

thinking

togetherness

ANDREJ BOŽIČ (*Ed.*)

**THINKING TOGETHERNESS**

**PHENOMENOLOGY AND SOCIALITY**

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Filip Borek

# **SCHWINGUNG AT THE HEART OF PHENOMENON**

**INTERSUBJECTIVITY AND PHENOMENALITY**

*Abstract:* In the article, we propose a reformulation of the Husserlian question of intersubjectivity, starting from phenomenon-as-nothing-but-phenomenon (Richir). Our aim is to show how at the most profound level of phenomenality there is something like intersubjectivity already at play. To clarify this dimension, we use the German term *Schwingung* as a proper movement of the phenomenon as such that constitutes the phenomenological basis of intersubjectivity, which enables us to preserve both the moment of transcendence (irreducible alterity) and communication of *ego* and *alter ego*. Such a radicalization approaches its theme in a genetic-phenomenological way, disclosing a transcendental fiction at the origin of intersubjectivity.

*Keywords:* anonymity, genetic phenomenology, phenomenality, intersubjectivity, transcendental oscillation.

## **1. Introduction**

Embodying one of the “basic problems of phenomenology,” the question of intersubjectivity comes to light at various levels of phenomenological architectonics. Philosophical investigation of *alter ego* presented by phenomenologists of all generations, e.g., by Husserl, Fink, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Henry, Waldenfels, or Richir, seems to occupy a *central* position in their theoretical projects, although it usually emerges not as an *independent* problem, but it is rather determined by the inner logic of their works. For instance, in Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology the inquiry into the question of intersubjectivity becomes ineluctable within the context of a *transcendental* problem of world-objectivity or world-transcendence. As it is known, Husserl

claims that the objectivity of the world reveals its transcendental *Seinssinn* as “thereness-for-everyone” (*Für-jedermann-da*) (Husserl 1982, 91). According to the methodological constraints of phenomenology, the starting point of every analysis is *my own* transcendental ego. Notwithstanding, in order to avoid the objection of a “transcendental solipsism,” it is necessary to explicate, “in what intentionalities, syntheses, motivations, the sense ‘other ego’ becomes fashioned in me and, under the title, harmonious experience of someone else, becomes verified as existing and even as itself there in its own manner” (Husserl 1982, 90). The whole problem of the *alter ego* in Husserl consists therefore of two—seemingly contradictory—requirements: to think intersubjectivity as a necessary condition of world-experience, in its *transcendental*, not solely *mundane* character, though starting from the *ego* and its primordially, but also without positing intersubjectivity *dogmatically*. The meaning of the transcendental question of intersubjectivity in Husserl was adequately captured by Schnell:

46            [...] how is it possible to keep together two apparently contradictory statements—i.e. one according to which the world is presented “for everyone” (*für jedermann*), therefore *objectively*, and another according to which any sense is constituted within the life of the consciousness *ego*, that is, in the transcendental *subject* [...]? (Schnell 2010, 11.)

Comprehensive and systematic studies on the theme of intersubjectivity—which are loaded with obscurities, ambiguities, and sometimes even contradictions—, as exhibited above all in the fifth Cartesian meditation and the volumes XIII–XV of *Husserliana*, play a crucial role in Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology, redefining its basic concepts (such as *Subjektivität*, for instance), methods, and tasks. Nevertheless, the question of transcendental intersubjectivity *receives* its function and sense *only* within a broader problematic (and methodological) context that, for its part, is receptive and responsive to further modifications and transpositions.

In the paper, we aim, so to speak, to *dislocate* the question of transcendental intersubjectivity within the environment of phenomenological inquiry, in order to incorporate it into a *different* chain of questions, without leaving,

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at the same time, the achievements and demands springing forth from the Husserlian phenomenology behind our back. In the first chapter, we present some acquisitions of Husserl's thought that will serve as *guidelines* for our sketch of the problem. For this reason, the presentation of his wide and dense studies devoted to intersubjectivity will be necessarily very brief and general. However, the task here is not solely to provide some guidelines for further investigations, but also to localize some *aporias* in Husserl's inquiry that will motivate us to pose the question of intersubjectivity anew. For the elaboration, inevitably of preliminary and sketchy character, of the question of intersubjectivity, the *fundamental question* of phenomenology, i.e., that of *phenomenality* and its *genesis*, will be taken as a *Leitfaden* (chapters 2 and 3). The aim here is to demonstrate phenomenologically that something like "intersubjectivity" is already at play at the most primordial level of the phenomenon, and that it, for this reason, possesses irreducible and decisive significance within the whole architectonics of phenomenology.

## 2. Husserl and transcendental intersubjectivity

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Husserl's pursuit to think intersubjectivity has a *transcendental* character. As we mentioned above, this means, first, that the phenomenological inquiry into intersubjectivity must necessarily start with the meditating *ego*. Transcendental intersubjectivity "is neither a systematic structure that *grounds* consciousness nor a 'collective consciousness' [...] it does not characterize a 'social' (*mundane*) relationship that would be noticed *from the outside*" (Schnell 2010, 10–11). In other words, intersubjective relations must be apprehended from *the inside*, i.e., from the perspective of a part of this relation. Secondly, like every *transcendental* philosophy, phenomenology inquires into the problem of *the conditions of possibility* of a relationship between the *ego* and the *alter ego*, rather than considering the questions of *concrete* intersubjective relations (Zahavi 2001, 150). Having these principles in mind, let us ask the following question: what does Husserl understand under the term "transcendental intersubjectivity"? As was shown in detail by Zahavi (Zahavi 1996; Zahavi 2001), Husserl does not operate with *one* meaning of this term, but one can rather distinguish its *three* meanings: (1) "open intersubjectivity" (*offene Intersubjektivität*), which

forms a structural *a priori* of the transcendental subject (Zahavi 2001, 53); (2) first constitution of the sense *alter ego* for an ego, first *Fremderfahrung*, *Erstkonstitution* (Lohmar 2017, 130), or its *Urstiftung*; (3) “anonymous publicity,” which consists of historically grounded norms, conventions, etc., and makes, for this reason, the institution of sociality possible. Without taking the third meaning of the transcendental intersubjectivity into consideration, let us focus, in general, on the first two meanings. What is “open intersubjectivity” and how is it related to the concrete experience of *alter ego*?

48 In “Beilage XXXV” in volume XIV of *Husserliana*, Husserl writes: “*Ontologisch gesprochen, jede Erscheinung, die ich habe, ist von vornherein Glied eines offen endlosen, aber nicht explizit verwirklichten Umfanges möglicher Erscheinungen von demselben und die Subjektivität dieser Erscheinungen ist offene Intersubjektivität.*” (Husserl 1973, 289.) Open intersubjectivity is nothing but the structural openness of our experience towards other *actual* perspectives that makes the experience of an *object* (object as experienced *actually* from different perspectives; see Zahavi 2001, 32) possible. This *a priori* structure—as Zahavi argues—is *independent* from concrete, factual experiences we have of other subjects. It serves, nonetheless, as a *foundation* for these experiences. This first “intersubjectivity” could also be called “intra-subjective alterity,” as long as it defines transcendental subjectivity *from the very beginning* and in its *essential structure* (Zahavi 2001, 161) and does not result from any experience. Subject is in its essence in relation with other subjects, even if they are not corporeally present *in propria persona* in our experiential field. In other words, transcendental subjectivity is potentially, though not *habitually*, related to *alter ego*, it is “transcendental coexistence” (Husserl 1973c, 370). Although Husserl himself never analyzed systematically the relations between “open intersubjectivity” and the constitution of the first *Fremderfahrung*, Zahavi’s thesis—based on certain passages from Husserl’s manuscripts—on the *Fundierungsverhältnis* between these two notions of intersubjectivity seems to be plausible. Nevertheless, it is not quite clear, if the priority of open intersubjectivity over concrete experiences of the other has only *static-phenomenological* or likewise *genetic-phenomenological* character. Furthermore, open intersubjectivity cannot be taken *in advance*, but should rather be *concretely* attested and verified in “transcendental experience.” Schnell

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speaks in this context of “phenomenological construction”—in order to “verify” the construction of the fact that “subjectivity is structured inter-subjectively,” “it is necessary for *me* to be given an account of the concrete experience of the other” (Schnell 2010, 12). And this is precisely the task of the fifth Cartesian meditation. Before we delve deeper into the problems that are signaled but not fully developed in Zahavi’s reading of Husserl, we must underline *three moments* that—according to the author of *Logical Investigations*—are necessary, in order to think intersubjectivity *as intersubjectivity*.

First, the constitutive experience of the other must be precisely the experience of the other in *its otherness*. The other subject cannot be understood as a mere “mirroring” of my *ego*, since it would be nothing but a *copy* of myself. As Husserl admits: “if what belongs to the other’s own essence were directly accessible, it would be merely a moment of my own essence, and ultimately he himself and I myself would be the same” (Husserl 1982, 109). An *alter ego* must be experienced, given exactly *as the other*, in its *insurmountable transcendence* or *inaccessibility* (Husserl 1982, 124). This does not mean, however, that the inaccessibility in question is a *negation* of the givenness of the other. Rather, it constitutes its peculiar *mode of appearing*. The other *as other* is given *through its absence*. Exclusively under these *two* conditions, the *inter-subjective* relationality is possible—the other must *appear*, but its mode of appearing has the necessary character of withdrawal (*Entzug*). When there is no *relation* between *different* subjectivities, then speaking of *inter-subjectivity* is devoid of any sense. Therefore, these two moments indicate what should be necessarily avoided while constructing a phenomenologically adequate intersubjective field. When one denies any possibility of “communication” of the ego with an *alter ego*, then intersubjectivity cannot be phenomenologically attested and verified. When one negates any difference between the ego and the *alter ego*, then the *alter ego* loses its whole sense. Therefore, the question of intersubjectivity becomes a question of *irreducible* transcendence of the other as a possible mode of *phenomenality*.

Even if these conditions of constructing a phenomenologically relevant theory of intersubjectivity have systematic and methodological validity, one can ask—not without a reason—if the Cartesian-like starting point in the *ego cogito* already determines the *impossibility* of inter-subjectivity and leads

inevitably to the transcendental solipsism. If one presupposes an absolute, transparent, and self-coinciding *ego cogito* for whom the whole world exists as its *Geltungsphänomen*, then how is a multiplicity of other egos possible? One way of getting out of this aporia is to admit that the *ego cogito* (or the individual monad) is definitely not the most profound layer of the transcendental. Such a viewpoint, however, runs the risk of falling into one extremity.

According to Fink (Fink 1976, 223; Schutz 1970, 86), “late” Husserl was an advocate of such an extreme position. Despite a certain *textual inadequacy* of this interpretation (as Zahavi has convincingly pointed out in Zahavi 2001, 65–77), it is worth saying what such an extremity consists of and what difficulties it may generate. Its main idea could be summarized as follows: at the primal, absolutely *anonymous* level of constituting subjectivity there does *not yet* exist a difference between *ego* and *alter ego*—they emerge in their *distinctiveness* in the self-pluralization of this primal life. Such a view may appear appealing, for it seems to solve the problem of absolute distance between subjects. But one can easily see, as Merleau-Ponty already did in his *Phenomenology of Perception*, that it does not *solve* the problem, but rather *eliminates* it (Merleau-Ponty 2012, 372) by *dissolving* the insurmountable difference between subjects in the monism of the anonymous primal life. But as we know, Husserl himself operates with terms such as “anonymous” or “anonymity.” “Anonymous” means “nameless” in Husserl. One can argue that anonymity means a lack of any reference to subject or ego. Nevertheless, in Husserl, such a “radical concept of anonymity” is rather impossible. Anonymity is not a *negation* of the egological consciousness, it is not a consciousness without ego, but rather a *pre-reflexivity* and *non-thematicity* (Zahavi 2002). In this strict sense, one can speak of “anonymous (or anonymously functioning) intersubjectivity,” and hence passively, pre-reflectively, and non-thematically operating intersubjectivity.

Husserl’s theory of intersubjectivity can, therefore, be summarized as follows: it assumes that at the basis of the world-constitution there is an infinite *plurality* of monads that are transcendent towards each other, and this *Ineinander* of egos takes place passively, pre-reflectively (non-objectively), and non-thematically in the “background” of transcendental consciousness. Furthermore, such a transcendental absolute cannot be reached solely using “descriptive analysis,” but it requires a new form of reduction (e.g., “primordial

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reduction” in *Cartesian Meditations*) and “phenomenological construction” (Schnell 2010, 12). There are, however, certain ambiguities and obscurities in Husserl’s theory that motivate us to develop his analysis in a strictly systematic manner (as was previously done by many other phenomenologists, including Merleau-Ponty, Henry, or Richir). In this short article, there is not enough space to discuss all of them. Nevertheless, it is useful to point out two such ambiguities. As we already said, Zahavi’s interpretation of the conditioning relation between open intersubjectivity and concrete *Erstkonstitution* of *alter ego* is ambiguous in respect of genetic–static distinction: should this conditioning be understood solely *statically* or should it be radicalized in the form of *genetic* priority? Is primordiality, of which Husserl speaks in fifth Cartesian meditation, only “static primordiality” or also “genetic primordiality” (see Kern 2021, 36)?<sup>1</sup> Is “genetic primordiality,” as concrete self-presence of the ego without *Urstiftung* of other egos, possible? Is it not genetic phenomenology that ultimately legitimates the intersubjective structure of subjectivity (e.g., when it refers to phenomena such as instincts or drives)? But how could one, then, conceive phenomenologically such a phenomenon as *Urstiftung* of the other I? Furthermore, even if one admits that ego is intersubjectively structured, then the question arises: how such a structuration can be attested and verified from the point of view of the I itself? Since intersubjectivity is a necessary condition of the possibility of ego, one must go beyond the ego to understand this ego. But how such a movement can be called “phenomenological” after all? All these questions lead us to reformulate the question of intersubjectivity beyond Husserl’s approach.

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### 3. Phenomenon-as-nothing-but-phenomenon as oscillation

Before we perform the concrete analysis (or rather a sketch of such an analysis) of intersubjectivity from a transcendental-phenomenological point of view, it is necessary to exhibit methodological tools that will be of use for such a purpose. The following question deals with the problem of the

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<sup>1</sup> One should admit that the analysis in fifth Cartesian meditation is neither fully static nor fully genetic. It is, as Sakakibara rightly defines it, “half-genetic” (Sakakibara 2008, 8). Compare also Lee 2002.

phenomenological *origin* of intersubjectivity. In this sense, it is a part of *genetic phenomenology*. Intersubjectivity cannot be merely posed and presupposed as a *factum*, but it must be *genetized* (Schnell 2012, 470). To perform such a genetization, the merely descriptive method is insufficient. Description—that, however, constitutes both the methodological beginning and constant foothold of further elaborations—must be supplemented by *Abbaureduktion* and “phenomenological construction” (which are the negative and positive aspects of the same operation).

52 The *constructum* must be constructed in two steps: firstly, it has to be constructed through “dismantling” (*abbauen*) of all that can be excluded from the phenomenon as “unnecessary.” This is the *fictive* moment of the method. Secondly, however, since the *constructum* is in service of *explaining* what is accessible to us pre-constructively (i.e., descriptively), it has to be constructed in a very specific way—namely, having such “properties” that make the *generation* of the “given,” “phenomenal” layer possible. In other words, what the first (negative) moment tries to capture is, so to speak, the “minimal” dimension of a given phenomenon, i.e., nothing other than its *necessary* conditions of possibility, while the second aims at *sufficient* conditions of the *explanandum*. Therefore, the construction must follow some kind of *retrojection*—thinking the origin of something should be performed as a thinking that concerns what comes from it. The project intended here is *genetic, constructive, and retrojective*. The task is to *genetize* intersubjectivity in a transcendental-phenomenological manner. Where should such a genetization start from? Our answer: from the phenomenon as such.

When one considers the proper “object” of transcendental phenomenology (distinct from something one may call “phenomenological realism”; see Schnell 2021, 21) as “phenomenon-as-nothing-but-phenomenon” (*phénomène comme rien que phénomène*; Richir) or as “appearing as such” (*Erscheinen als solches*; Patočka), or as “self-appearing of appearing” (Henry), then the question of intersubjectivity needs to be placed within the specific architectonics of the problem of phenomenality. The aim of phenomenology—understood as “radical transcendental phenomenology”—is to think “phenomenon with reference only to its phenomenality” (Richir 1987, 19). The reduction of phenomena to *nothing-but-phenomena* requires of us the bracketing of the

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reference of phenomena to something alien to it, namely to the *thing* or *object* that appears in it. The phenomenon, pre-phenomenologically conceived, is always a phenomenon-of... This moment of reference, this “of,” should be parenthesized.<sup>2</sup> The question at stake could be formulated then as follows: how does phenomenon-as-nothing-but-phenomenon phenomenize itself, in order to *generate* something like transcendental *intersubjectivity*?

The pure phenomenon is a phenomenon taken without being a “phenomenon-of...” To the structure of appearing belongs—besides that *what* appears—also *to whom* it appears (Patočka 2000, 129). Every appearing has its genitive (appearing-of...) and its dative (appearing-for...) aspect. The genitive–dative dyad should now be parenthesized, in order to let the pure phenomenon as such appear. Such a reduced phenomenon is *not yet* a phenomenon of *something* for *someone*. What is, then, left, when we exclude both the subject and the object of appearing? Are we left with pure nothingness? One can argue that appearing—to “be” appearing—implies a redoubtment of *itself* and *in itself* (Henry 2003, 109), briefly: appearing must itself somehow appear. Taking that into consideration, one must admit—standing against Henry in this respect—that there must be an inner *difference* in appearing itself. Phenomenon phenomenizes itself only as “divergence” (*écart* in the terminology of “late” Merleau-Ponty) or “non-identity.” But what does this divergent self-manifestation of phenomenon-as-such mean?

First, “what” appears cannot be identified with any object. “What” appears is rather absent. And yet, should we understand it as an “absent object” or the “absence of object”? In a sense, the phenomenon-as-nothing-but-phenomenon is to be *retrojectively* determined as the “absence of object.” At the same time, following the necessity of *Abbaureduktion*, the pure phenomenon cannot, however, be determined by the *factum* it tends to explain. We cannot presuppose on this genetic level any prior presence of an object (its *Vorgegebenheit*) that is *negated* afterwards. Therefore, the absence of object is rather an “absence

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<sup>2</sup> One of the problems with the Husserlian phenomenology of intersubjectivity is that most of its considerations are conducted on the basis of *intentionality*, which is precisely this “phenomenon-of...” (at least technically), whereas we suggest—following *inter alia* Henry and Richir in this respect—that phenomenon-as-nothing-but-phenomenon should be understood in its *non-intentional* or *pre-intentional* dimension.

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without absent.” This absence, however, cannot be a *simple* absence, otherwise it would “be” nothing but a “lack of phenomenality,” “non-phenomenality.” Since the essence of the phenomenon belongs to something like “redoublement,” it is necessary to speak in this case of “absence of absence” or “doubled absence,” which never perfectly coincide with each other, but are rather “different” or “polarized.” Phenomenon is a movement between “two” absences. This means, first, that phenomenon comes from *nothing* and sinks into *nothing* again. This coming-from-nothing-and-sinking-into-nothing—which are the movements of *Anwesen* und *Abwesen*—implies, hence, the movement of coming-into-*presence*. In other words, absence “presentifies” itself into absence. It should be stressed that this original absence does not crystallize itself into an object, it does not reach any *stability*, but it disappears the very same moment, when it appears.

54 We choose to name the movement *in* the phenomenon itself (which is nothing but *this phenomenon*) with the German term *Schwingung*. In the phenomenological tradition, it was used previously—in different configurations and meanings—in Heidegger, Fink, and Richir.<sup>3</sup> The term *Schwingung* must be understood, not as a movement between two already-present poles, but rather as a movement wherein the *polarization* happens, that is: the *origination* of the poles in question. In this sense it refers to what Heidegger calls in *Contributions to Philosophy* “oscillation” (*Gegenschwung*) and “coming to be of the oscillation” (*Erschwingung*): “that oscillation [*Gegenschwung*] between beyng and Da-sein in which the two are not objectively present [*vorhanden*] poles but are the pure coming to be of the oscillation [*Erschwingung*] itself” (Heidegger 2012, 225). In other words, the poles of the movement of the phenomenon are not “stable,” but are co-generated *within* and *by* the very movement itself.

And now the question arises: how does such a concept of phenomenon affect the notion of (transcendental) subjectivity? In what sense is phenomenon-as-nothing-but-phenomenon *presubjective* or even *asubjective*? Further: how can such an understanding of the phenomenon as a “phenomenological basis” be successfully used within the transcendental problem of intersubjectivity? If one wants to speak of subjectivity within the context of the pure phenomenon, it

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3 See Richir’s article on the question of *Schwingung* (Richir 1998).

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is necessary to notice that such a subjectivity would be devoid of any reference to an object (would be *non-intentional* then), and it could not apprehend itself in the prism of any objectivity. As such, it would not have any *Habitualitäten*, as long as there would no *Stiftungen*. Does this mean, however, that such a phenomenon-as-nothing-but-phenomenon, as an interplay of presence and absence, is asubjective? We argue that such a characteristic might be misleading. First, the pure phenomenon should serve as a condition for the possibility of an *ego*. Second, what is at stake in the pure phenomenon is precisely the structure of subjectivity, namely *reflexivity*. The phenomenon is reflexive or, better: it is its *reflexivity*. It refers to itself, as long as it does not coincide with itself, and does not coincide with itself, as long as it refers to itself. The phenomenon is an endless play of iterations and repetitions. And only under this condition, it can phenomenize itself. As long as it “plays” with “itself,” it possesses an “ipseity,” a *Selbstheit*, which nevertheless is utterly “anonymous” and “pre-personal.”

#### 4. Intersubjectivity and phenomenality

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How can, then, intersubjectivity be genetized from the oscillation of the movement of the phenomenon? How does the ipseity of the pure phenomenon coincide with the structure of intersubjectivity? Based at first on the intentional experience, we must admit that the constitution of objectivity requires a double movement of the phenomenon: its *centralization* and *decentralization*. What should be understood under these terms? A phenomenon is constituted as an object, when it is *the center* of the manifold of experiential points of view (= centripetality). But, in order to be constituted as an object, it has to be de-centralized in manifold perspectives upon it (= centrifugality). To create an object, the phenomenon centralizes itself, insofar as it is decentralized in different perspectives. Centralization and decentralization—like movement and countermovement—create in reality one single (paradoxical) movement. As one can argue, the centralization of my perspective (which is synonymous with the origination of perspective) is possible only as a simultaneous *de-* and *co-*centralization of other perspectives: *de-*centralization, insofar as they are not *my* perspectives, and *co-*centralization, insofar as they are other *absolute* perspectives *for themselves*.

There are, here, two different meanings of centralization/decentralization. The first one refers to already constituted intentional experience, where the center of regards (= object) serves as a “pivot” for the determination of perspectives. However, such centralization of regards requires a prior process of double co- and decentralization of perspectives, of, as Husserl calls it, *absolute Hier* (taken in plural). This double movement of de- and co-centralization takes place in the phenomenon-as-nothing-but-phenomenon in its “oscillation,” “vibration,” or “blinking” (Richir’s *clignotement*). The sphere where this de- and co-centralization occurs could also be named—following Richir in this respect—“transcendental interfacticity” (*interfacticité transcendantale*), which is defined as the “‘transcendental coexistence’ of an original plurality of absolutes as an absolute Here, which does not mean their mutual relativization through another absolute from a higher register” (Richir 2006, 36–37). What motivates Richir to substitute the term “intersubjectivity” with “interfacticity”? Richir claims that Husserl—being *methodologically* forced to do so—understands intersubjectivity within the horizon of the eidetics of one’s own *Erlebnisse*. By doing so, he has to suspend the *facticity* of the *ego* which, as he himself was fully aware of, is phenomenologically impossible (see Husserl 1973c, 385). In other words, the transcendental intersubjectivity as eidetic modification of my own I is possible only on the grounds of its *facticity* which, in turn, is intrinsically connected to other facticities. The proto-movement of phenomenon-as-nothing-but-phenomenon, its infinite oscillation, is nothing but the genetization of absolutes (of *absolute Hier* [in plural]). It enables their *Ineinander*, as long as it creates a “space” where their communication becomes possible, and guarantees, at the same time, their *transcendence*, since the phenomenon never coincides absolutely with itself.

What is an advantage of such a solution? First of all, it, in a way, *deformalizes*—still too formal—the concept of *offene Intersubjektivität*, bringing it back to its genetic roots (phenomenon-as-nothing-but-phenomenon serves as a genetic matrix of intersubjective relations) beneath intentionality. Secondly, it requires from us a modification of our phenomenological methodological tools. In Schnell’s terminology, the problem of *alter ego* cannot be solved at the level of *immanence*, but it necessarily requires us to go deeper to the level of pre-

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immanence or pre-phenomenality. The entire problem is here merely sketched and requires a more detailed analysis.

## 5. Conclusion

To conclude, let us formulate two final questions. What is the methodological status of such a transcendental interfacticty understood as the oscillation of the phenomenon in itself? How is the crucial notion of *anonymity* then redefined? In order to answer the first question, we have to keep in mind that the *Rückfrage* towards genetic primordiality of interfacticty starts from the already instituted (in sense of *Sinnstiftung*) phenomena *a posteriori*, which are *retrojectively* brought back to their phenomenological origin. Interfacticty is accessible as *a priori* that is nowhere to be found at the level of these institutions; it cannot even be conceived through the consequent and subsequent *Erinnerung* of past experiences that lie “at the bottom” and “at the beginning” of our experiential life. In this sense, transcendental interfacticty is entirely *fictional*, as it does not function at the level of intuitive-intentional attestability. On the other hand, it is *a necessary fiction*, if we want to fully *understand* and *legitimate* intersubjectivity in a phenomenologically relevant way, and—in consequence—make phenomenology as science possible (which requires intersubjective communication and validation). As entirely “beyond memory,” it could be described—using Merleau-Ponty’s term—as “a past that has never been present”—(Merleau-Ponty 2012, 252) or—following Levinas—as “immemorial past” (Levinas 1986, 355). Transcendental interfacticty is a phenomenological fiction, however: a *transcendental* fiction.

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Such characteristics enable us to determine more precisely the phenomenological meaning of anonymity. The transcendental interfacticty of phenomenon-as-nothing-but-phenomenon is an *anonymous interfacticty*. First, this means that it cannot be *objectified*. Second, it is, however, something more radical than “anonymity” as understood by Husserl (at least as interpreted by Zahavi). The reflexivity of the phenomenon as such is *not yet* pre-reflexivity of consciousness, since the latter is coextensive with intentionality, whereas the former operates at the pre-immanent level. The former makes the latter possible.

And then the question arises: how such an anonymous, pre-egoic, though *always already differentiated* (in contrast to Fink's "absolute life") field can be appropriated *personally*? How can the anonymous and the personal be coupled together (as is the case in Merleau-Ponty; see 2012, 476–477) in one single structure? Though crucial and fundamental to the present case, this question transcends the limited scope of our paper, and thus represents a task for further investigations.

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