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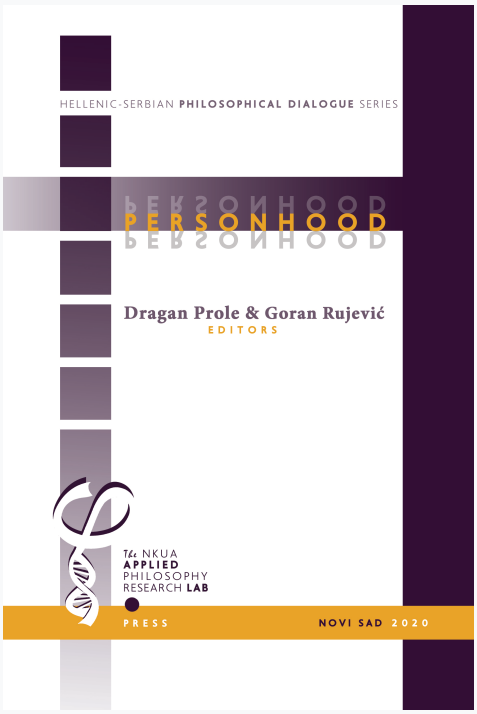


Chapter

# The Phenomenological Understanding of the Person: Nietzsche in Husserl's Shadow

*Dragan Prole*

**Personhood**

*Dragan Prole, Goran Rujević, George Arabatzis, Una Popović, George Boutlas, Dragan Prole, Panagiotis Kormas, Antonia Moutzouri, Damir Smiljanić, Alkis Gounaris, George Kosteletos, Marica Rajković, Ioannis Ladas*

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# The Phenomenological Understanding of the Person: Nietzsche in Husserl's Shadow

**Dragan Prole**
University of Novi Sad
E-mail address: proledragan@ff.uns.ac.rs
ORCID iD: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7352-4583

**Abstract:** The article deals with the phenomenological notion of person. The basic hermeneutical intention is to show the similarity of Nietzsche's and Husserl's "anthropology," that is, of what characterizes man. The first part of the paper presents Nietzsche's critique of "Egypticism," that is, the thesis of eternal human nature, what is unchangeably, essentially human. Consciousness is determined by historicity, time, space, its moving nature, and something like that cannot have a permanent, unchanging constant. In the second part of the paper, the author shows why Husserl's phenomenology represents the most productive legacy of Nietzsche's imperative "To the sea, philosophers!" The third part brings a metaphorical variation on the theme of Ecce Homo "Why is phenomenology destiny?" Modern teaching about personality insists on radical change, in which the phenomenological science of the necessity of abandoning the natural attitude can be a valuable guide.
**Keywords:** Nietzsche; Husserl; person; egypticity; natural attitude.

The term personhood is certainly not one of the more recognizable phenomenological concepts. Today, the methodological concepts such as epoche, reduction and variation, and *termini technici*, for example eidos, intentionality and constitution are much more in focus than personhood. The unfortunately named, and only occasionally mentioned term of *Wesenschau* was studied far more than the idea of personhood. An irrelevant and insignificant term drew more of readers' attention and incited more interpretative effort than the core, but not as conspicuous, quaint idea of personhood. This information might seem unusual when we realize that

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the phenomenological understanding of personhood owes its existence to the extremely fierce discourse. Very few terms provide an insight into the construction of a specific phenomenological break with tradition. In it, it is possible to see the signs of a modified understanding of man, where the roots of those changes still reach deep into tradition. Phenomenological person will be neither substance, nor a purely natural being, nor a psychological reflex of the current. In a word, Husserl found the notion of "human essence," "human nature" and similar platitudes, ever-present in the pseudo-scientific argumentation, as deeply foreign. From the phenomenological perspective, this natural-scientific tendency to suppress and erase man's historicity seems quite unusual, as it assumes that the timeliness of consciousness is reduced to the naturality of a plant or a rock. It is as if the development of natural sciences emboldened, in the long term, the attempts to finally "scan" and solve the riddle of humanity. Anthropologism, psychologism, scientism, naturalisms, philosophy of the mind, are just different names of the same modern strategy. Each of them gives a small contribution to the "petrification" of man, that is, the convincing simulation of inalterability and absolute stability where constant flow and movement are exclusively present. Nietzsche calls such a strategy "egypticity," calling out the philosophers for the tendency to de-historize the object of their examination, making mummies out of their concepts. The philosopher is another name for the talent to transform a living phenomenon into a dead thing:

> You want to know what the philosophers' idiosyncrasies are? [...] Their lack of historical sense for one thing, their hatred of the very idea of becoming, their Egypticity. They think that they are showing respect for something when they de-historicize it, sub specie aeterni, II - when they turn it into a mummy. For thousands of years, philosophers have been using only mummified concepts; nothing real makes it through their hands alive.[1]

[1] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and*

Husserl adds that egypticity cannot be reduced to dehistorization, as it creates an entire attitude, ironically called "the natural attitude." Even though nominally natural, that attitude is emphatically anti-life. Furthermore, the dominance of the natural-scientific world is not possible without the suppression of the living world. Due to that, the reign of the natural attitude is at the same time a document of self-oblivion of the personal worldly life.[2]

Phenomenology of the person is not a creation of a specific time and space. There's no eternal, permanent or essential personality, but only an attempt to "tear" such a personality from self-understanding, the everyday milieu in which it is built with the logic of the natural attitude. Aware of the actual spiritual ambience in which the "scientific" modernity understands personality, phenomenology is initially forced to "isolate," that is, to suspend all publicly endorsed convictions. Therefore, the phenomenological idea of personhood does not start with assertion, but with a negation. The man is not a substance, there are no stipulations that would repeat themselves as an unavoidable constant. Ontologically, *the man is not, but is only becoming* – "it is not understandable why the world is natural, but also a personal factum of specified development. Incomprehensible: the specified order of feelings, personal distinctions."[3]

## I. Can there be truth as consent without permanent human nature?

The relationship between the understanding of the man and understanding of the truth is very interesting. Where the conviction that man's essence is permanent and unalterable

*Other Writings*, trans. J. Norman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 166-167.

[2] Lothar Eley, *Die Krise des Apriori in der transzendentalen Phänomenologie Edmund Husserls* (Den Haag: M. Nijhoff, 1962), 105.

[3] Edmund Husserl, *Grenzprobleme der Phänomenologie. Analysen des Unbewusstseins und der Instinkte, Metaphysik, Späte Ethik*, Husserliana Band XLII, ed. R. Sowa, and T. Vongehr (Dodrecht: Springer, 2013), 18.

is prevalent, and his "nature" tacit and defined, is the place where the truth is perceived as the consent of the substantial subject and the substance, which presents the object of its understanding. As is the case with personhood, the truth's comfort zone is in dissent. rather than in consent. If we assume that the former term of truth as *adequatio* necessarily came from the understanding of human nature as permanent, constant, completely understandable and determinable, the question imposed is if the *adequatio* can ever be a reliable criteria in situations where the subjectivity is determined as an *ultimate existence*, and with that constantly variable?

Husserl's phenomenology announces the primary course of philosophy of the 20th century. Most of its insights have had their foundation in the idea of *Mehrmeinung*, which tells us that the object is always something more than what we have thought or known. No matter how much we think, no matter how good we get to know it, the object is always something that is more than what was thought of it. The same logic works in reverse on the phenomenological concept of personhood. This means that personhood is always something more that the knowledge of it. Learning about *Mehrmeinung* is valid even when it is about our own personhood. Due to that, the idea of self-knowledge is unavoidably illusionary and impossible.

There is no complete "knowing thyself," as the entirety of life is, at best, getting to know thyself: "I can be more and different than the I as an apercetive unity [...] Nobody 'knows' themselves, no one 'knows' what they are, they get to *know themselves*."[4]

There is no overlap of words and things, which means reality can never truly be translated into a concept. Modernity seriously considers the contingent of the order of things. Indeterminacy is its constitutive principle, which has consequences on the recognition of the unknowability of human personhood, that

[4] Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie II. Phänomenologische Untersuchungen zur Konstitution*, Husserliana Band IV, ed. M. Biemel (Den Haag: M. Nijhoff, 1952), 252.

is, on the "unpredictability of human affairs."[5] If the modern era had a doorway, on them we could find the first part of Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, according to which the world is everything that is accidental (*Die Welt ist alles, was der Fall ist*).[6] The idea which belongs more to poetry than to the philosophical way of thinking, from a rationalistic perspective, fits perfectly into the phenomenological horizon. Subjectivity in the outer relations seems predictable, reliable and calculable, but is in itself the very opposite: unpredictable, unreliable, incalculable. The Uncertainty principle is well emphasized by Husserl's idea of a principal and inevitable contingency of world facts: "every factum, including the factums of the world are, as factums, contingent."[7]

Speculative thinking assumes mindfulness, and not the contingent of the thought. If a factum of the world is not mindful, but contingent, then it is necessary to find a different thought approach. The "guy upstairs" can hardly be of assistance. Instead of speculative understanding, Husserl chooses description. Unlike the euphoric, already pre-defined criticism of phenomenology *à la Adorno*, the point of description is not in the conservation of things. There's nothing easier than to banalize description – it shows everything as it is, and it does that because it is an expression of the hidden attempt to preserve everything as it is, and not allow for any changes to be made. Description? But a new name for an old bourgeois style of philosophizing, like phenomenological certainty: "Exuberance toward raw factness does not prevent us from accepting the world of things from being accepted 'as is.'"[8]

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[5] Gerhard Gamm, *Der unbestimmte Mensch. Zur medialen Konstruktion der Subjektivität* (Berlin, Wien: Philo, 2004), 11.

[6] Ludwig Wittgenstein, Tractatus logico-philosophicus (Sarajevo: V. Masleša, 1987), 26.

[7] Edmund Husserl, *Erste Philosophie II. Theorie der Phänomenologischen Reduktion*, Husserliana Band VIII, ed. R. Boehm (Den Haag: M. Nijhoff, 1959), 50.

[8] Theodor W. Adorno, *Metakritik der Erkenntnistheorie. Studien über Husserl und die phänomenologische Antinomien* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1956), 141.

## II. The observer and the point of observation are variables

Far from representing a pure apparition, description in phenomenology takes care of the transcendent character of subjectivity. Unlike the idea, which was self-implied for centuries, phenomenology final breaks with the idea of a stable, founded point of philosophical observation. If there ever was a thinker who literary applied Nietzsche's anti-Cartesian imperative. "To the sea, you philosophers!"[9] that would be Edmund Husserl. Even though phenomenological terminology is vibrant with Descartes' favorite concept – foundation (Begründung), that concept is with Husserl above all reminiscent of Plato's philosophical argumentations. Instead of searching for solid, secure foundations on which to build up philosophical knowledge, for Husserl, *Begründung* means *logon didonai*, the revelation, philosophical "settling of the scores."

Like the mobile camera of the Russian Dziga Vertov, Husserl's consciousness is mobile, instead of Archimedes' stable point, it is guided by kinesthesia, the sense of movement. Despite being corporeal and movable, Husserl's consciousness is, unlike the camera, expressly variable. In its flow we see the imprint of transcendence, the transformation of I, which happens in accordance with the essential lawfulness – "otherness of the final subjectivity which is inherit to it with its inner necessity."[10] Description is then not the display of something changeable from the perspective of the immovable, nor is the display of the changeable with the help of the mechanism that is fixed from inside but can change the point of view. Transcendence, like the otherness of subjectivity, becomes the immanent part of the description within the confines of egology, that is, the phenomenological explication of ego through ego. With Husserl,

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[9] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, § 289, Kritische Studienausgabe, Band 3, ed. G. Colli, and M. Montinari (München, Berlin: DTV/De Gruyter, 1980), 530.

[10] Walter Schulz, *Der Gott der neuzeitlichen Metaphysik* (Pfullingen: G. Neske, 1957), 29-30.

the power of transcendence is explored in the first person, personhood is perceived in a constant change, *the change of the living world inevitably forces the change of personality*: "In that constant shift of man's living world, it is obvious that people as personalities change too, insofar as they correlatively have to obtain new characteristics."[11]

It is probably not by chance that the method of description is for both the Munich and Göttingen circles of phenomenologist the fundament of phenomenology. Being that description contains the inevitability of personal convictions, that is, the personal experience of the truth, it acted as a practical cornerstone for the idea that understood "the truth constituted on the source givens as the authentic truth."[12] Personal convictions and source givens with Husserl are placed in the function of a struggle against psychologisms and naturalism. Unlike its contemporaries, James, Russell, Mach, phenomenology fiercely opposed every attempt of the naturalization of consciousness, being that it also has naturalization of ideas as a consequence, or the naturalization of ideals and norms. Contrary to the fanatical obsession with psychology which Husserl called out throughout his career, phenomenology is conceived in the accidental, uses description, insists on the personal convictions, and does all that for the establishment of essential absolutes and apodictic laws. A similar constellation can be found when discussing the relationship between the individual I and the general sense of personhood:

> Although the personal I is individual, we can determine according to universal eidetic laws what this I is, an I which can be comprehended only through living familiarization with an actual cogito.[13]

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[11] Edmund Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge*, Husserliana Band I, ed. S. Strasser (Den Haag: M. Nijhoff, 1973), 162.

[12] Ernst Tugendhat, *Der Wahrheitsbegriff bei Husserl und Heidegger*, 2nd Edition (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1970), 229.

[13] Rudolf Bernet, Iso Kern, and Eduard Marbach, "The 'I' and the person," in *Edmund Husserl. Critical Assessments of Leading Philosophers*, Volume IV, ed. R. Bernet, D. Welton, and G. Zavota (London, New York: Rout-

In short, phenomenology probably owes its success to the strategy of using the means of positivism and empiricism only to the extent necessary to leave those positions. In its initial phase, phenomenology only seemingly shares radical empirical starting points, while is as far from them as possible in the later stages. This is not about Husserl initially accepting the position of empiricism to later abandon it. The idea of transcendent retroactive determines what we perceive as empirical, until the inverse is valid, that the transcendent in all forms comes from the empirical. Accordingly, Husserl's transcendental motive always determines in advance what we would like to denote by the notion of natural attitude.[14]

## III. Phenomenological confrontation with the accidental

In order to be able to say anything about the truth in "maritime conditions," devoid of foundation and support, we must first face the coincidence of each particular experience. Husserl's phenomenology does this by pausing, restraining, "bracketing" the validity of the immediately experienced. In Nietzschean spirit, phenomenology starts with the idea that there are more idols in the world than there is reality. Because of this, it insists on a certain immunity to the immediate reality, convinced that it is only at a distance from it that there is room for thought. Being that transcendental subjectivity alone is not related to the immediately existing, phenomenology is necessarily a transcendental philosophy. Philosophy that calls for unconditionality necessarily assumes immunity to immediacy. Apart from the confrontation with the conditionality, *phenomenology demasks the false presentation, that is, teaches that the experience contents can have different meaning from the one normally attributed to them*. In short, after the denunciation of

ledge, 2005), 311.

[14] Jean Grégori, "L'attitude personnaliste entre naturalité et transcendentalité – le problème du 'quotidien' dans Ideen II d'E. Husserl," *Arhe* II, no. 4 (2005): 24.

the apparent absolute of the given the objectively experienced, comes the pointing out of everything that was not visible or accessible before the denunciation. Husserl's terms of disclosure (Enthüllung) and Heidegger's idea of truth (Unverborgenheit), indicate a plain that was initially hidden, and which only becomes accessible through the demasking of everything it hides. Through that, what was invisible and unknown becomes visible and known. Yet, phenomenological description has nothing to do with going behind the obscure, but recognizable veil. Unlike the naïve search for the projected depths, description did not want to explore what hides beneath the fallible and unreliable surface. Simply put, the phenomenological method can be perceived as a thought construction which is preceded by deconstruction. Due to oversaturation with historical sense, Husserl tacitly shared Nietzsche's belief that a powerful dismantling is required wherever you wish to set up something.

In contrast to his time, Husserl did not believe that philosophical rationality is possible if one insists on the fascination with the "facts" or "empirical data." His unwritten *Untimely Meditations* could have been ironically titled "About the harms of positivism to life" or "Immediacy as a tutor." If the fundamental impulse of modernity in phenomenology is alive and vital anywhere, then it is in the view that the truth of an object of thought lies not in approaching, but in moving away from its immediate givenness. Distancing oneself from the immediacy still does not imply nearing the dept and the beyond in the traditional sense. Contemporary thinkers no longer believe in a world of essences which is somewhere "beyond" the visible, tangible, experienced. The contemporariness is principally against the traditional dichotomies of the deep/surface, truth/lie, essence/simulacrum, reality/phenomenon. Instead of these, "vertical" binary oppositions in which one side is implicitly positive and desirable, and the other implicitly negative and undesirable, the spirit of modern philosophy cares far more about the "horizontal" treatment which does not work with the higher and lower, but with the different, mutually irreducible and incomparable

methods. In Husserl's terms, with the different "attitudes," that is, suprapersonal configurations of the relationship between consciousness and the world. Still, even in phenomenology, the unbridgeable difference, built on the axis of the philosophical-unphilosophical, transcendental-mundane, is still very much alive. Not all ideas are equally important, and it would not be wise to claim them equal. Some allow for a meaningful and responsible life, while others promise only stagnation in immaturity and naïve dependency. Likewise, dogmatic, self-comprehensible exaltation of the transcendental in relation to the mundane is not instructive, since the transcendental attitude, if the individual in it relies solely on himself, may well end in alienated pride:

> Closing oneself within the confines of the natural attitude (naturalization) is alienation, but alienation is also the retreating of the subject into itself, the tearing under a subjectivist (Cartesian) form.[15]

Only when it realizes what it owes to other forms, can the phenomenological idea of personhood expect to escape the traps of alienation and vanity.

## IV. Phenomenology is the restoration of personhood

Starting with the *Idea I*, Husserl's transcendental phenomenology was understood as a step outside an idea, for the sake of assimilation and appropriation of another. Becoming a philosopher inevitably means changing oneself, becoming a different person. Husserl tied his philosophical program explicitly to the idea of *renewal*. Renewal is mostly tied to the legacy of the philosophical institution. In the spirit of his avant-garde contemporaries, Husserl's phenomenology rejects tradition, but only through accepting the task of revealing and accomplishing its basic motives and tendencies. Unlike the avant-gardists, who

[15] Rober Legro, *Ideja humanosti, Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stojanovića* (Sremski Karlovci, Novi Sad: J. Popov 1993), 225.

paradoxically attempted to create their own tradition through the various break gestures, Husserl's paradox is in the idea of abandoning tradition through the realization of its original motives and goals. Because of that, it is recommended to carefully listen to Husserl's suggestion with which he started his lecture at Sorbonne. At first glance, it is typically German and protestant. Very much in the spirit of Fichte's idealism, according to which the "Philosophy wisdom (sagesse) is the philosophizer's quite personal affair."[16] However, when the famous Jena professor claimed that philosophy is not a piece of furniture, that its choices do not depend on the aesthetical, but character criteria, he above all, said that we cannot expect an unfree person to choose idealism as his modus of thinking: "A person indolent by nature or dulled and distorted by mental servitude, learned luxury, and vanity will never raise himself to the level of idealism."[17] In short, to think freely, I must be free. Philosophy will not set me free, as I will always choose an unfree philosophy as an unfree man.

If we could sum up Fichte's morals into a single idea: my choice of philosophy is dictated by the type of man I am - then the noted affinity in the case of phenomenology related mostly to the changes in one's own personality. Husserl attempts to disrupt Fichte's rigid and irreconcilable differences between the free and the unfree. Instead of it being predetermined, it would be far better for the line separating them to be dynamic and changeable. Thought that, the change with Husserl does not imply the advance of something unknow or completely new.

*Change gives name to renewal in the sense of living in accordance with the ideal of true, true humanity*. This idea of "true humanity" is not a determined substance, but a continuous effort of change and self-abandonment for the sake of conquest of something new: "At every moment here, humanity has been overcome, the idea

[16] Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations. An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. D. Cairns (Den Haag: M. Nijhoff, 1960), 2.

[17] Johann Gottlieb Fichte, "Erste Einleitung in die Wissenschaftslehre," in *Johann Gottlieb Fichtes Sämmtliche Werke* Band I, ed. I. H. Fichte (Berlin, 1845/46), 434.

of 'overman' has become the highest reality."[18] Paradoxically, change thus brings together both future hopes and aspirations of the past. Renewal, according to Husserl, encompasses both the individual and the human community. As such, the renewal is the highest theme of ethics, the science of the essence of possible ways of life in an a priori generality.[19] As an idea, renewal offers a common link between the specific and the general, between the individual and the world community. Within that horizon we catch the glimpse of the person of the higher degree. Husserl makes a strict distinction between the solipsistic-individual purposes and achievements on one side, and the common purposes and achievements on the other. In doing so, common purpose has a completely different spiritual meaning from that which can be obtained by the action of an individual subject as part of a community. Along those lines, the personalities of the higher order become "officials,"[20] in a sense that the community is represented as a single individual.

*The state is for Husserl the will of the whole in which the singular individual becomes the "person of a higher order."* In short, compared to the collective personhood, the personhood of the individual as an empirical subject is irrelevant for Husserl. Instead of dealing with the individual, renewal of philosophy for Husserl is possible only if he manages to pull off the actual objectivization of the universal human sense, and not the description of an arbitrary, accidentally picked empirical type.

Every individual awareness is interpreted by genetical phenomenology as a living history of its own making. Every

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[18] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, trans. J. Norman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 130.

[19] Edmund Husserl, "Fünf Aufsätze über Erneuerung," in *Aufsätze und Vorträge (1922-1937)*, Husserliana Band XXVII, ed. T. Nenon, and H.-R. Sepp (Dodrecht, Boston, London: Springer, 1989), 20.

[20] Edmund Husserl, *Einleitung in die Ethik. Vorlesungen Sommersemester 1920/1924*, Husserliana Band XXXVII, ed. H. Peucker (Dodrecht: Springer, 2004), 359.

personality has its own "positive potentiality,"[21] its entire previous existence is summed up in a moment with its willingness to go straight to the point, to act in a very specific manner. If the factum of the world is accidental, then the willing actions certainly are not. If we recall that Husserl's contemporary Rilke called for reform movements by asking his readers to alter their way of life, phenomenology could be read as a certain guidebook for the transformation of life from an unphilosophical one to a philosophical. Such reading would become even more interesting if we were to subject phenomenology to the strategy of denunciation. Its essential question must be: can the founder of phenomenology be also accused of false pretenses? What is the concept of personhood that the phenomenological transformation into a philosopher offers us?

## V. Why is phenomenology destiny?

Careful readers did not miss the almost existential sound of Husserl's sentences, in which the possibility of philosophical explanations and settling of the scores is presented as the only available option without which it is not possible, or conceivable to live: "Many statements, which consider 'life threatening' and one 'can't keep on living,' point in that direction."[22] The encounter with Husserl's texts will testify to the fact that in life it is possible to have different choices, but in time, it becomes clear that any possibility of choice for a phenomenologist is but imaginary. Being that there is no other methodology thanks to which it is possible to obtain similar results, the orientation is reduced to only one – phenomenological route. If the phenomenological route is the necessary, or even the only possible route, it is by no means natural. Husserl did not find anything more senseless

[21] Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie II. Phänomenologische Untersuchungen zur Konstitution*, Husserliana Band XXXVII, ed. H. Peucker (Dodrecht: Springer, 2004), 255.

[22] Ferdinand Fellmann, "Lebenswelt und Lebenserfahrung," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1987), 90-91.

that the spontaneous shift from the natural to the philosophical attitude. Therefore, he could not even imagine an option in which someone is simply "born" to philosophy: "No one can be born a philosopher for substantive reasons. Anyone can start only as a natural, non-philosophical man."[23] If everyone starts as a non-philosopher, how is it that only a minority decides to pursue philosophy while a vast majority remains in the natural default? Husserl's methodology is marked by certain educational lessons. The explicit mention of the "educational possibilities" of the phenomenological reduction relates mostly to the possibility of accepting the change in the attitude. More precisely, what it actually means to accept an attitude, to pursue it, abandon it, and to adopt another attitude:

> […] the natural attitude is not the only possible attitude [...] the *educational part of the phenomenological reduction* is that it first and foremost makes us more receptive for the understanding changes in the attitude.[24]

Plato knew that nothing could be known in a cave about what a cave was, and that it was therefore necessary to get out of it. Understanding the change of the attitude is necessarily tied to the capacity of the abandonment of the usual human point of view. Still, it seems that the necessity of leaving the world to which we are tied with our senses was not something the ancient philosopher was able to explain. The regime of images was for him the natural starting point but the myth of the cave does not hold any suggestion which could help us understand why the noted individual decided to leave the cave, what is the thing that separated him from all the other tenants of the cave. Ontologically and epistemologically, the image in Plato's dialogues is that of

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[23] Edmund Husserl, *Phenomenological Psychology. Lectures. Summer Semester 1925*, trans. J. Scanlon (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1977), 34.

[24] Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie II. Phänomenologische Untersuchungen zur Konstitution*, Husserliana Band IV, ed. M. Biemel (Den Haag: Springer, 1952), 179.

unity of the being and the non-being, the illusionary products, but his dialectic did not offer the necessity of the exit, nor did it show why it is necessary to reach a certain saturation with the world of images: "Nothing is harder than making the offer of freedom more appealing."[25]

Unlike Plato, whose fugitive from the world of images cannot carry out his escape on his own, but needs others to "forcefully pull him out into the sunlight,"[26] Husserl in the phenomenological reduction recognizes the individual path into freedom, that is, in the transcendental subjectivity, as only it points to the absolute, to the source of the being not tied to the existing. Although at the end of his *Cartesian Meditations* he cites St. Augustine's thesis that truth resides within man, Husserl was by no means concerned with offering one of the many variations on Judeo-Christian anthropology. The foul and corrupt corporeality is with him simply invalid as the position of the impeccable purity of the immortal soul, eventually saved by grace of God. It is without doubt that the phenomenological subject does not care about being made of this world. The adjective *mundane* in Husserl's register contains the pejorative connotation still nurtured in the English language tying the phrase to the banal, prophane, crude and earthly. Mundane interests are synonymous for a life dictated by trivialities, whose time goes by in dealing with the incidental and irrelevant, while at the same time neglecting the crucial and significant.

Mundane affinities necessarily force a man into becoming an amateur, layman and commoner. The connection between the earthly goods and values for a Christian signify a life of sin, but for Husserl they point to a *naïve life*. Both are essentially alienated, the first one from God, and the second from true humanity. The lack of the commoners is in the missed opportunities for repentance and salvation, and lack of the naïve subject is in the

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[25] Hans Blumenberg, *Höhlenausgänge* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1996), 87.

[26] Platon, *Država* 516a, trans. A. Vilhar, and B. Pavlović (Beograd: BIGZ, 1993).

fixation with the ordinary, the natural attitude. For a Christian and phenomenologist alike, the appreciation of the common suffers from the lack of change. Despite the possibility to become different, the commoner chooses to remain the same. Still change which the Christian expect is significantly different from the one requested by the phenomenologist. The antonym of *mundanity* for Husserl is no longer *holiness*, but the *phenomenological attitude*. The successful change of the attitude in phenomenology does not lead to salvation or eternal life, but to the only possible rational and responsible living. There's no more talk of salvation, only philosophizing. The crucial thing is that the choice of phenomenology is not a matter of theoretical orientation, but relates to the existential, life question. Does this imply that the phenomenologist took the place in which the saint once stood? Is it not then, from the Christian perspective, the phenomenological subject the typical representative of pride?

## VI. Is egology necessarily the surrender to pride?

The Christian sensibility would certainly never approve of the philosophy which declares itself as egology. The phenomenologist would have been the ideal typical representative of pride, as he puts his subjectivity above everything, even above God. On the other hand, phenomenology does not recognize any intentional object other than the concrete modes of givens or fantasy produced variations of those givens. To such an attitude, every religion must seem naïve, as it is founded on the unprovable and unverifiable hypothesis:

> Within our actual experience we do not encounter divinity anywhere, and so exclude the questions of God as a transcendence of a different type than the transcendence of the objects of empirical sciences.[27]

[27] Zagorka Mićić, *Fenomenologija Edmunda Huserla. Studija iz savremene filozofije* (Beograd: F. Pelikan, 1937), 74.

The questions whether God exists or not, what our relationship with him would be, are necessarily excluded for methodological reasons. The primacy of the ego is, for phenomenology, indisputable, as it precedes all other eidetic necessities. With that, the ego is not just a contingent, individual being, created by chance and in the unpredictable social, economic and historical conditions. Every ego is the unique and inimitable, but is, despite that, marked by the essential necessities, which characterize the essence *qua* essence.

The existence of ego is absolute, and even if all the world givens were to vanish, that would not mark the end of ego. In short, ego can be without the world, while the world cannot be without ego. Ontologically, ego is the personhood in the sense of the unity of many, being a person for Husserl means being aware of one's center, the power of unity. Still, self-awareness alone is insufficient for personhood. Empirical self-awareness is, in particular, insufficient, as for reaching the person from ego, you need something else. Aside from the awareness of self, of one's convictions, desires, *social acts* like enjoyment, analogue apresentation and others are necessary.[28] Even though the discourse of egology can falsely point us in that direction, personhood cannot be conceived as a transcendental Robinson Crusoe, as it simply cannot function without other ego:

> It is only with empathy and the constant orientation of empirical reflection onto the psychic life which is apresented along with the other's Body and which is continually taken Objectively, together with the Body, that the closed unity, man, is constituted, and I transfer this unity subsequently to myself.[29]

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[28] René Toulemont, *L'essence de la sociéte selon Husserl* (Paris: PUF, 1962), 230-231.

[29] Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy II. Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*, trans. R. Rojcewicz, and A. Schuwer (Dodrecht, Boston, London: Kluwer, 1989), 175.

Therefore, one cannot think of the transcendental ego as a superior, vain unity beyond the multitude of other subjects. Though it may seem confusing at first, the conclusion, according to which "the transcendental and intersubjective with Husserl do not go hand in hand,"[30] implies the superiority of the transcendental (intersubjective). We over the transcendental I. Contrary to the logic of common sense or the natural attitude, according to which the awareness of self prepares the way for the awareness of others, one of the crucial insights of Husserl's phenomenology is that "the experience of the world is not a private experience but the experience of the community."[31] However, this experience is, like any other, constituted as self-experience, in where lies the entire paradox of the phenomenological position. *Others are before me, but they cannot exist independent of me, they are initially there as givens in me*.

Experience of other is the necessary self-experience, it becomes understandable thanks to the phenomenological *inspectio sui*. The experience of apresentation, acting with-present, with Husserl is usually reduced to the awareness that the presence of others is analogous to my own, and that, based on the insight into others, I myself exist. Everything relies on the variations of selfness, the experience of the foreign presents the modification of me. Opposed to that, pride is based on the construction of the self as the superior unity, which sees as a disturbing factor every possible instance of the excellence of the other.

> A prideful person lives inside himself with a light source, even if that light is sometimes blindingly reflected by external objects. Those objects occlude the physical and spiritual qualities of that person […] all that, for pride, is out of the question. A prideful

[30] Walter Brüning, "Der Ansatz der Transzendentalphilosophie in Husserls Cartesianischen Meditationen," *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung* XX (1966): 195-196.

[31] Edmund Husserl, *Formale und transzendentale Logik. Versuch einer Kritik der logischen Vernunft* (Halle: M. Niemeyer, 1929), 209.

> person does not say: 'I am the one representing so and so, and who did this and this', on the contrary, he says just 'I am Me.'[32]

Fichte's notion of subject turns out to be the ideal typical representative of pride, but a revolutionary, rebellious version which no longer accedes to opportunism.[33]

Unlike a prideful person, the phenomenological notion of personhood sees that without others, there is no intimate personal world. What the V *Cartesian Meditation* rejects as principally impossible, in the attitude of pride becomes a regular ordeal. Instead of finding the testimony of self in the intersubjective mutuality, the prideful subjectivity creates a self-relationship through excluding the possibility of being molded in exchange with others. Through the illusion of the inner primordial world which is supposed to be the "source," meaning that it genetically precedes every objectivity, pride functions by closing into itself. However, unlike shame, in which the individual retreats into itself as a way of defending from the binding generalities, norms and ideals, pride functions by "leaving itself" in the attempt to break and deny the validity of any generality, norm or ideal.

Radically observed, pride is the existence without the existing, and therefore, the attitude of pride can bless the destruction of all things, even if they are symbolical or imaginary. In this, pride is not just different, but contrary positioned to the phenomenological attitude, and the idea of phenomenological personhood. The attitude of pride needs no one, it does not recognize any potentiality of interaction, and therefore excludes the constitutive horizon of the things between us, *entre nous*. Pride is marked by "broken intentionality," in it the noesis projects itself sky high, without caring to establish real contact

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[32] Aurel Kolnai, *Ekel, Hochmut, Haß. Zur Phänomenologie feindlicher Gefühle* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2007), 68.

[33] Dragan Prole, "Metamorfoze gordosti. Od Aristotelovog samoodnosa do Kafkinog stida," *Gordost*, Adresa (Novi Sad, 2014), 16.

with the experience givens. Pride does not reflect the things that constitute and neglects the noema. Due to that, the others and the world are for a prideful person only what he wants to see in them, while the reflection of the given, reductions and variations are simply irrelevant. Phenomenological attitude represents the methodological path which starts with the testimony of the other to build a "world of personalities, their achievements, the kingdom of freedom,"[34] while pride remains a synonym for the tendency of the arbitrary I to, beyond all other I's, present itself as the absolute and indisputable. Even though the ideas of the *Übermensch*, the will to power and the "experience of seven loneliness"' point to the prideful nature of the "free spirit," the subjectivity it represents is anything but absolute. The Protean character of human existence, unlike the prideful immunity towards the existing, insists on participation with it. To live means to go towards things and phenomena, the Dionysian man: "He enters into any skin, into any affect: he constantly transforms himself."[35] The modern idea of personhood brings the radicalized teaching of change. Twists and turns are no longer interpreted as unique, imitable events in life. On the contrary, they are human life.

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[34] Edmund Husserl, *Einleitung in die Ethik. Vorlesungen Sommersemester 1920/1924*, 313.

[35] Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, 197.

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