrence of evil. Being perfectly good, He would presumably be disposed always to prevent evil. If one grants these definitions, it will then seem to follow that the existence of God would logically exclude the reality of evil.¹ So goes the 'logical problem of evil'. But the logical tension can be resolved through a revision of the concept of God. For present purposes, the most interesting possible revision would have to do with the notion of His perfect goodness. Suppose one suggested that the perfect goodness of God would not entail His unconditional opposition to all evil, but only that He does not permit evil unless there is a sufficient or adequate reason to do so. In this case, there would no longer be a contradiction.² God and evil could co-exist *so long as God had a sufficient or adequate reason to permit the existence of evil*. It does not matter for present purposes what that reason might be.

But even if there is no logical contradiction between the existence of God and the reality of evil, there may nevertheless be a further argument to make. One could distinguish between justified and unjustified evils. Suppose that an evil is 'gratuitous' if either (i) nothing at all justifies its occurrence, or else (ii) it is excessive for the purpose it serves. One could grant the theoretical possibility of justified evils while still insisting that the existence of God does exclude the reality of gratuitous evils. And it may be that a closer consideration of at least some evils which actually occur motivates the conclusion that they are gratuitous. This is a version of the so-called 'evidential argument from evil', initially proposed in a powerful way by William L. Rowe.³ A basic formulation of the argument can be given as follows:

¹ J. L. Mackie, *The Miracle of Theism*, Oxford University Press, 1982, 150-176; David Hume, *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* 10.25, in David Hume, *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion and Other Writings*, ed. Dorothy Coleman, Cambridge University Press, 2007, 74.

² See Daniel Howard-Snyder, 'Introduction: The Evidential Argument from Evil', in Daniel Howard-Snyder, ed., *The Evidential Argument from Evil*, Indiana University Press, 1996, xii-xiv.

³ See William L. Rowe, 'The Argument from Evil and Some Varieties of Atheism', in *The Evidential Argument from Evil*, 1-11.

- (1) If God exists, then there are no gratuitous evils.
- (2) Probably, some evils are gratuitous.
- (3) Therefore, probably, God does not exist.⁴

This formulation of the argument does not attempt a logical demonstration. After all, the conclusion can only be as strong as the weakest premise. It only attempts to show that the nonexistence of God is as probable as that some evils are gratuitous.

Some philosophers attempt to deny premise (1), claiming that the existence of God is in fact compatible with the reality of gratuitous evils.⁵ The present essay, however, is sooner concerned with premise (2), which asserts the probable gratuity of some evils. This premise could be justified in something like the following way:

- (i) Some evils appear to be gratuitous.
- (ii) Therefore, probably, they are gratuitous.⁶

The basic assumption of this line of reasoning is that *appearance provides probable grounds for concluding that something is a reality*. The more persistent the appearance, the more probable the reality of the appearance. If a person briefly does something to suggest drunkenness, the grounds for concluding that he or she is drunk are slim. But if the person very persistently appears to be drunk – for example, in what he or she says and does, in the way that he or she walks, etc. – then the conclusion of drunkenness correspondingly grows in probability. In the same way, certain evils which take place in the world are such that a closer ‘inspection’ does not reveal anything that justifies them. For example, it is not clear what purpose is served by the prolonged suffering of animals in nature or by the evil some human beings cause others. Even if there were a purpose served by them, one could certainly imagine that it could be served by a quantitatively lesser amount of evil and suffering. The more one considers some evils, the more they appear to be gratuitous as defined above. *To that extent*, one might consider oneself justified in concluding that probably they are gratuitous.

⁴ This could be considered a version of what Paul Draper calls a ‘modus tollens’ argument from evil. Other philosophers propose different versions of evidential arguments from evil. For example, Draper argues that the actual distribution of pain and suffering in the universe is more likely given the thesis of naturalism rather than the thesis of theism. See the discussion in Paul Draper, ‘The Problem of Evil’, in Thomas Flint and Michael C. Rea, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Theology*, Oxford University Press, 2009, 332-351. A phenomenological approach to this specific argument would involve a greater discussion than can be undertaken in the present context. For example, it would question the very possibility of naturalism itself.

⁵ See the discussions in Klaas Kraay, Jr., ‘God and gratuitous evil (Part I)’, *Philosophy Compass* 11/2016, 905-912; ‘God and gratuitous evils (Part II)’, *Philosophy Compass* 11/2016, 913-922.

⁶ Cf. Perry Hendricks, ‘Skeptical Theism Proved’, *Journal of the American Philosophical Association* 6/2020, 265.

Analytic skeptical theism and the prospect of a phenomenological approach

One very common line of response to the evidential argument from evil is called ‘skeptical theism’.⁷ It is concerned to undermine confidence in the assertion of the gratuity of some evils. Many analytic philosophers of religion pursue the skeptical theistic project by proposing epistemic ‘principles’ or ‘theses’ regarding the conditions for the rationality of certain inferences. For example, Stephen Wykstra proposes a principle called ‘Condition Of Reasonable Epistemic Access’, or ‘CORNEA’, according to which ‘we can argue from ‘we see no X’ to ‘there is no X’ only when X has ‘reasonable seeability’, that is, is the sort of thing which, if it exists, we can reasonably expect to see in the situation’.⁸ Paul Draper summarizes the essential thesis of the skeptical theistic position as consisting in the assertion that ‘Humans are in no position to judge directly that an omnipotent and omniscient being would be unlikely to have a morally sufficient reason to permit the evils we find in the world’.⁹ And Michael Bergmann considers the ‘skepticism’ of the skeptical theist to amount to a skepticism regarding the representational adequacy of the human grasp of (i) all possible goods, (ii) all possible evils, (iii) all the relations of entailment which obtain between possible goods and the possible evils which might justifiably be permitted on the basis of the former, and (iv) the total moral (dis)value of various states of affairs.¹⁰ But other philosophers think that these skeptical theistic theses lend themselves to other, more unsavory forms of skepticism. For example, Stephen Law says that, for all the skeptical theist knows, perhaps God has a sufficient or adequate reason for deceiving him or her with respect to the belief that the external world is real or that it has a past.¹¹ Skeptical theism thus threatens to open a ‘Pandora’s box’.¹² William Hasker argues that skeptical theism of the sort proposed by Michael Bergmann leads to skepticism about whether anything one considers to be *prima facie* good is in fact good, all things considered. This terminates in a kind of moral paralysis in which one no longer knows how to

⁷ See Trent Dougherty and Justin McBrayer, eds., *Skeptical Theism: New Essays*, Oxford University Press, 2014.

⁸ Stephen Wykstra, ‘Rowe’s Noseum Arguments from Evil’, in *The Evidential Argument from Evil*, 126.

⁹ Paul Draper, ‘The Skeptical Theist’, in *The Evidential Argument from Evil*, 176. See also Jonathan D. Matheson, ‘Phenomenal Conservatism and Skeptical Theism’, in *Skeptical Theism: New Essays*, 3-20.

¹⁰ Michael Bergmann, ‘Skeptical Theism and the Problem of Evil’, in Flint and Rea, eds., *Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Theology*, 375, 379.

¹¹ Stephen Law, ‘Skeptical Theism and Skepticism About the External World and Past’, *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement* 81/2017, 55-70.

¹² Stephen Law, ‘The Pandora’s box objection to skeptical theism’, *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 78/2015, 285-299.

judge things or what to do.¹³ A similar argument is also put forth by Scott Sehon.¹⁴ Scott Coley suggests that skeptical theism is incompatible with the endorsement of any particular theodicy.¹⁵ Mark Piper suggests that skeptical theism is incompatible with theism itself.¹⁶ Erik Wielenberg argues that the 'parent-child analogy' which is so prominent in Christian theology for describing the relation which obtains between God and human beings itself militates against the skeptical theses of the skeptical theists.¹⁷ And there are still further responses to these arguments.¹⁸

Whereas the discussion about skeptical theism and the evidential argument from evil has for the most part been taking place within the analytic-philosophical context, the present essay seeks to pursue an interpretation of skeptical theism from the point of view of phenomenological philosophy. Such an approach is arguably very desirable and promising. After all, one of the critical premises of the evidential argument from evil deals with the apparent gratuity of evils experienced in the world, and phenomenology is concerned precisely with appearance and experience.¹⁹ But more than that, phenomenology is eidetic and descriptive rather than being hypothetical or speculative. It does not put forth theses for consideration but rather seeks to describe things exactly as they show themselves to be in experience.²⁰ A phenomenological approach to skeptical theism would not proceed by way of the proposal of theses or hypotheses but rather by means of the eidetic analysis of the relevant structures of intentionality involved in the experience of evil. It would proceed on the basis of a demonstration of what it is to see as such, then drawing conclusions for what it means to see evil. There would therefore be in principle no contesting or protesting its successful conclusions, since it would have produced its results in virtue of a return 'to the things themselves' in order to allow them to

¹³ William Hasker, 'All too skeptical theism', *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 68/2010, 15-29.

¹⁴ Scott Sehon, 'The problem of evil: skeptical theism leads to moral paralysis', *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 67/2010, 67-80.

¹⁵ Scott Coley, 'Skeptical theism is incompatible with theodicy', *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 77/2015, 53-63.

¹⁶ Mark Piper, 'Why Theists Cannot Accept Skeptical Theism', *Sophia* 47/2008, 129-148.

¹⁷ Erik J. Wielenberg, 'The parent-child analogy and the limits of skeptical theism', *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 78/2015, 301-314.

¹⁸ For example, see Perry Hendricks, 'Skeptical Theism Unscathed: Why Skeptical Objections to Skeptical Theism Fail', *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 101/2020, 43-73.

¹⁹ Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, Cambridge University Press, 2000, 2: 'Phenomenology is the study of human experience and of the ways things present themselves to us in and through such experiences.'

²⁰ Martin Heidegger, *History of the Concept of Time*, trans. Theodore Kisiel, Indiana University Press, 1985, 76ff.

show themselves from themselves.²¹ In this way, a phenomenological skeptical theism would be *stronger* than its analytic counterpart, both with respect to the manner in which it is argued, as well as the options it opens up for responding to the objections of critics.

The transcendental structure of world-experience

Because the evidential argument from evil deals with the matter of the *apparent* gratuity of evil things that happen in the world, it would be well to begin with the more general question of *what appears and how*. Because the evidential argument from evil proceeds on the basis of evils which take place *in the world* and of the apparent gratuity of these, it is evident that the mode of appearance relevant to this discussion is that of *the world*.²² And if there is something like a transcendental structure of world-experience, a structure which characterizes all experiences of the world whatsoever, if this can be discerned phenomenologically by reflection upon experience itself, then this will prove applicable in the case of the experience of evil events or happenings as well. One can therefore proceed from the general conditions of world-appearance to the specific case of the appearance of evils within the world.

The first thing a person typically notices in experience is (i) *a particular external world-object* which captures his or her attention for whatever reason. Thus, one sees a cat. In this spirit, Edmund Husserl defines ‘the concept of experience in the broadest sense’ as ‘the self-evident givenness of individuals’.²³ But a moment’s reflection reveals that the individual world-object only ever appears *among many other world-objects*, all of which inhabit the same shared ‘milieu’ or ‘environment’, each influencing the appearance of the others. For example, one does not simply see a cat, but rather a cat lying upon the floor of one’s apartment, shadows being cast upon her fur as the light of the setting sun penetrates into the room through the half-closed blinds blocking the window. The appearance of the cat is ‘affected’ or ‘interpreted’ by all the other world-objects which themselves appear on the same ‘stage’ as it, such that if these were different, – e.g., if it were midday or night rather

²¹ Cf. Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations I*, trans. J.N. Findlay, Routledge, 2001, 168; Heidegger, *History of the Concept of Time*, 85.

²² The principle contribution of Michel Henry to phenomenology is that of distinguishing the mode of appearance of the world (ekstatic, intentional) from that of life (enstatic, non-intentional), and of founding the former upon the latter. For example, see the discussion in *Incarnation: A Philosophy of Flesh*, trans. Karl Hefty, Northwestern University Press, 2015.

²³ Edmund Husserl, *Experience and Judgment*, trans. James S. Churchill and Karl Ameriks, Northwestern University Press, 1973, 27.

than sunset, or if the blinds were open rather than half-closed, and so on, – the cat would also appear differently. An even more trivial example suffices: a pencil appears bent and thicker when it is submerged in water. It is thus clear that what appears in experience is not merely a single external world-object, but rather one such object among many, all of which inhabit the same shared ‘space’ or ‘environment’, each influencing in some way the appearance of the others. (ii) From within the ‘natural attitude’, which really consists in a kind of outward-oriented preoccupation with objects, a person is likely to take his or her access to external world-objects for granted.²⁴ Thus, Husserl characterizes this attitude by saying that the external objects are ‘simply there for me’.²⁵ But the truth is that the access to the world is mediated by *one’s lived body*, even if one is not always aware of this.²⁶ And yet sometimes the contribution of the lived body becomes apparent. For example, the cat may look blurry, though this is not because it is blurry, but rather because one is not wearing glasses. So also, the cat looks small, though not because it is small, but rather because its body is much smaller than one’s own. If one were the size of a mouse, the cat would appear massive, just as if one were the size of an atom, the cat would be undetectably immense. And if one’s body were considerably different, – if one had eyes like a falcon or a sense of smell like a dog, – then the world would appear quite differently. (iii) There is still a further contributing factor of the appearance of the world, though its contribution is far subtler than that of the external world-object or the lived body. It is *the thought-life*, i.e. a person’s habits of thinking about and interpreting things. One can think of the study of the contribution of the thought-life to the appearance of the world as hermeneutics.²⁷ Thus, consider how a man married to a twin would experience his wife and his sister-in-law quite differently. This difference would not owe to a difference in the sisters considered as visible world-objects, nor to a difference that takes place in his lived body, but rather to the fact that he thinks of one as his wife and not the other. Or consider how a woman would experience her parents quite differently after learning that she was adopted. They appear to her differently, not because they have changed as visible external world-objects, nor because of a change in her body, but because of a change in how she

²⁴ Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, 42-47.

²⁵ Edmund Husserl, *Ideas for a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy: First Book: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. Daniel O. Dahlstrom, Hackett Publishing Company, 2014, 48.

²⁶ The classic discussion of the lived body is in Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Donald A. Landes, Routledge, 2014. See also Dan Zahavi, *Self-Awareness and Alterity: A Phenomenological Investigation*, Northwestern University Press, 1999, ch. 6, as well as the discussion of the ‘transcendental body’ in Henry, *Incarnation*, 108ff.

²⁷ See John D. Caputo, *Hermeneutics: Facts and Interpretation in the Age of Information*, Pelican Books, 2018. See also Jean-Luc Marion, *Hermeneutics and Givenness*, trans. Jean-Pierre Lafouge, Marquette University Press, 2013.

thinks about them, i.e. because of a change at the level of thought-life. (iv) At the opposite pole of the structure of world-experience lies *the living self*.²⁸ This is the 'to whom' of the appearance of the world, i.e. its 'dative of disclosure'.²⁹

The preceding reflections have thus revealed the fourfold transcendental structure of world-experience, which may be formalized as follows:

living self ← *thought-life* + *lived body* + one external world-object among many.

The left-pointing arrow (←) can be interpreted as '*appears to*'. Everything to the right of this arrow is a contributing factor to the appearance of things, listed in ascending order according to the evidence of its contribution. The contribution of the external world-object is more evident than that of the lived body, which is in turn more evident than that of the thought-life. What appears in world-experience is therefore (i) one external world-object among many, all appearing in the same 'environment' or 'stage', each influencing in some way the appearance of the others, such as these are experienced through the dual 'filter' of the (ii) lived body and (iii) thought-life of the (iv) living self.³⁰

This analysis clarifies in a very helpful manner how it is that what appears in world-experience is *not merely an individual world-object, but rather everything and all at once, oneself included*. It is thus more accurate to say, not that the cat appears to be white, but that it appears to one to be white, such as one finds oneself to be in the conditions in which this appearance takes place. A person does not merely experience the world *tout court*, but rather the world such as he or she receives it, given what and how he or she is. This analysis also makes it possible to see how it is that *there can be no such thing as a 'false' appearance while it is nevertheless possible to make false judgments about what appears*.³¹ On the one hand, every appearance is true insofar as what appears is not first and foremost the individual object, but rather the whole, oneself included, and all at once. A pencil placed into a half-full glass of water appears thicker at one end than at the other. This is not a false appearance, since what appears is *not the pencil*, first and foremost, *but rather the whole*: the pencil, the water, the immediate surrounding environment, as well as one's own lived body and thought-life. *Under precisely*

²⁸ It is called here the 'living self', rather than the 'transcendental ego', following the critique of Michel Henry. See Michel Henry, 'Four Principles of Phenomenology', in Scott Davidson and Frédéric Seyler, eds., *The Michel Henry Reader*, Northwestern University Press, 2019, 5-28.

²⁹ Cf. Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, 4, 58, 112ff., 154.

³⁰ A similar fourfold structure is recognized in Vedanta. See Swami Nikhilananda, *Drg-Drśya Vivéka: An Inquiry into the Nature of the 'Seer' and the 'Seen'*, Sri Ramakrishna Asrama, 1931, 1: 'The form is perceived and the eye is its perceiver. It (eye) is perceived and the mind is its perceiver. The mind with its modifications is perceived and the Witness (the Self) is verily the perceiver. But It (the Witness) is not perceived (by any other)'.

³¹ In general, appearance is the precondition of judgment. See Husserl, *Experience and Judgment*, 19.

these conditions, the pencil is such as to appear thicker at the submerged end than at the other. This appearance is reflective of the being of the pencil, so that it is not false. If the pencil is to appear differently, then the conditions of appearance must themselves be changed, e.g. the glass must be emptied of water. On the other hand, *false judgments can arise because one ignores or misidentifies the principal contributing factor in an experience.* For example, a person might not realize that the apparently offensive quality of another's words owe not to the intention of this other, nor to the words themselves, but rather to his or her own insecure or anxious disposition, i.e. to the contribution of the thought-life. Of course, the words in question are such as to be offensive when heard in precisely the conditions in which this anxious person heard them, these conditions including the anxious person him- or herself, together with his or her peculiar habits of interpretation. The mistake arises only when the offensiveness is thought to belong to the words themselves as they were meant by their speaker, rather than originating in the hermeneutic contribution brought by the insecurity or anxiety of the one to whom they are addressed. In this way, *every appearance is a true one, once the conditions in which it takes place are specified, and yet this does not preclude the possibility of forming a false judgment about what is experienced, especially when the contributing factor principally responsible for a particular aspect of the experience has been misidentified.*

Phenomenological statement of skeptical theism

With these remarks in mind, it is possible to turn now to the question of what it would mean for some evil within the world to appear to be gratuitous. To say that an evil is gratuitous is to say that nothing that comes with it, before it, or after it in time justifies its presence in history. *The gratuity of an evil event is thus a relation that it bears to all other events in time.* From the phenomenological point of view, it must therefore be asked: what are the conditions of the appearance of this state of affairs? Is it possible for the gratuity of an evil so defined to appear to human beings? Consider what Maurice Merleau-Ponty famously wrote:

For each object, just as for each painting in an art gallery, there is an optimal distance from which it asks to be seen – an orientation through which it presents more of itself – beneath or beyond which we merely have a confused perception due to excess or lack. Hence, we tend toward the maximum of visibility and we seek, just as when using a microscope, a better focus point, which is obtained through a certain equilibrium between the interior and the exterior horizons.³²

³² Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 315-316.

So also, adapting the insight of Merleau-Ponty to the present context, it would seem that the ‘optimal distance’ from which the gratuity of an evil event asks to be seen demands a position *outside of all time and history*. Only from such a vantage point could the gratuity of an evil event be discerned, since the gratuity of an event is a matter of the way in which it is related to other things that take place in history, and a relation cannot be perceived unless the relata are all given. This is how the *gratuity* of an evil event is distinct from its *evil*. The evil itself could perhaps be thought of as a ‘monadic’ property which is perceptible in its own right, like one might also think about the color or shape of a cat. It is enough to have the thing present, and one can perceive its monadic properties. But the appearing of the relation it bears to other things requires that these other things also be given. Thus, one cannot see that one cat is fatter than another unless both are given, just as one could not see that $x > 100$ unless the value of x is given.³³ In the same way, the *gratuity* of an evil event, which is a relation it bears to all other events in history in virtue of which it may or may not be justified in its occurrence, cannot be perceptible or visible unless all these other events are visible as well. This is the condition in which this appearance must take place.

It is obvious that such conditions of appearance are unrealizable and impossible for the human being. *It is not possible to accede to a position of atemporal omniscience, beyond all time and history, in order to see the way in which some evil event relates to all other events in history*. This is because of the lived body of the human being. All world-experience is mediated through this body which is itself subject to the passing of time and limited in its vision. Jean-Luc Marion poignantly comments on the subjection of the body to time by noting how ‘the weight of time is accumulated there where my flesh is the most openly visible — on my face’.³⁴ This condition is furthermore inescapable because the lived body is not akin to a pair of sunglasses which one may set to the side when they prove to be obstructive. It is rather what one is: ‘I can take neither leave nor distance from my flesh, because I do not have it, but I am it’.³⁵ Consider how one cannot see from within a train car what might lie ‘just around the bend’, so to speak, nor what the path was like which the train took to arrive at the station at which one boarded. To see all that, it is necessary to leave the train and to assume a position from outside of it, e.g. in a helicopter or an airplane. But it is *not* possible to assume a position outside of the

³³ See Steven Nemes, ‘*Claritas Scripturae*, Theological Epistemology, and the Phenomenology of Christian Faith’, *Journal of Analytic Theology* 7/2019, 199-218.

³⁴ Jean-Luc Marion, *In Excess: Studies of Saturated Phenomena*, trans. Robyn Horner and Vincent Berraud, Fordham University Press, 2002, 95.

³⁵ Marion, *In Excess*, 92.

limited, temporal perspective afforded by the lived body, since *this lived body is exactly what one is*. And so, because the gratuity of an evil can only become an apparent from a position outside of all time and history, from which its relation to all other events becomes transparent, and because such a position is impossible for the human being owing to the limitations imposed by the lived body, it follows that the gratuity of an evil cannot become apparent to a human being as a matter of principle.

But even if it were possible for a human being to assume such an impossible position, that would not suffice for establishing the premise that some evil event in history is truly gratuitous. Here a second limiting factor makes itself felt, namely the *thought-life*. The evidential argument from evil suggests that some events take place in history which God would have prevented if He truly existed. But even if, *per impossibile*, it were possible for a human being to assume the transhistorical position of God, so that he or she could see the connections which some event bears to every other happening in history, and even if the human being were to judge in such conditions that the event in question is unjustified, *it would still not be shown that it is truly gratuitous*. It is one thing for *a human being* to judge that something need not or should not have happened, and it is another for *God* to share that judgment. One cannot simply take for granted that the way one would judge a thing in some set of conditions is the way God would judge the thing in the same circumstances, i.e. one cannot take for granted the closeness of one's own thought-life to that of God. And who can claim to think like God? In Christianity, this is absurd: 'My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor as your ways my ways, says the Lord' (Isa. 55:8). Indeed, Christian theology has asserted the unknowability of God from its very beginnings.³⁶ For all one knows, if one were to assume the thought-life of God, the evil event in question would no longer appear unjustified but perhaps even necessary. Thus, the lived body makes it impossible for a human being to appreciate the connections of historical events with one another, and even if this were not so, there would still be the problem that a person cannot claim to be able to judge things as God does.

Phenomenological critique of the analytic notion of 'appearance'

This line of argument suggests that the language of analytic philosophers of religion with respect to the 'apparent' gratuity of evil needs to be corrected. Wykstra notably objected to Rowe's first formulations of the evidential argument from evil

³⁶ See Marion, *In Excess*, ch. 6: 'In the Name: How to Avoid Speaking of It'.

on the grounds that he moves too quickly from (a) not seeing a good reason for why God would allow some evil to (b) there appearing to be no good reason for which God would allow some evil.³⁷ This is a very good objection to make from a phenomenological point of view. Wykstra then goes on to formulate the CORNEA principle as a way of clarifying the conditions under which the fact of not seeing something can justify the claim that something appears not to be there: only if the thing in question is something such that, if it were there, one would be likely to see it. But CORNEA is very controversial, and a number of philosophers object to it, the arguments surrounding the principle quickly becoming quite abstract with the introduction of Bayesian probability theory.³⁸ Wykstra and Perrine then complicate matters even further by supposing that the predictable ‘invisibility’ of the reasons for which evil things occur owe to the fact that God ‘often acts with a view to goods of such ontological depth as to be beyond our ken’.³⁹ Why should one speak about the ‘ontological depth’ of the goods for the sake of which God acts? What benefit is brought by making this stipulation? As with Bergmann’s proposal that human beings cannot take for granted the representative adequacy of their grasp of what is possibly good, what is possibly evil, what evil may be permitted for the sake of what good, and of the total moral (dis)value of some states of affairs, the discussion is needlessly complicated and new avenues of attack are opened up to the opponents of skeptical theism. Most importantly, from a phenomenological point of view, it seems that the true crux of the matter is being missed. The essential problem is not that of discerning the conditions in which seeing or not seeing something justifies the conclusion that something appears to be or not, since this is trivially easy to do, nor is it a matter of supposing that perhaps there is some other unheard of good which may be served by some particular evil event taking place. From the phenomenological point of view, *the real problem with the evidential argument from evil is that it consists in the attempt to make a justified global interpretation of the moral significance of some historical event (when in fact this is impossible) on the basis of an experience that has been misunderstood phenomenologically.*

Consider a person who fails in an attempt to lift an object of a certain weight. On the basis of this experience of the object itself, this person takes him- or herself to be justified in concluding that it is at least probably unliftable. Such a person draws a mistaken conclusion on the basis of a certain lack of phenomenological

³⁷ Wykstra, ‘Rowe’s Noseeum Arguments from Evil’, 127.

³⁸ See the essays by Kenneth Boyce, M.J. Almeida, Paul Draper, Timothy Perrine, Stephen J. Wykstra, and Lara Buchak in Dougherty and McBrayer, eds., *Skeptical Theism*, chs. 8-13.

³⁹ Timothy Perrine and Stephen J. Wykstra, ‘Skeptical Theism, Abductive Atheology, and Theory Versioning’, in Dougherty and McBrayer, eds., *Skeptical Theism*, 143.

awareness. Phenomenological reflection reveals that one does not merely experience the world-object on its own but rather *the world-object in relation to oneself*. World-experience is simultaneously an experience of oneself. The ‘liftability’ of the object is not an intrinsic property of it, but rather a property it bears in relation to the person who attempts to lift it. It may be liftable to one person and not to another. What such a person experiences in the failed attempt to lift the weight is not merely a property of the object considered on its own, but more so his or her own inability to lift it. It is clear that if he or she were stronger, the weight would be ‘liftable’. At the same time, the experience he or she has of the object is a true one. It is truly unliftable to him or her, such as he or she is in the conditions in which the experience takes place. *There is no falsity in the experience, but only in the judgment made about the object*. This false judgment owes to the fact that the hypothetical person is oblivious to the contribution of the lived body to his or her world-experience. That is why he or she draws unwarranted modal-ontological conclusions about the weight in question. In the same way, a proponent of the evidential argument from evil may find him- or herself unable to make sense of the moral meaning of some evil event which takes place in the world. It is not clear what purpose the evil in question serves, nor is it clear that, even if there were some such purpose, it could not be served by a quantitatively lesser evil. Thus described, this is a true experience and not a false one. The evil in question truly is inscrutable to him or her. But it would be a mistake to interpret this as an experience of the apparent gratuity of the evil event in question, since *this is not in fact what appears*, but only the person’s own inability to make sense of what has happened. To claim that the evil is gratuitous is to claim that it bears a certain relation to everything else in history that comes before it, with it, or after it, and it is clear that *such a relation cannot become visible due to the limitations imposed by the lived body*. And if it cannot become visible in principle, then *neither is it what appears in the experience of the inscrutability of the evil*. For this reason, it is a fundamental phenomenological mistake to say that any evil event is apparently gratuitous.

One of the contributing factors to this confusion is the way in which analytic philosophers talk about appearances, ‘seemings’, and ‘intuitions’.⁴⁰ For example, the doctrine of Phenomenal Conservatism maintains that ‘if it seems to S that P, then, in the absence of defeaters, S thereby has justification for believing P’.⁴¹ The very

⁴⁰ See Chris Tucker, ed., *Seemings and Justification: New Essays on Dogmatism and Phenomenal Conservatism*, Oxford University Press, 2013.

⁴¹ Chris Tucker, ‘Seemings and Justification: An Introduction’, in Tucker, ed., *Seemings and Justification*, 2. See also Michael Huemer, *Skepticism and the Veil of Perception*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001, 99; ‘Phenomenal Conservatism and the Internalist Intuition’, *American Philosophical Quarterly* 43/2006, 147-158; ‘Compassionate Phenomenal Conservatism’, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 74/2007, 30-55; and ‘Phenomenal Conservatism Über Alles’, in Tucker, ed., *Seemings and Justification*, 328-350.

language one typically uses to describe these states suggests a measure of passivity on the part of the person to whom something appears: 'It seems that there is a cup on the table... It seems that I had eggs for breakfast... It seems that $2 + 2 = 4$... It seems that torture for fun is wrong.'⁴² One merely receives what 'seems' to be the case. But phenomenology teaches that the 'seeming' or 'appearing' of a state of affairs which can be expressed categorially, i.e. in a propositional form, is itself an accomplishment of consciousness that implies a certain activity on the part of the person who is to achieve it. This accomplishment is called a 'categorial intuition'. Robert Sokolowski describes the way in which one attains to a categorial intuition as follows.⁴³ First, an object is given in experience in a manifold of appearances, aspects, profiles: its size, its position relative to one's own body, the texture or color of its surface, and so on. Second, one focuses on a particular aspect of the object in question in isolation from the rest. Third, one then registers the particular aspect as belonging to the object in the manner that a part belongs to a whole. It is in this third stage that one then intuits a categorial object capable of being expressed in a proposition of the form ' x is F '. One therefore is not merely presented with the 'propositional' or 'categorial' object from the beginning but rather attains to it through a specific act of categorial consciousness in which one must engage actively, otherwise known as 'constitution'.⁴⁴ And the success or failure of the categorial intuition is not a matter of its *prima facie* justification, but rather its conformity to the object itself. This is the first mistake of analytic philosophy in the matter of 'seemings' – *ignoring the activity required to attain to the consciousness of a categorial object*.

But it is further obvious from what Sokolowski says that the categorial object cannot be intuited or appear unless it is first given in experience and then adequately 'conceptualized' or 'interpreted'. Another way of putting the same point, as Husserl appreciates in *Experience and Judgment*: the evidence or clarity of the truth of the judgment one forms about something presupposes the prior and more fundamental evidence or clarity with which the world-object referent of that judgment itself appears in experience.⁴⁵ The 'seeming true' of a proposition is epistemically worthless in the absence to consciousness of what the proposition describes, since anything could 'seem true' to a person even if it is in fact false.⁴⁶ It is possible to return once more to an argument given earlier. Because the truth of a proposition is a relation it bears to that which it purports to describe, this relation cannot itself be perceived unless both relata are given: the proposition and its

⁴² Andrew Cullison, 'Seemings and Semantics', in Tucker, ed., *Seemings and Justification*, 33.

⁴³ Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, 89-90.

⁴⁴ Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, 92.

⁴⁵ Husserl, *Experience and Judgment*, 19.

⁴⁶ Dan Zahavi, *Husserl's Phenomenology*, Stanford University Press, 2003, 32.

world-object referent together. This means that it is impossible to perceive the truth of a proposition in the absence to consciousness of its world-object referent, just as it is impossible to perceive that one cat is fatter than another unless both are visible.⁴⁷ Once more, it would seem that the analytic-philosophical experience of ‘seeming’ must be reinterpreted in a phenomenologically more adequate way. What is actually being experienced in the case of an ‘intuition’ that some proposition is true in the absence to consciousness of its world-object referent is not the ‘apparent truth’ of the proposition, but rather an inclination one feels to believe it or at least assent to it, perhaps owing to its fundamental coherence or ‘fit’ with what one already believes or takes oneself to know. This is the second mistake of analytic philosophy in the matter of ‘seemings’ – *confusing the inclination to believe a proposition with its appearing to be true.*

Responding to common objections to skeptical theism

The phenomenological approach to skeptical theism proceeds on the basis of an elucidation of the transcendental structure of world-experience as such and of the limitations imposed on the possibilities of appearance by the exigencies of the lived body and the thought-life. It critiques the claim that the evils of the world appear to be gratuitous by specifying the conditions in which such an appearance would actually take place and demonstrating that they are unattainable for human beings. It also critiques the notions of ‘appearance’ and ‘seeming’ that much analytic philosophy takes for granted, explaining how it is that the experience of the inscrutability of evil has come to be misinterpreted as an appearance of gratuity. It would be well now, by way of conclusion, to consider how it fares against some of the more important objections brought against the analytic versions of skeptical theism.

For example, some skeptical theists propose a certain skepticism about the representational adequacy of the grasp human beings have of all possible goods, all possible evils, and the relations of entailment which obtain between them such that the latter can justifiably be permitted on the basis of the former.⁴⁸ Stephen Maitzen, following Graham Oppy and Michael Almeida, argues that such a conception of things leads to moral skepticism and undermines the ordinary sense of moral obligation to prevent or intervene in the case of evils which God purportedly had a

⁴⁷ Compare the discussion in Walter Hopp, ‘Phenomenal Conservatism and the Principle of All Principles’, in Daniel O. Dahlstrom, Andreas Elpidorou, and Walter Hopp, eds., *Philosophy of Mind and Phenomenology: Conceptual and Empirical Approaches*, Routledge, 2016, 180-202.

⁴⁸ E.g., Bergmann, ‘Skeptical Theism and the Problem of Evil’. See also Michael Bergmann and Michael Rea, ‘In defence of skeptical theism: A reply to Almeida and Oppy’, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 83/2005, 241-251.

reason to permit.⁴⁹ One would lose confidence that what one does is in fact good or that what one acts to prevent is in fact evil. It is worth noting that the present essay does not commit itself to any such skepticism about value and for that reason does not fall victim to the objection in question. From the phenomenological point of view, this is a red herring. The argument of the present essay has to do rather with the claim that an evil event can appear to be gratuitous. It disputes this claim on the grounds that the transcendental conditions of world-experience for human beings – namely, the lived body and the thought-life – make it impossible for such a thing actually to appear to anyone. *The global-historical ethical interpretation of an event, which is precisely at stake in the claim that an evil event is gratuitous, exceeds the powers of the human being.* What is felt in the experience of some evils is not their gratuity but their inscrutability. Their inscrutability is the felt manifestation of one's own inability to make sense of them, not of their proper senselessness *per se*. Nothing in the experience of the inscrutability of evil justifies one in concluding that the evils are themselves senseless, *not because one does not know what is really evil or good, but because this is to make a claim about their connection with everything else in history*, a relation to which one can have no access. Someone might object that the gratuity of the evil can be inferred inductively on the basis of its apparent senselessness with reference to all those goods and evils with which one is familiar. But one could contest this without resorting to the moral skepticism of Bergmann and Rea, as well as without positing unheard of goods like Wykstra. One needs only to point out the obvious and indisputable fact that the whole of history is not revealed to any one presently participating in its flow and flux, and that the justification of the evil in question is a matter of its relation to other events which either already have or will take place in time. One could admit that the evil in question does and even must relate in some way to the goods with which human beings are already familiar. It is just that this relation is historical, and the historical sphere is such that one cannot plausibly claim to possess the access to it necessary for judging that an evil event is gratuitous.

Other critics of skeptical theism argue in something like the following way: if God can have an adequate or justifying reason for permitting evils which seem otherwise impermissible, then it would seem that He could have a reason for deceiving or at least allowing human beings to be deceived about various things, from the real existence of the external world and the history of the universe to the promise of eternal life in the Gospel.⁵⁰ But there are in fact two issues here.

⁴⁹ Stephen Maitzen, 'Skeptical theism and moral obligation', *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 65/2009, 93-103.

⁵⁰ See Bruce Russell, 'Defenseless', in Howard-Snyder, ed., *The Evidential Argument from Evil*, 193-205; Law, 'The Pandora's box objection'; and Erik J. Wielenberg, 'Divine Deception', in Dougherty and McBrayer, eds., *Skeptical Theism*, 236-249.

(i) On the one hand, there is the conception of the way in which God relates to the events in history implicit in the antecedent of the conditional. Suppose one man sees that another is suffering. From the fact that God, from His position beyond all space and time, did no wrong in bringing about a world in which this suffering takes place, it does not follow that the one man is permitted to ignore the suffering of the other. And if the one man reasons that the suffering of his neighbor must be alleviated, it does not follow that he has come to a conclusion which implies that God was unjust in creating a world in which this suffering takes place. Their situations are radically different: the man is in the world at a certain time and place, with limited knowledge, whereas God, in His omniscience, creates the entire world, all times and all places. Nothing available to the man justifies him in drawing the conclusion that, because it would be impermissible *for him, where he is and given what he knows*, to permit the suffering of his neighbor to continue, it would therefore have been impermissible *for God* to allow it in the first place. This is because the man does not have unmediated access to the whole domain of moral truth, but rather such access as is made possible by who and where and how he is. God is radically different from the man and in a radically different situation, whence it follows that the man cannot draw conclusions about God to the extent of that difference.

(ii) As for the question of the existence of the external world: this is itself an interesting problem for phenomenology, and it would seem that in this matter there will be inevitable differences between the analytic philosophers and the phenomenologists. It is a matter too complicated and involved to be resolved easily here, but it would be well nevertheless to return once more to the suggestion made earlier that there is no falsehood in appearances, even if there may be falsehood in the judgments one makes about what appears. Phenomenologically understood, the 'world' is this itself-appearing 'milieu' of appearance which Michel Henry names the 'Outside', within which things project representations of themselves to the intentional gaze of consciousness.⁵¹ Thus, it is enough for one to enjoy intentional consciousness of any sort and one is in direct contact with the 'world' so understood.⁵² To the extent that one limits one's judgments about things to their appearance, one runs no risk of deception, because (according to some interpreters of Husserl) the thing itself is given in its appearance.⁵³ This is in fact the goal of the phenomenological

⁵¹ Henry, *Incarnation*, 39-40.

⁵² Phenomenologists reject the 'representationalist' notion of consciousness according to which one is conscious not of the things themselves, but rather of representations produced as a result of imperceptible causal processes realized by the interactions between physical bodies. See Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, 9ff.; and Dan Zahavi, *Phenomenology: The Basics*, Routledge, 2016, 20f.

⁵³ See Dan Zahavi, 'Husserl's Noema and the Internalism-Externalism Debate', *Inquiry* 47/2004, 42-66.

reduction proposed by Husserl: to bring back (*re-ducere*) one's conception of things to the precise ways in which these things show themselves in experience.⁵⁴ In this way, phenomenology can be understood as proposing a pathway to knowledge which sidesteps the skeptical worry about the 'real existence of the external world'. The world is precisely what appears. To that extent, a phenomenological approach to skeptical theism would seem to find nothing uniquely hazardous or troubling in the supposition that God may have reasons for doing or permitting things which normally would be impermissible for human beings in their own contexts and situations.

At the same time, the 'commonsenseism' of much analytic philosophy of religion with respect to the knowledge of the external world and the reliability of world-experience may be subjected to critique from the phenomenological point of view. Michel Henry especially makes much of the fact that the flow of time makes it impossible to seize upon some apparent reality with any certainty.⁵⁵ Whatever one purports to think about or to perceive, whatever one focuses one's consciousness on in an attempt to see it and describe it as it is, immediately slips away into the past and, for better or for worse, becomes inaccessible except as a memory. As Husserl puts it, world-experience reveals a 'perpetual Heraclitean flux' in which 'all experiences flow away'.⁵⁶ This applies as much in the case of concrete external realities (*a posteriori*) as also in that of abstract or ideal ones (*a priori*). If knowledge of the categorial object – i.e., of the state of affairs or proposition – demands the presence to consciousness of the world-object referent, and if experience of an object both temporally and epistemically precedes the achievement of a categorial intuition, then it strictly follows that, with respect to one's opinions about the world and the things that appear within it in time beyond the fact of their appearing, *one is at best left with beliefs and hermeneutical judgments which are impossible to fulfill in principle and which one judges as probable or not relative to one's own convictions about what is likely true*. In other words, nothing to which one gains access by means of world-experience can be known in its 'presence' but only as a memory or as an expectation, i.e. *as absent*. For this reason, one typically does not spend every moment trying to judge things exactly as they appear in that precise moment, but rather goes on one's way on the basis of a presumed general picture of the world which makes it possible to pursue one's purposes and goals, even though one never manages strictly to confirm the adequacy of this picture of the world in an experience. This general picture is rarely if ever 'shattered' by some

⁵⁴ Henry, *Incarnation*, 28.

⁵⁵ Henry, *Incarnation*, 51-55.

⁵⁶ Edmund Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, trans. John Barrett Brough, Kluwer, 1991, 360.

experience, so that one takes it for granted insofar as it ‘works’. But it is not *skeptical theism* which leads to this conclusion, but rather *the temporal-phenomenological structure of world-experience itself*. For this reason, these considerations cannot simply be ignored or swept to the side. Neither will it do to retreat to the ‘phenomenal conservatism’ proposed by some analytic philosophers, since it was already argued that this conception of things is oblivious to the active contribution which a person makes in achieving an intuition of a categorial object. It also goes without saying that the mere ‘seeming true’ of a proposition whose world-object referent is absent in fact has nothing to do with its truth as such.

Suppose, then, that someone responds as follows: ‘Your arguments are not as plausible to me as the conviction that I genuinely possess the relevant knowledge of at least some external realities, for example the gratuity of some evil events. For this reason, I am within my rights to reject your arguments and to maintain my prior convictions’. But this is not true. In virtue of what is this hypothetical interlocutor confident that he or she possesses the relevant knowledge? The thing itself about which he or she believes something is not itself present to him or her, nor can it be made present, as phenomenological analysis reveals, and the ‘seeming true’ of the proposition he or she believes has nothing to do with the actual truth of the proposition so long as its world-object referent is not itself given. The counter-argument therefore would seem to amount to the suggestion that the phenomenological objection being proposed here can be rejected on the grounds that one finds it incredible, which is to say that one is not inclined to believe it. In the light of all that has been said thus far, this cannot be considered a convincing argument. It amounts to a confusion of one’s own (dis)inclination to believe with a reason to think that the contrary thesis is false. In this sense, it makes the same phenomenological mistake as the evidential argument from evil: it considers something apparent to be a quality of some external world-object (the gratuity of an evil, the falsehood of the phenomenological thesis) when it is really an experience of oneself (one’s inability to understand an evil, one’s indisposition to believe the thesis).

But there is a final objection to consider: ‘Would not this phenomenological sort of external-world “skepticism” undermine the very arguments and reasons one has to believe that God exists in the first place?’ By way of response, it would be well once more to return to the philosophy of Michel Henry and especially his interpretation of Christianity in the light of his phenomenology of life.⁵⁷ The essence

⁵⁷ See Michel Henry, *I Am the Truth: Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*, trans. Susan Emanuel, Stanford University Press, 2003); *Incarnation; Words of Christ*, trans. Christina M. Gschwandtner, Eerdmans, 2012; and the essays collected in Scott Davidson and Frédéric Seyler, eds., *The Michel Henry Reader*. See also Michael O’Sullivan, *Michel Henry: Incarnation, Barbarism and Belief*, Peter Lang, 2006; Joseph Rivera, *The Contemplative Self after Michel Henry: A Phenomenological Theology*, Notre

of Henry's contribution to the phenomenological tradition consists in the distinction between two modes of appearance: that of *the world* and that of *life*. On the one hand, there is the mode of appearance which belongs to the world and its things, which show themselves as objects to the ek-static intentional gaze of consciousness in the 'Outside'.⁵⁸ What appears in the world appears outside oneself, so that there is a 'distance' and 'difference' between the object and the subject to whom it appears. The 'world', phenomenologically understood, is this itself-appearing 'milieu' or 'stage' of appearance in which things appear. On the other hand, there is life, which Henry defines as the en-static, non-intentional experience of oneself in a certain immediacy and transparency. In the world appear objects: this cat, that dog, this person, that event. In life one appears to oneself in one's affective states: joy, despair, pleasure, suffering, boredom, and the like. Life understood as the experience of oneself does not appear in the world. It is not a biological phenomenon, nor is it an object of intentional experience at all. It is that invisible quality of things which experience themselves immediately, invisibly, in a form of non-intentional consciousness. Henry argues that life is more foundational than the world insofar as (i) the world is an appearing and (ii) nothing could appear unless there were a life which could feel itself being appeared to.⁵⁹ The world is defined with reference to life, whereas life is defined with reference to itself.⁶⁰ And Henry further understands Christianity to define God as absolute Life. This implies that He does not appear in the world at all. He is not an intentional object of ek-static consciousness. To that extent, God is also not something known by means of an argument about things that appear in the world.⁶¹ He is rather that Life in which each living being feels itself to be alive, on which their status as a living being constantly depends, a condition they did not choose for themselves and for which they could not act so as to secure it for themselves for even a second more, since every action they might perform presupposes that they are already alive.⁶² Life as that which can experience itself is therefore the prior condition of the world, which is an appearing, and one's own condition as a living being is itself received from the absolute Life which is immanently present as the basis for one's own condition as a finite living being. That is why Michel Henry can

Dame University Press, 2015; and the discussions in Bruce Ellis Benson and Norman Wirzba, eds., *Words of Life: New Theological Turns in French Phenomenology*, Fordham University Press, 2010, and J. Aaron Simmons and Bruce Ellis Benson, *The New Phenomenology: A Philosophical Introduction*, Bloomsbury, 2013.

⁵⁸ Henry, *Incarnation*, 39-40.

⁵⁹ Cf. Henry, *Incarnation*, 110.

⁶⁰ Michel Henry, *Material Phenomenology*, trans. Scott Davidson, Fordham University Press, 2008, 3.

⁶¹ Henry, *I Am the Truth*, 54.

⁶² Henry, *Incarnation*, 122.

write: 'The invisible comes before every conceivable visible... If in him it is a question of Life, God is far more certain than the world. So are we.'⁶³ And he cites from Meister Eckhart the idea that the human being is *ein Gott wissender mensch* – a human being that knows God.⁶⁴ This is because the true essence of the human being is life, phenomenologically understood as something which experiences itself, and God is that absolute Life in which each living being feels itself to have arrived 'without their contribution or consent, which was not their own and which nevertheless became theirs'.⁶⁵ This is how the question of the existence of God, appropriately understood, is not affected by the phenomenological skepticism being proposed in the present essay: the skepticism has to do with the domain of appearance of the world and its things, whereas God is found in the domain of life.⁶⁶

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⁶³ Henry, *Incarnation*, 92.

⁶⁴ Henry, *Words of Christ*, 82.

⁶⁵ Henry, *Incarnation*, 122.

⁶⁶ A number of authors object to Michel Henry's conception of the 'world' on the grounds that it does not seem to cohere nicely with the Christian doctrine of creation. But there is no space to enter into this issue here. See the discussion in Joseph M. Rivera, 'Generation, interiority and the phenomenology of Christianity in Michel Henry', *Continental Philosophy Review* 44/2011, 205-235.

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...„Und doch statt der monas das Da-sein denken“. Heidegger, Leibniz und das Problem der Freiheit in der Auslegung Günther Neumanns.

Rezensionen: Günther Neumann, *Der Freiheitsbegriff bei Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz und Martin Heidegger*, Berlin 2019 und Günther Neumann, *Heidegger und Leibniz*, Band 2 der Reihe „Das Denken Martin Heideggers“ Hrsg. Hans-Christian Günther, Nordhausen 2020

Aus der „Gewaltsamkeit“ seiner Interpretationen der wesentlichen Denker machte Heidegger nie einen Hehl. Er sah diese vor allem als „Übersetzungen“ oder Versuche, ihren Gegenstand zu „überhellen“ (*Der Freiheitsbegriff...*, S. 91 ff.), Versuche, die davon lebten, das „Ungesagte“ (ebd.) im Gesagten aufzuspüren. Wissend um diese hermeneutische Herausforderung, gelingt es dem in Mathematik und Philosophie promovierten Heidegger-Forscher und Herausgeber Günther Neumann auf zweifache Weise, dem Leser Heideggers Verhältnis zu Leibniz und die subtilen Nuancen des Freiheitsbegriffs beider Denker näherzubringen. Im Kontext der seit dem 16. Jahrhundert stattfindenden philosophischen Auseinandersetzung mit dem Phänomen der Mathematisierbarkeit der Welt – die heutzutage umso mehr die ethische Problematik einschließt –, ist eine Besinnung auf das Denken des genialen Mathematikers und Philosophen Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz gerade angesichts der Freiheitsproblematik eine Angelegenheit von besonderer Dringlichkeit. Leibniz ist nämlich nicht nur der Autor des berühmten Satzes „*Cum deus calculat, fit mundus*“, bei dem

er die unbegrenzte Anwendbarkeit der Mathematik voraussetzte, und des Satzes vom zureichenden Grund als viertem Grundsatz der Logik, sondern war auch gleichzeitig ein Verfechter menschlicher Freiheit aus der Vernunft. Dass diese Freiheit jedoch für Leibniz auf komplexe Weise mit dem Gedanken der Vorherbestimmung zusammenhängt und kompatibel gemacht werden muss, zeigt Günther Neumann im ersten Kapitel des Buches *Der Freiheitsbegriff bei Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz und Martin Heidegger*. Über die Auseinandersetzung mit dem Spinozismus und Leibniz' Versuche, den Neozessitarismus zu überwinden, die Neumann u.a. mit einer eindrucksvollen Stelle eines Briefes an den Berliner Hofprediger Daniel Ernst Jablonski dokumentiert (S. 29), werden die historischen Debatten um die Frage nach der Existenz möglicher Welten mit Rücksicht auf Leibniz' Gottesbegriff und seiner Metaphysik als ‚Onto-theo-logie‘ erörtert. Anschließend wird die Frage der Kompatibilität von hypothetischer Notwendigkeit und Freiheit als Kontingenz (S. 43) aufgegriffen, die Leibniz als Problem der Selbst-determination (*„durch sich selbst“*, S. 45) diskutiert. Ein weiterer wichtiger Punkt, die

leibnizsche Unterscheidung zwischen nötigen (*nécessiter*) und neigen (*incliner*), wird hier ergänzt durch einen Vergleich mit den Neurowissenschaften vor dem Hintergrund der „Abgrenzung gegen jede Art von mechanischer Hypothese“ (S. 49). Das zweite Kapitel behandelt Heideggers Leibniz-Auslegung im Rahmen seiner Seminare (vor allem denen, die zwischen 1931 und 1934 stattgefunden haben und die als Band 84.1 der Gesamtausgabe *Seminare: Kant-Leibniz-Schiller* erschienen sind). Dabei liegt Heideggers Fokus auf dem Gedanken des individuellen Gesetzes der Monade als *lex seriei* im Zusammenhang mit dem Phänomen der Zeitlichkeit. Die Resultate der heideggerschen Analyse trägt Günther Neumann als Zusammenfassung von fünf Thesen vor (S. 103 ff). Schließlich widmet sich das dritte Kapitel dem heideggerschen Freiheitsbegriff unterwegs zum ‚Ereignis-Denken‘ und untersucht die Zusammenhänge von Schuld und Verantwortung (S. 146 ff.), Eigentlichkeit und Uneigentlichkeit im Wechsel der hermeneutischen Perspektive von der Sinn- zur Wahrheitsfrage.

Dass dabei Leibniz für Heidegger zunehmend wichtig wurde und sogar „dem späten Heidegger in gewisser Weise näher als Kant“ rückte, zeigt Neumann anhand des 2020 erschienenen zweiten Bandes der Reihe *Das Denken Martin Heideggers*, der in einer komprimierten Form den verschiedenen Etappen des Gespräches Heideggers mit Leibniz gewidmet ist.

Heideggers Interesse an Leibniz veränderte sich in den drei Abschnitten seiner Rezeption, die Neumann als das Umfeld der Fundamentalontologie von *Sein und Zeit*, als Übergang zum Ereignis-Denken und als das sogenannte Spätdenken herausstellt, das ab den *Beiträgen zur Philosophie und Besinnung*

bis zur berühmten Vorlesung *Der Satz vom Grund* vom Wintersemester 1955/56 Auseinandersetzungen mit dem leibnizschen Denken enthält. So rücken in der ersten Hauptphase die Phänomene des Hanges und Dranges ins Zentrum, die Heidegger in Zusammenhang mit dem Phänomen der Sorge anspricht (1925, Die Prolegomena-Vorlesung), die Repräsentation der Monaden in den *Grundproblemen der Phänomenologie* (1927), die Destruktion der Urteilslehre in der Vorlesung *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik vom Sommersemester 1928* und die Fensterlosigkeit der Monaden in der *Einleitung in die Philosophie* (1928/1929). In der zweiten Etappe der Rezeption stehen im Umfeld der *Monadologie* Heideggers Versuche, sich das Denken Leibniz‘ anzueignen, ja, es gleichsam zu ‚übersetzen‘, wie es das von Günther Neumann angeführte Zitat der *Beiträge* belegt, das fast als Motto der Konfrontation mit Leibniz gelten dürfte: „*Leibnizens* unergründliche Vielgestaltigkeit des Frageansatzes sichtbar machen und doch statt der monas das Dasein denken“ (GA 65, 176, zit. bei Neumann 2020, S. 12.) Die dritte Hauptphase führt von den *Beiträgen...* über die *Nietzsche*-Vorlesungen (wo Leibniz als Wegbereiter des Willenscharakters des Seins dargestellt wird, S. 71) zu den Aus- und Weiterführungen von ‚Überhellungen‘ leibnizscher Gedanken in den Vorlesungen *Der Satz vom Grund*. Wie das von Heidegger beschriebene „Ge-stell“ im Kontext der Technik-Auseinandersetzung zu einem geänderten Verhältnis zur Sprache führt und das Ausmaß dieses Phänomens erörtert Neumann anhand der Frage „Atomzeitalter oder Informatikzeitalter?“, die das Denken Andre Robinets mit dem Heideggers kontrastiert (S. 82). Günther Neumann schließt seine Überlegungen mit einem kurzen Blick

auf die Folgen, die das Prinzip des zureichenden Grundes für die mechanistische Physik der Neuzeit (S. 91) hinterlässt, Folgen, die heutzutage zu neuen ethischen Fragestellungen und denkerischen Auseinandersetzungen auffordern, deren Wurzeln aber schon bei denjenigen wesentlichen Denkern angelegt sind, für die die Grenzen der Philosophie, der Physik und Mathematik auf selbstverständliche Weise fließend geblieben sind.

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