



STUDI E RICERCHE

The open diaphragm. Pedagogy of the unconditional third

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Il diaframma aperto. Pedagogia del terzo incondizionato

Abstract

This study intends to show on one side the first results of a research focused on the modifications of subjectivity in the educational relationship, and on the other the repercussions that the reflection on thirdness and the impersonal can have on pedagogical theory and educational practices. Supported by the proposals of Esposito and Ronchi, but also by the pedagogical reflections of Colicchi, Cambi and Perticari, the intent is to investigate the depth of the "third person" as a constitutive element of the "impersonal transcendental field" first suggested by Sartre. In this direction, the essay addresses the theoretical-pedagogical implications of what is here called the "unconditioned third".

Keywords

"He"; impersonal; third unconditional; otherness; unexpected pedagogical

Il saggio che qui si presenta intende fornire i primi risultati di una ricerca che ha come proprio *focus*, da un lato, i cambiamenti della soggettività nella relazione educativa e, dall'altro, le ricadute della riflessione sulla "terzietà" e sull'impersonale in merito alla teoria pedagogica e alle prassi educative. Facendo riferimento ai lavori di Esposito e Ronchi, ma anche alle riflessioni pedagogiche di Colicchi, Cambi e Perticari, l'intento è quello di approfondire il concetto di "terza persona" quale elemento costitutivo del "campo trascendentale impersonale" individuato, per primo, da Sartre. In questa direzione, il saggio rileva alcune implicazioni teoretico-pedagogiche di ciò che qui viene definito il "terzo incondizionato".

Parole chiave

"Egli"; impersonale; terzo incondizionato; alterità; inatteso pedagogico

1. The unconditionally impersonal: “He”

If the modern has produced an excess of personalization and, consequently, an inexorable rupture between the perception of the world and the internalization of reality, only the genius of Kafka has been able to circumscribe with the impregnable resolving force of the literary word (always so “extreme” and “systematic” in philosophical discourses and pedagogical theory) the evanescence of the pronoun “I”, amplifying the impregnability, instead, of “He”¹.

“He” is, in fact, that indefinite and unconditioned object that, like Levinasian otherness, retracts into its defensive position at the very moment one tries to capture it: the only taking in force of “He” is incarceration or the state of coercion, which, however, “He” does not mind (and, in any case, considers it a possible and even necessary condition).

He is neither bold nor light. But neither is he fearful. A free life would not frighten him. Fact is, such a life has not presented itself to him, but neither does this frighten him, as he generally does not frighten himself. There is, however, a “someone” absolutely unknown to him who worries a great deal and always about him, only about him. These concerns of the “someone,” which concern him, especially the continuity of them, sometimes give him, in moments of calm, a severe headache (Kafka, 1972, p. 810, *our translation*).

In the condition of existential suspension, “its life is devoid of pleasure,” “it has no idea of freedom,” it cannot desire because there is no correspondence whatsoever between the real of the lived reality and the transparency of its suspension. Projected on the limit-threshold of a law that does not realize itself and cannot be made explicit in any way except by symbolic means, the body, defrauded of its right, experiences a complete metamorphosis (animal, transcribed body, subjectivity emptied of meaning), but continues to have its own consciousness. Formally, he is subjected to the larger system-machine which, in its impersonality and unjustifiable impartiality, is the extreme enactment of the “third one” (Panattoni, 2019, pp. 9-12).

The “third” to which attention is to be drawn, and which may also represent an important value in the pedagogical sphere, in order to unhinge the normative prevalence of the subject, refers to the positive affirmation of life that is inherent through the ontological explicitness of its immediate, non-mediated manifestation. On the personal/impersonal fracture, contemporary reflection, particularly Italian – from Agamben to Esposito, from Ronchi to Cimatti² –, has devoted specific attention in relation to the overall deconstruction of the political categories that have established the subject in contemporaneity³.

The “third person” (or, as it is defined here, extending its meaning, the “unconditional third”) emerges as the constant thrownness of that otherness which, perceived as a diaphragmatic movement, leads back to Kafkaesque discourse to designate three essential features that polarize the critical gaze: foreignness, the point of tolerance, and paranoicization.

The three categories signaled to circumscribe the range of affirmativeness of the “third” – foreignness, the point of tolerance, paranoicization – turn out to be formulas not easily bendable to the constitution

1 An inescapable parallel runs between Kafka’s “He” and Paul Valéry’s *Monsieur Teste*. Both of these figures – albeit literary – capture the unnerving ambiguity of the categories with which modern philosophy has come to terms, ever since the founding event of Cartesian dualism: internal/external, subject/object, ego/cogito. The common root of the inexplicable force underpinning these two literary representations lies in the loss of foundation of the Ego, which has become the elective site of an insurmountable contradiction in the ‘normative’ formation of the process of identification. Valéry (who, unlike Kafka, was well aware of the Bergsonian lesson) restores in an exemplary manner the inexpressive opacity of the Ego of his *Monsieur Teste*, which, as with Kafka’s “He”, loses that effected correlate that allows the Ego to be in the world: meaning. On this, see Madrussan, 2006, pp. 77-97.

2 See, respectively: Agamben, 2002/2004; Esposito, 2007/2012; Ronchi, 2017; Cimatti, 2018.

3 On the more exquisitely pedagogical side, the question of the third has always focused on understanding the edges of the postmodern subject, fully immersed in the conflicting contradictions of contemporaneity. See, in particular: Colicchi (Ed.), 2008; Peticari, 2004; Cambi, 2006.

of being of subjective prehension, since the non-conditioning of the “third” proposes a de-individuating perspective⁴.

Hence, Kafka introduces into his narrative the position of inside and outside (foreignness), the stressogenic term of the tensional rupture (point of tolerance), and closure to the world and to any possibility of emotional qualification (paranoicization). These subtractive formulas of ontological impermanence are manifested as a “more,” that is, as an unrelated dual system of tensions (the subject disappearing completely before the posteriority and futurity of things) and images (the imperceptible escape on the plane of qualitative-formal variables of objects that are manifestly phenomenal), which render opaque any nominative effectivity of idealized ontological difference⁵.

In the real, the plane of contingency, which is the disjointed perception of objects, does not “offer itself” to a receiving entity that possesses, as Aristotle put it (*Metafisica*, XII, 9, 1074 b-d), a gradation in the possible and variant distinction of prominent effectualities (the object that emerges without a cause, qualifies as such by its primary and secondary properties); rather, the disjointed perception of objects stands there, as the immanence of a transient activity that, nevertheless, does not depend on any caused cause (as, on the other hand, would be desired in gnoseology and the theory of knowledge) nor efficient. If anything, it returns to itself a *causa sui* (the Spinozian causative cause) that renders the spatial and temporally diachronic *dynamis* of the object itself impregnable – without, that is, any fixity.

The permanence of every object as a “thing” and every entity as unrelated (gradient inertia of every singularity that potentially has in itself what it will become) renders problematic the de-passivizing generativity of the I-world relation (egologically centered on the perceptual and functional appropriation of what is – namely, the world –, according to Heidegger, “in our disposition”), just as Husserl’s reflections made it a percipient knowledge activity through intentionality. Only thus was he able to undermine, in effect, the obscure and unconfessable transparency of consciousness unrelated as being (Husserl, 1993, pp. 83-90)⁶. It is what Husserl himself called “passive synthesis” (the relation between “association” and

4 Agamben, taking up Blanchot, thematised the experience of the ‘neutral’ in *The Coming Community* (1990/2007). Roberto Esposito, in turn, in discussion with Agamben and Nancy, re-proposed the political as the central theme of the instituting production of the subject in *Community* (1998/2010), recovering, later and from another angle, the implications of the institution becoming impolitic in *Instituting Thought* (2020/2021).

5 “By turning facticity,” Meillassoux points out, “into a property of things themselves – a property which I am alleged to know – I turn facticity from something that applies only to what is in the world into a form of contingency capable of being applied to the invariants that govern the world (i.e. its physical and logical laws). In so doing, I claim to know that the world is perishable, just as I know that this book is perishable. [...] Accordingly, the correlational circle undermines the thesis of the absolute contingency of everything just as effectively as it undermined the thesis of the absolute necessity of a supreme being – for how would one know that the apparent unreason of the world is an unreason *in-itself* – i.e. the real possibility of everything’s becoming other without reason – rather than just an unreason *for-us* – i.e. simply a function of our inability to discover the true necessary reason for everything, hidden behind the veil of phenomena? This movement from the *for-us* to the *in-itself* is no more acceptable in the case of contingency than it was in the case of necessity” (Meillassoux, 2006/2008, pp. 91-92). The debate on the *Realistic Turn* (or *Speculative Realism*) involves various voices concerned with the subject of the materiality of entities (of every entity) *versus* the legitimacy of the transparency of subjectivity that transcends and absolutizes itself in the Kantian (or post-Kantian) “I think”. On the side of the more exquisitely phenomenological investigation (Harman, Bryant, Morton), on the one hand, and praxico-speculative (Meillassoux himself, Brassier and Garcia), on the other, the theoretical trajectories seem to delineate the resumption of the “plane of impersonal transcendence” as a fertile intuition of the early Sartre and the articulated positions on the naturalness of the human of the late Merleau-Ponty. However, the most innovative and convincing speculative-phenomenological direction (even for some of its critical aspects) can be found in the work of Renaud Barbaras (2008/2021). See, on these aspects: Sartre, 2003/1960; Merleau-Ponty, 1995/2003.

6 The *Lectures on Passive Synthesis* comprise analyses of the datitude of the world that is given insofar as it is “in the availability of” (with the consequent relationship between modalisation and associative properties of the ego). The *Lectures* are the result of the Course that Husserl gave in Freiburg between 1920 and 1926. The text is of particular importance as it identifies subjective consciousness as the object of Husserl’s research, undertaken with meticulous attention in *Ideen I* and *II*. The critical and meticulous analysis of the I-world relationship comes before any form of causal/causative datum. For pure phenomenology, as a “rigorous science”, in fact, there can be no *datality* that is not a transparent cause (ergo, analysable) for the inquiring consciousness, which, for this reason, is intentional/intentional. See, on these aspects, Husserl, 1913/1965, pp. 15-20 and p. 416. Husserl writes in the *Lectures*: “This retroactive crossing out and ‘reinterpretation’ essentially means that if we were to bring the retentive elements (i.e., the series of appearance of which we are still freshly conscious, but which have become completely obscure) to intuitive givenness in an explicit remembering, we would notice the following

“sensible fields”), through the different modalizations (negation, doubt, possibility) of the evidence of the world as “filling structure” (*ivi*, pp. 107-121).

The spatializing “tension” of the world – which Husserl also defines as the “remembrance,” i.e., the “source in itself of objects” (*ivi*, pp. 161-165) – which deflates, in the perspective of Bergsonian duration, the contemplative fixity of eidetic emergences, resonates, on the other hand, in the pure posing of the field of images in *actu agendi* (i.e., in the act that has no specificity in itself but at the same time possesses all and infinite of them). For Husserl, on the contrary, such “tension” is the “accidentality” of the extended world, which is constituted as the individuating correlative subsumed in the noema, as “the thesis of my pure self and its living, which is ‘necessary’ and indubitable” (Husserl, 1913/1965, p. 101).

2. The unrelative referents of experience

In Sartre’s writing *The Transcendence of the Ego* at issue is the one-sidedness of appropriation and subsumption of the world by that Ego that reigns supreme as a given of performativity for any theoretical-praxial confrontation. In the distinction that Sartre immediately brings to attention between *Me* and *I*, he asks, “is not this psychic and psycho-physical *me* enough? Need one double it with a transcendental *I*, a structure of absolute consciousness?” (Sartre, 2003/1960, p. 36). In essence, Sartre lucidly asks, if the *Me* is already the non-relative presupposition of pure consciousness that allows for direct and unmediated intuition, why on earth should we be endowed with a transcendental, i.e., supra-dimensional formation, which we call the Ego and to which we attribute (according to the Copernican revolution wrought by Kantian criticism) an a priori capacity for synthesis?

At this initial state of thinking, Sartre poses central and understandably innovative questions with respect to Husserlian phenomenological speculation: 1. the “transcendental field,” within which reflected and unreflected consciousness is situated, is deprived of the “I” in order to become “impersonal” or “pre-personal”; 2. the “I” is but the evident exteriority of that *Me* which is pure self-sufficient consciousness; 3. the “I” I think “appears on a fund of unity” which it did not generate: it is, on the contrary, that very fund of unity which makes the “I” possible; 4. finally, Sartre brings the question back to a purely ontological level: “one may well ask if personality (even the abstract personality of an *I*) is a necessary accompaniment of a consciousness, and if one cannot conceive of absolutely impersonal consciousnesses” (2003/1960, pp. 36-37)⁷.

As far as the synthetic activity identified by Kant, phenomenological analysis can, Sartre argues, do without the transcendental of the ego. Why, then, this radical expression? By distinguishing the *me* from the *I*, that is, consciousness from subjectivity, differences are already posited: 1. “the *I* is an existent”; 2. as an “existent,” thus trapped in *being-there*, it is always located “behind the reflected consciousness,” in a position of inadequacy; 3. “a new object appears which is the occasion for an affirmation by reflective consciousness,” continually being diverted by the appearance of the innumerable objects; 4. finally, “the transcendent *I* must fall before the stroke of phenomenological reduction” (2003/1960, pp. 52-53, *passim*).

However, Sartre (who devotes the entire second chapter of his writing to the “constitution of the Ego”) is even more explicit:

This is to say that the type of existence of consciousness is to be consciousness of itself. And consciousness is aware of itself *in so far as it is consciousness of a transcendent object*. All is therefore clear and lucid

situation in memory: We would find in all the horizons of these retentional components not only the previous prefiguring in the previous structures of expectation and fulfillment, just as this prefiguring was originally motivated at that time, but we would find superimposed upon it the corresponding transformed prefiguring that now points continually to ‘green’ and ‘indented.’ [...] However, insofar as these moments of sense are mere moments of a unitary sense organized in a tight uniformity, the entire sense of the series of appearance is altered modally, and this sense is at the same time duplicated. For we are still conscious of the previous sense, but as ‘painted over,’ and where the corresponding moments are concerned, crossed out” (2001, p. 69).

7 On the genesis of the “impersonal transcendental field”, see Piatti’s thorough study, 2021, pp. 123-178.

in consciousness: the object with its characteristic opacity is before consciousness, but consciousness is purely and simply consciousness of being consciousness of that object. This is the law of its existence. We should add that this consciousness of consciousness – except in the case of reflective consciousness which we shall dwell on later – is not *positional*, which is to say that consciousness is not for itself its own object (1960/2003, pp. 40-41).

In short, if the ego is nothing but the “disturbing” element in the formative scene of pure consciousness (absolute, i.e., reflected and unreflected), which is self-sufficient, it, nevertheless and understandably from the point of view of phenomenological analysis, “simply does not posit itself as an object” (1960/2003, p. 45), since the same object “is transcendent to the consciousnesses which grasp it, and it is in the object that the unity of the consciousnesses is found” (1960/2003, p. 38).

The intensiveness of such experience radicalizes the supravient field of the object in its datitude, enlarging the extensiveness of the entity as an ad-venient possibility. According to this formulation, the Heideggerian being-thrown, posited in its ontological centrality, is not only the authenticative rejection of being nor the obliteration of the pervasiveness of being-being, but rather the already given that was in potency and becomes manifest.

Precisely because of its being already given, consciousness is not pre-determination of the object (assuming there is always a percipient Ego) but is posited as antecedent to any reflective noematicity: by becoming possibility in act, for example, tokenness produces, on the plane of effectualities, the experience of the irrepressible anguish of “feeling nowhere.” In contrast to what Heidegger signals, so as to reach that level of percipient activity, detachment from the solipsistic condition is not necessary in order to enter the world, since this event is already the co-responsibility of life and world (Heidegger, 1983, pp. 260-276).

On the other hand, for Husserl, the reversal of being-being-world occurs through intersubjectivity, although it remains within the field of the eidetic formation of the transcendental subject, placing itself in constant friction with the foundational position (extension and thought) of Cartesian egological separateness (Husserl, 1993, pp. 116-121).

The object coming out of its retention, therefore, manifests itself solely: a. as an act in potency (increasing possibility); b. as an infinite storehouse of objects that has its own relatum or infinite quantity of relata. What makes us pause near the event when it already draws to a close, subjecting, finally, consciousness to the radical doubt of perceptual capacities, subverting the descriptive-expressive form of cogitation (Henry, 1990/2001, pp. 67-81)? Consciousness, precisely in this liminal dimension, posits itself in the restlessness of the permanent unreflection that is advanced as an “existential tragic” in the self-referential I-world relationship⁸.

In this unspeakable (but necessary) pause of “passive retention”-which we shall call “proximity,” since the explication of the objecthood of being in its incipient datitude is continually subverted-is located that impersonal transcendental field that continually retracts and folds in on itself with the intention of warding off the pseudo-normative prehension of the subject. It is no coincidence that, within this interpretation, which identifies some cracks in phenomenology, Deleuze dealt with Leibniz – precisely in an anti-noematic and anti-platonic direction – describing the occurrence, in the wake of Whitehead, as the infinite series of vibrations that deform space and time, thus unhinging the asphyxiated appropriation of the world by the Ego⁹.

If the subject becomes radicalized in experience, the pedagogist reveals the traces of this radicalization through the entanglement, the chiasm, which is not immediately attuned to the experienced reality. We take the question of intersubjectivity as a synthetic formulation of the unconditioned openness that is given as evidence and eventuality. The distance that determines the obscurity of the impersonal relation between different entities can only be defined by the two possible vertices of experience: 1. life in its im-

8 On the existential position of the “restless conscience”, also from a theoretical-pedagogical analysis, see Bertin, 1981; Erbetta, 1998.

9 It is useful to point out what Whitehead writes, introducing a sign of strong theoretical distinction, about the meaning of “objectification”: “That a nexus is a set of actual entities in the unity of the relatedness constituted by their prehensions of each other, or – what is the same thing conversely expressed – constituted by their objectifications in each other” Cfr. Whitehead, 1929, p. 35.

manence (i.e., without any appropriative drive); 2. pure consciousness that does not transcend itself into the ego but is itself co-producing phenomenality (Barbaras, 2013/2019, pp. 79-89).

By externalizing itself as a posterior and not an antecedent form (precisely because it is pronominal), the subject is already determined, i.e., it is already a function-of, fully immersed in the becoming of the planes of existential sharing that, at the same time, self-position the ego and decentralize it in the direction of intersubjectivity. Precisely because of its predicate quality (i.e., driven toward other-than-self), the ego cannot but be identitarian, idealized and always in search of a quid of exteriority. It is because of this interweaving of ‘relato’ and ‘irrelato’, of *in itself* and *for itself*, that is, in an attempt to overcome Kantian synthetic transcendental, that Hegel could only take in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* the extreme step of identifying the ego with absolute Self-consciousness (Hyppolite, 1946/1974, pp. 156-177). The unrelated condition of the ego, in the constitution of this consciousness, can only be the unconditioned impersonal that expresses no obligation, precisely because it is pre-individual.

The manifestation of “Others” is an obscurity that lingers in the shadow that stretches over the object and makes it accessible to the concept, not in the sense of representation, but of an un-thought that materializes as a cleft in the very moment it becomes unconditioned thirdness (without presuppositions or expectations). It is pure possibility of consciousness unreflected and unpreordained by the Ego. The idiom thus generated is the “individuating” *koiné* that differentiates – by necessary distinction of appearance – the gap of the pronounceable, placed between the relative and the absolute, the two deterrent oppositions of egological appropriation, through which the perceptual arrives at the form of the thought. Such an idiom, moreover, is defined through the very thickness of the immanent translation between percept and concept: its consistency corresponds to the formal emergence of the thing that already has its properties in and of itself, so that the identification that draws it toward experience itself becomes contingency.

Sharing the image given by Deleuze and Guattari of the plane of immanence as the absolute and inextinguishable contingency of the constant protension of life as a creative activity, it is perhaps appropriate to briefly draw attention to the differentiated positioning within which the activity of the educative is situated in relation to impersonality. First, such a plane is functioning, that is, it has no expected outcome of creation that is determined by a preordained and absolute event. It, when it happens, arises, as Castoriadis has argued, *ex nihilo*, that is, with a sufficient reason of cause that, as soon as the event is initiated, generates unrelated fields of conjunction¹⁰. Secondly, such positioning, which we denote as differentiated, insofar as it performs a function of permeability of the conceptual plane, demands a performative activity (even if not tending toward any specific goal) of complete retentive abandonment (toward others) that is no longer passive, as in the Husserlian noematic situation of associative experience, but fluid and generative.

The zones of intersection and margins that are created on the threshold of experiential activity, which opens the limits of educational doing and pedagogical reflexivity, generate, in turn, the differential deviations of a new positioning of the knowledge activity of the educating outsider. On this threshold, in fact, lies the impregnability of the unconditioned pedagogical that is expressed through the impersonality of the *Ereignis*, which can only be pure manifestation of a pre-personal or, at any rate, pre-individual transcendental field.

The identifying contingency spoken of here corresponds to Morton’s definition of “hyperobject,” relating to all those experiences of the non-human (natural catastrophes, ecological decline, meteorites, nuclear annihilation, other forms of life, etc.), which the human tends to exclude from its horizon, since they are non-signifying (Morton, 2013, pp. 38 sgg.)¹¹. The oppositional discontinuity of relative and ab-

10 It is worth noting – which we do not know has been done before – how Sartre, in fact, in *The Transcendence of the Ego*, had already enshrined in a brief, elliptical sentence, the possibility of such a primary happening *ex nihilo*: “We may therefore formulate our thesis: transcendental consciousness is an impersonal spontaneity. It determines its existence at each instant, without our being able to conceive anything *before* it. Thus each instant of our conscious life reveals to us a creation *ex nihilo*. Not a new *arrangement*, but a new existence” (Sartre, 1960/2003, pp. 98-99). Sartre’s essay was written between 1934 and 1936, i.e. in the years immediately following his study trip to Berlin in 1933; while Castoriadis’s *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, which is important for its second part, where the ontological thesis of the “creation *ex nihilo*”) is fully elaborated (albeit in an explicitly antiphenomenological and anti-existentialist sense), was published in 1975. On the genesis of Sartre’s neglected but essential writing, see Ronchi’s accurate “Introduction” (Ronchi, 2011, pp. 7-22). On the constitution of Castoriadis’ fundamental work and the ontological concept of “creation”, see: Ciaramelli, 2002, pp. 9-17.

11 “A baby,” Morton writes, “vomits curdled milk. She learns to distinguish between the vomit and the not-vomit, and comes

solute, made up of “viscous,” “non-local,” and temporally undefined fragments and elements, which compose and decompose like long-lasting flashes, as if laboriously outlining possible modes of evidence (this is the ‘terrible’ in the manifestation of Others), highlights the impregnability of the experience of identity which, even on the formal pedagogical-educational level, cannot but reveal itself as a patchwork of tesserae that continually seek a “logic of meaning”¹².

3. Absolute immanence and the possibility of becoming

Is it true, therefore, that, if unthought, the object remains distant, in its stubbornness of shadow and opacity? In this sense, the plane of immanence, as it is proposed by Deleuze in the wake of the suggestions of early Sartre, Ruyer and Simondon, guarantees both the continuity of the event and the multiplicity of *qualities* – the “primary” and “secondary qualities” of James and Whitehead (Whitehead, 1929, p. 493 and p. 496), which distinguish form and content –, which, in their own way, contextualize and present the contingent *being-there* of every entity. The realist formation of that continuous flux of consciousness that belongs to “images,” defined by Bergson in the first decisive chapter of *Matter and Memory* (Bergson, 1896/1991, pp. 17-76), does not remain a prerogative of the human but, if anything, shifts radically to the fluidity of both the plane of immanence and the entity. The simple relatum of the thing rests in the thing itself and is not dependent on anything other than the explicit formations that recognize in the object specific qualities¹³.

At the time that the object presents itself, the phenomenon overshadows it. Heidegger’s definition of phenomenon in *Sein und Zeit* is well known. He writes, “what thus shows itself (the ‘phenomenon’ in the genuine primordial sense) is at the same time an ‘appearance’ as an emanation of something which *hides* itself in that appearance—an emanation which announces” (Heidegger, 1927/1962, p. 54)¹⁴. To encounter something means to make elliptical any approach to the object which, in itself, does not require any intention. Beingness is, as pure beingness, undeterminable, left to itself in its form and possibility. What remains absent in Heidegger is the becoming of each thing for itself, contrary to the tension of the Beingness to present to itself the things of the world that are available to it. The *Ereignis* always stands in the shadows in the non-determinable, and, consequently, the attempt to go *zur Sache selbst* (“to the thing itself”), the universally recognized motto of phenomenology, constitutes a clear denial of the hard crust of the contingent, which is not exhausted in the description of the phenomenon¹⁵. Hence, intentionality remains, even for Harman and Morton, the proper movement of thought to give meaning to the thing, but in a rather expanded sense compared to Husserlian formulations founded on the dual noetic-noematic construct of reduction (Harman, 2017, pp. 152-153)¹⁶.

What, then, modifies the openness of the plane of immanence to the unconditioned third? Indeed, we

to know the not-vomit as self. Every subject is formed at the expense of some viscous, slightly poisoned substance, possibly teeming with bacteria, rank with stomach acid. The parent scoops up the mucky milk in a tissue and flushes the wadded package down the toilet. Now we know where it goes” (*ivi*, p. 31).

12 On the pedagogical interpretation of the identity crisis in modernity, see: Cambi, 1987, pp. 160-167; Sola, 2002, pp. 11-65; Kaiser, 2021, pp. 89-103.

13 Merleau-Ponty writes: “What there is then are not things first identical with themselves, which would then offer themselves to the seer, nor is there a seer who is first empty and who, afterward, would open himself to them—but something to which we could not be closer than by palpating it with our look, things we could not dream of seeing “all naked” because the gaze itself envelops them, clothes them with its own flesh” (Merleau-Ponty, 1964/1968, pp. 131).

14 “Phenomenology,” Heidegger emphasises, still mindful of the lesson of his master Husserl, “is our way of access to what is to be the theme of ontology, and it is our way of giving it demonstrative precision. *Only as phenomenology, is ontology possible*” (*ivi*, p. 60).

15 On the relationship between Heideggerian existential analytics, with particular reference to *Sein und Zeit*, and pedagogical reflection, see Gennari, 2017, pp. 120-122; Nesti, 2007, pp. 75-78.

16 Harman writes: “The basic principle of phenomenology is that philosophy should not speculate on hidden causal mechanisms or mysterious things-in-themselves, but should simply describe what *appears* to us in all its magnificent subtlety. Husserl thought it absurd that anything might exist that would not be, at least *in principle*, the object of some mental act” (*ivi*, p. 152).

have seen how it can be both terrifying and unknown, an unexpected yet unwanted presence, a figure elusive (in every way) to the undeserved flattery of the ego. The simple description of the proximity of the subject to the object, or of the perceived thing to the percipient, is not enough. Nor is the presentification sufficient to justify the appropriation of the “third” – which remains in its unconditionality – through the even descriptive definition of “coming into appearance,” as, that is, the manifestation of an occurrence that is inscribed in an immediate time, thus participatory and cognitively constituent.

The spontaneous manifestation of consciousness, in its absolute perceptual freedom, continuously generates new existences: in this condition of creation *ex nihilo*, no precedence arises between subject and object, between inert thing and thinking and active existence. “There is something distressing for each of us,” Sartre points out, “to catch in the act this tireless creation of existence of which *we* are not the creators” (Sartre, 1960/2003, p. 90).

At this level man has the impression of ceaselessly escaping from himself, of overflowing himself, of being surprised by riches which are always unexpected. And once more it is an unconscious from which he demands an account of this surpassing of the *me* by consciousness. Indeed, the *me* can do nothing to this spontaneity, for *will is an object which constitutes itself for and by this spontaneity* (1960/2003, pp. 90-91).

Then, Sartre points out, the function of the Ego lies, arguably, in continually attempting to disguise such “monstrous spontaneity.” It is in this fissure of complete flux that the “unconditioned third,” as a factual disarticulation of the categorical irreprehensibility of the Ego, comes to light. Indeed, as Esposito has specified, the impersonal subtracts the “thing” from its uniquely position of use, emphasizing the object’s preformative irreducibility to the pronominalistic declination of “you,” as appropriation conditioned by the necessity of dependence (Esposito, 2016, pp. 17-23).

Pushing in an anti-subjectivist and anti-dualist direction (a position that by will be modified to a greater extent by Sartre himself during the writing of *L’Être et le Néant*) and turning, with a certain audacity, the cogitating Husserlian position of the *I-Me* relation, contained in *Ideen*, Sartre writes limpidly:

it is not necessary that the object precede the subject for spiritual pseudo-values to vanish and for ethics to find its bases in reality. It is enough that the *me* be contemporaneous with the World, and that the subject-object duality, which is purely logical, definitively disappear from philosophical preoccupations. The World has not created the *me*: the *me* has not created the World. These are two objects for absolute, impersonal consciousness, and it is by virtue of this consciousness that they are connected (Sartre, 1960/2003, pp. 105-106).

The unconditioned, then, like the impersonal recalled here, is without any other cause than its own; it is without any other origin than that continually distancing and disturbing call (the unutterable hypothesis of the Platonic *Parmenides*, and yet just as probing) of the *nihil* that generates, despite all irreflexivity (or precisely because of it) the possible forms of becoming.

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