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Horizontal Intentionality and Transcendental Intersubjectivity

One of the problems confronting an interpretation of Husserl's late phenomenology is how to reconcile Husserl's increasing interest in the constitutive contribution of intersubjectivity with his introduction of the primordial reduction. How is it possible to characterize transcendental intersubjectivity as the foundation of truth and true being (Hua VIII 449, Hua IX 295, 344), and to claim simultaneously that it is necessary to isolate the 'sphere of ownness' (that is, the primordial sphere encompassing everything which can be constituted by the ego itself, without any contribution from another subjectivity (Hua I 124, Hua XVII 248)), so that one can gain a comprehension of the constituted Seinsgeltung of the Other (Hua XV 270-71)?

In a sense, the answer is relatively straightforward. Husserl insists that the primordial reduction is undertaken for methodological reasons in order to elucidate the exact founded-founding relationship between subjective and intersubjective constitution. Thus, we are dealing with an attempt at a precise and appropriate introduction of the founded, but constituting transcendental intersubjectivity, and Husserl can consequently maintain that the thorough implementation of the transcendental reduction will ultimately lead us (if not sooner, then later) to a phenomenology of transcendental intersubjectivity (Hua I 69, Hua IX 245-246, Hua VIII 129, 176).

The main problem with this answer is, however, that Husserl's strategy seems to remain vulnerable to a number of substantial objections. Let me, for the sake of simplicity, merely mention the two most fundamental ones. The first is general in nature and ultimately concerned with Husserl's theory of constitution. Thus, it might be asked whether Husserl's approach does not willy-nilly lead to a transcendental solipsism, insofar as it is impossible to preserve the equality and transcendence of the Other the moment one starts to regard it as founded and constituted. The second is more specific in nature and questions the exact range of the primordial sphere. Thus, one might ask if Husserl does not overestimate the constitutive ability of the primordial ego, insofar as intersubjectivity is at play earlier than Husserl claims.

In this article I want primarily to address the second problem. Taking Husserl's analysis of horizontal intentionality as my point of departure, I wish to demonstrate that my perceptual experience (constitution) of the Other is only possible if a certain kind of intersubjectivity is presupposed. Thus, it will be argued that intersubjectivity must already be at play prior to my concrete experience of the embodied Other, and, consequently, that this experience cannot be effectuated primordially. This conclusion will be supported by passages in Husserl's unpublished manuscripts, however, and thus the article also purports to present one aspect of the radical and fundamental intersubjective rethinking of the phenomenological project undertaken by Husserl in the last period of his thought; i.e. it will be shown (once more), that Husserl's final words on the question of intersubjectivity are not to be found in the Cartesian Meditations.

Although I will not explicitly thematize Husserl's concept of constitution, and although the argument presented does not as such attempt to prove the impossibility (or uselessness) of the primordial reduction,¹ the conclusion will nevertheless be of pertinence when it comes to a refutation of transcendental solipsism: If the contribution of the Other is at play prior to my concrete experience of an Other, if it is independent of my factual encounter with an Other, intersubjectivity cannot be reduced to a contingent relation. It must belong a priori to the structure of constituting subjectivity.

1.

An examination of Husserl's analysis of the intentional structure of our experience reveals that horizontal intentionality plays an important role in ordinary perception. By its very nature, the object of (transcendent) perception is characterized by its adumbrational givenness (cf. Ideas I § 42). When perceiving an object it is necessary to distinguish that which appears from the appearance, since the object is never given in its totality but always in a certain restricted profile. Despite this, the object of perception is exactly the appearing object and not its intuitively given profile. That is, perception furnishes us with a full object-consciousness, even though only part

of the perceived object is intuitively given (Hua XVI 49-50).² In order to clarify how this is possible, Husserl describes a kind of intentional awareness which we possess of the absent profiles of the object - of the object's inner horizon (Hua VI 161). The meaning of the present profile is dependent upon its relation to the absent profiles of the object, and no perceptual awareness of the object would be possible if our awareness were strictly restricted to the intuitively given:

Die uneigentlich erscheinenden gegenständlichen Bestimmtheiten sind mit aufgefaßt, aber nicht dargestellt. Daß sie mit aufgefaßt sind, ist evident, denn sonst hätten wir gar keine Gegenstände vor Augen, nicht einmal eine Seite, da diese ja nur durch den Gegenstand Seite sein kann (Hua XVI 55).

In other words: in order for a perception to be a perception-of-an-object, it must be permeated by a horizontal intentionality which intends the absent profiles (Hua VI 161, Hua IX 183), bringing them to a certain appresentation.

It is my contention that an examination of the structure of this horizontal intentionality must lead to a reestimation of the constitutive contribution of transcendental intersubjectivity.³ To progress in the argument, it will be necessary to clarify exactly in what way the absent profiles are horizontally present. What kind of appresentation is at play? If we are to consider the profiles from within a phenomenological perspective, we have to account for the noetic-noematic correlation. Merely to presuppose their existence would be a dogmatic move, which has been made impossible by the effectuation of the epoché.

Husserl sometimes characterises the horizon as a horizon of facultative possibilities (Vermöglichkeiten), and the absent profiles as the noematic correlates of my possible perceptions. If one attempts to follow up on this systematically, two alternative interpretations seem viable: 1. The absent profiles are appresented as profiles given in past or possible future perceptions. Thus, the back of the armchair is appresented as the side which I have seen, or which I would be able to perceive in a future perception. 2. A different possibility is to claim that the absent profiles are appresented as the correlates of fictitious co-present perceptions. They are correlated with the perceptions which I would have had, if it had been possible for me to be there now (instead of here).⁴ Thus, the co-intended back of the armchair is fictitiously given as the side which I would have seen, if I had been facing the back now. It should be emphasized that we are dealing with a fictitious and not a actualizable possibility, since the front and the back of the armchair is principally incapable of being given perceptually for the same consciousness simultaneously.⁵

The vital question is, however, whether either of these accounts are phenomenologically acceptable. A closer examination of the first alternative makes it clear that it conceives of the object as a unity in a series of temporally separated profiles. This conception, however, does not match with our experience. When I perceive an armchair, I am not perceiving something which at that very moment possesses one actual profile, and which has previously possessed and will subsequently possess various others. The present front is not a front with respect to a past or future back, but is determined through its reference to a present co-existing back. Consequently, it belongs to the very notion of the transcendence of the object that it, at any given moment, possesses a plurality of co-existing profiles. As Husserl himself occasionally emphasizes, every appresentation makes co-present (mitgegenwärtig) (Hua I 139, Ms. A VII 12 2b & 28b) - and only this account respects the true transcendence of the object. Apart from that, it should be recalled that the correlation of the absent profile with a past or future perception, instead of providing us with a co-present back, would present us with an additional past or future front. Given that, the specific horizontal givenness of the absent profiles cannot be understood properly by means of the first account.⁶

The last objection also affects the second account, however. For this account, if true, would lead to a destruction of the homogeneity of the perceptual object. Although perception only gives us a partial presentation of the object, the reality of the object is a unified whole which would be annihilated if it were partially composed of fictitious slices (which would be the noematic correlates of the fictitious perceptions). It is, of course, possible for us to imagine in detail the absent profiles, and we probably do so more often and more unnoticed than Husserl were ready to accept.⁷ But even if this imaginative activity could take place without attributing the positional modality fictitious to the profile, it still would not be able to account for the horizontal structure of the object. Whereas the imaginative 'filling out' is characterized by a certain arbitrariness, it necessarily takes place and unfolds itself within the horizontal structure, the reality of which it presupposes (Hua XVI 52). What the backside of the armchair looks like is a matter of contingency. That it has a backside is a necessity and cannot be accounted for by being correlated with a fictitious possibility; not even if the fictitious character of this contingent possibility is disregarded. In other words, the reality of the perceptual object implies the reality of its perceptual horizon, that is the reality (and not mere fictitious (or contingent) character) of the absent profiles, although the horizon might be open, i.e., more or less determined (Hua XI 6, Hua I 83).

Although Husserl seems to have made use of both accounts in the Logical Investigations (cf. Hua XIX 589-590), he soon became aware of their problematic character, however. Already in his lectures Raum und Ding from 1907 he explicitly states that it is a naive construction to claim that the absent profiles are (ap)presented imaginatively (Hua XVI 56), and in an unpublished manuscript from 1920-21, he states that the systems of possible perceptions correlated to the transcendent object cannot be understood as systems of perceptions which I have had or could eventually acquire, nor are they mere fictions, but that we are dealing with a distinctive and peculiar kind of appresentations (Ms. A III 9 23b). Unfortunately, he does not elaborate the remark in that manuscript - but a study of Husserliana XIII-XV does suggest a third alternative.

The absent co-intended profiles must be understood as the correlates of possible perceptions. These possible perceptions must, however, be compatible with my own actual perception, since they must be simultaneously actualizable; my horizontal appresentation of the absent profiles of the object must preserve their character as actual co-existing profiles. Both my fictitious as well as my previous or subsequent perceptions lack this compatibility, however. The consequence is that the absent profiles cannot be correlated with my possible perceptions. However, in Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität I Husserl tentatively offers the following solution:

Ein Subjekt kann gleichzeitig nicht zwei Aspekte der orthologischen Mannigfaltigkeit haben, aber verteilt auf verschiedene Subjekte kann eine Mehrheit von Aspekten gleichzeitig sein und muss es sein, wenn sie gleichzeitig dasselbe Dingliche erfahren (Hua XIII 377-78).

Die Erscheinung, die ich von 'meinem Standpunkt' habe (Ort meines Körpers im Jetzt) kann ich nicht von einem anderen Standpunkt haben, mit dem Wechsel der Standpunkte ändert sich gesetzmässig die Erscheinung, und die Erscheinungen sind evident unverträglich. Ich kann die unverträgliche Erscheinung haben zu einer anderen Zeit, wenn ich einen anderen Ort im Raum einnehme. Und ebenso kann ein 'Anderer' dieselbe Erscheinung jetzt haben, der eben jetzt an einem anderen Orte ist (Hua XIII 2-3).

Die widersprechende Vorstellung wird einstimmig, wenn ich eben die Verdoppelung als Verdoppelung nehme. Ich kann a priori nicht hier und dort zugleich sein, aber hier und dort kann ein Gleiches sein, ich hier, und ein gleiches und dann auch ein mehr oder minder bloss ähnliches Ich dort (Hua XIII 264).

In other words, the incompatibility of the co-existing profiles can be reconciled through another consciousness (Hua I 148), since the absent profile can be perceived by an Other. Thus, our horizontal intentionality seems to imply a reference to intersubjectivity, since the co-intended profile must be understood as the noematic correlate of the possible perception of an Other.

This would explain, moreover, why Husserl in his detailed analyses of the experience of the Other again and again emphasizes that it entails an awareness of the profiles present to the Other (Hua XIII 297). When I experience someone, I am not only experiencing another living body situated 'there', but also positing the profile which I would have perceived myself if I had been there (Hua XIV 255, 287-88). Thus, my concrete experience of the Other can furnish my intentional object with an actual co-existing profile.⁸

It should, however, be evident that we have still not reached an adequate clarification of horizontal intentionality. When I perceive an armchair, I am perceiving a transcendent and horizontally given object. This specific manner of givenness does not, however, presuppose that I am simultaneously perceiving someone, who actualizes the absent profile of the object. That is, my perception of the armchair is not dependent upon my simultaneous perception of a co-perceiving subject. Moreover, the armchair does not only have two profiles. It has a vast if not infinite plurality of co-existing and compatible profiles, and again, my perception of this transcendent object is not dependent upon me perceiving an infinite plurality of other subjects simultaneously perceiving the object. In other words, although the horizontal givenness of the object, that is the very object-appearance entails some kind of reference to foreign subjectivity, it does not seem to presuppose its actual presence (existence), nor is it apparently sufficient with merely one foreign subject.

Husserl was well aware of this problem himself, and he admits that a simple reference to the factual and concrete experience of the Other is insufficient, since every perception of an object (also one undertaken in isolation) presupposes a reference to the continual co-validation (Mitgeltung) of intersubjectivity (Hua XV 497, Hua IX 394, Hua XIV 289); i.e., every object-perception presupposes at the very least a tacit reference to Others as co-perceiving (Hua VI 468). Consequently, the analysis of the horizon seems to refer us to the perceptions (intentions) of a plurality of possible subjects, or as Husserl calls it, to the open intersubjectivity:

Also jedes Objektive, das mir in einer Erfahrung und zunächst einer Wahrnehmung vor Augen steht, hat einen apperzeptiven Horizont, den möglicher Erfahrung, eigener und fremder. 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 die offene Intersubjektivität (Hua XIV 289. Emphasis added).

To summarize the argument: In the case of transcendent perception the intuitively given is always permeated with references to absent profiles (Hua IX 183, 486). Every perception refers, with necessity, to further possible perceptions. These perceptions - being in principle incompatible with my present perception - are the perceptions of possible Others.⁹ Consequently, every appresentation as well as every object-appearance, due to their horizonedness, presuppose a reference to the open intersubjectivity (cf. Hua XIII 463).

What exactly does this concept of open intersubjectivity (i.e. of possible Others) actually entail? Is it not highly problematic to characterize a possible subject, respectively a plurality of possible subjects, as constitutive? Is constitution not always an activity undertaken by a (f)actual subject? In a certain way, this is true. When I perceive an object on my own, my object of perception is indeed constituted by me alone. I am, however, only able to perform this activity because my horizontal intentionality entails structural references to the perceptions of possible Others, and precisely for that reason, the structure of my horizontal intentionality is incompatible with any solipsism which, in principle, would deny the possibility of a plurality of subjects.¹⁰

2.

We have now reached a stage in our analysis at which the following question has to be answered: Is our concrete bodily experience of the Other the condition of possibility for the kind of open intersubjectivity that we have discovered in our horizontal intentionality, or is it the intersubjective openness of our horizon that enables us to perceive concrete embodied Others? The reason why this question is central is that it has direct implications for the earlier mentioned problem concerning the range and legitimacy of the primordial reduction.

At first glance, an examination of Husserl's writings seems to favour the first alternative. Husserl's detailed account of and preoccupation with concrete cases of empathy, and his considerations concerning the primordial sphere and a number of explicit assertions, indicate that he regards the concrete bodily experience of the Other to be the constitutive condition of possibility for our reference to the open intersubjectivity (cf. Hua I 153). Husserl seems to account for this constitution in two different ways:

1. Occasionally, Husserl writes that our life is furnished with a universal intersubjective horizon due to our experience of the Other (Hua VI 246), and he speaks about the constitution of this intersubjective horizon as a continual and never-ending process:

Alles Weltliche ist intersubjektiv konstituiert. Die Konstitution der Intersubjektivität und intersubjektiven Welt ist beständig auf dem Marsch und hat einen entsprechenden Horizont, in dem sie mir vorweg gilt als immer noch neuen intersubjektiven Sinn mit Beziehung auf neue Ichsubjekte annehmend (Hua XV 45).

Thus, Husserl mentions the extension of our intersubjective world-horizon, which takes place due to our iterative experience of our co-subjects together with their co-subjects, etc. (Hua VI 258, Hua XV 138, 176, 439).

A closer look reveals, however, that a different issue is at stake here. We are presented with an account of our increasing acquaintance with the plurality of factual Others and their respective fields of experience. Although these encounters can provoke important changes in our categories of validities,¹¹ they certainly do not clarify the constitution of the open intersubjectivity (as a formal structure in our horizontal intentionality). Husserl himself seems to admit this, since he continues the above quoted passage from Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität III by writing that we are here dealing with an expansion of the meaning 'objective world', which already presupposes an open horizon of indeterminate Others (Hua XV 45-46).

2. An alternative account of the constitution of the open intersubjectivity (which still takes the concrete bodily experience of the Other as the foundation, however) can be found if we scrutinize Husserl's examination of the situation in which I experience an Other as experiencing me. During this experience, I can realize that I can be given for the Other in the same way as the Other is given for me: that is, that I myself am an Other in respect to the perceiving alter-ego. Thus, I can realize that I am only one among others (Hua XVII 245, Hua XV 645):

Es verschwindet der Unterschied zwischen Selbst und fremdem Ich, der Andere faßt mich als Fremden auf, wie ich ihn als für mich Fremden auffasse, er ist sich selbst ein 'Selbst' usw. So

erfolgt Gleichordnung: eine Mannigfaltigkeit gleichartiger, in gleichem Sinn selbständiger, sich fühlender, wollender Ich (Hua XIII 243-44. Cf. Hua XV 635).

This 'becoming one among the others' implies a dethronement of my own ego as the sole pole of constitution (Hua I 157), and this dethronement has far reaching constitutive implications. Thus Husserl states that objectivity (conceived as intersubjective validity) can only be constituted the moment the ego perceives itself as one among the others, as a somebody (Hua XVII 245-47). Only after having experienced the Other as someone, and myself as a mere somebody, is it possible for me to constitute objectivity. Paraphrasing Theunissen - who has dubbed this transformation Veränderung (alteration)¹² - we can say that I can only constitute objectivity when I have constituted myself as one among the others, and thus integrated everybody (jedermann) within me (Theunissen 1977, p.94).

We have claimed that every appresentation, as well as each object-appearance due to its horizonedness, implies structural references to an open intersubjectivity. Does the constitution of the category 'jedermann' account for and found this kind of intersubjectivity? That the process of alteration plays a central role in Husserl's reflections is indisputable, and it is certainly also true, that the fundamental change in the validity of our experience (from subjective to objective) which occurs due to our experience of the Other is related intrinsically to this process. Nevertheless, it must be maintained that the process of alteration neither explains nor founds the kind of intersubjectivity implied in our horizontal intentionality. Quite to the contrary: The process of alteration implies a concrete encounter with a horizontally appearing embodied Other, and it consequently presupposes the kind of constitutive reference to intersubjectivity that is inherent in horizontal intentionality.

Ultimately, this insight bears on the range of the primordial reduction. If the horizontal co-givenness of the absent profiles refers us to the open intersubjectivity (since these profiles are to be understood as profiles for an open plurality of possible Others), then my horizontal intentionality and, consequently, my awareness of appearing objects imply an a priori reference to the constitutive contribution of foreign subjectivity. Thus, the actual experience of another embodied subject is founded upon an a priori reference to the Other. Prior to my concrete encounter with another subject, intersubjectivity is already present as co-subjectivity. Against this background, it must be concluded that an attempt to implement a transcendental aesthetics primordially (Hua XVII 297, Hua I 173) is a failure, and, consequently, that the constitution of the Other as an incarnated subject (as a lived body) cannot be undertaken primordially either.¹³

Interestingly enough, Husserl seems to have realized this eventually. In the manuscript C 17 II he writes as follows:

Natürlich stückt sich die Welt nicht aus den primordial reduzierten Welten zusammen. Jedes Primordiale ist Reduktionsprodukt von einem intersubjektiv und generativ konstituierten Sinn, der Seinssinn ist aus der intersubjektiv zusammenstimmenden Erfahrung eines jeden, einer Erfahrung, die schon auf die Intersubjektivität Sinnbeziehung hat. Meine Erfahrung als Welterfahrung (also jede meiner Wahrnehmungen schon) schließt nicht nur Andere als Weltobjekte ein sondern beständig in seinsmäßiger Mitgeltung als Mitsubjekte, als Mitkonstituierende, und beides ist untrennbar verflochten (Ms. C 17 36a. Emphasis added).

Thus, an examination of Husserl's late manuscripts reveals not only frequent analyses of the performance of the co-functioning intersubjectivity as a supplement to his investigations of the concrete bodily experience of the Other. It is also possible to find reconsiderations concerning the hierarchy of foundation. For instance, when Husserl writes:

Wenn Einfühlung eintritt - ist etwa auch da schon die Gemeinschaft, die Intersubjektivität da und Einfühlung dann bloß enthüllendes Leisten? (Ms. C 17 84b).¹⁴

Even though Husserl typically finds the unthematic experience of the co-functioning Other in a thematic experience of the Other, the significant passage just quoted testifies, that he, at the very least, came to question whether or not this approach was phenomenologically adequate. Even though the concrete experience of the Other might be the condition of possibility for a thematisation of the open anonymous intersubjectivity, it must be realized, that our acquaintance with the Others is not first and foremost an acquaintance with a special kind of intentional objects, but that the Others are already present and co-functioning in our horizontal intentionality, and that this intersubjective horizontal openness is the condition of possibility for our concrete experience of the Other.¹⁵

To summarize: it is necessary to distinguish two different kinds of relation with the Other (and correlatively two different kinds of transcendental intersubjectivity).¹⁶ To claim that the concrete experience of the Other is founded upon a prior horizontal reference to the Other does not imply, of course, that the constitutive contribution

effectuated by our concrete experience of the embodied Other is already accomplished by our horizontal participation in the open intersubjectivity. There are irreducible differences between the two. Whereas the contribution of the open intersubjectivity is primarily at play in the formal structure of our intentionality, concrete intersubjectivity (which for the first time allows dissension and thus a sharpened experience of the alterity of the Other) is the condition of possibility for the central change in our categories of validity. The thematic experience and constitution of objectivity is only possible due to our concrete experience of the Other (as experiencing me and the same objects as myself). Thus, Husserl's analyses of the concrete bodily experience of the Other and its constitutive implications are by no means superfluous, although they have turned out to be analyses of a founded experience of the Other.¹⁷

It should be emphasized that the argument presented does not prove that it is impossible (or useless) to effectuate the primordial reduction. It might very well be that there are domains, especially on the level of passive synthesis (for instance within auto-temporalization and association), that are constituted by the subject primordially. What has been demonstrated is 'merely' that the concrete experience of the Other takes place within a constitutive dimension already pervaded by intersubjective references, that is, that intersubjectivity is already at play prior to my concrete experience of the embodied Other. If, however, horizontal intentionality (noetically as well as noematically) entails structural references to intersubjectivity, then intersubjectivity cannot be reduced to a contingent and factual relation between me and an Other. It must belong a priori to the structure of constituting subjectivity.¹⁸

That the reference to intersubjectivity can be found precisely in horizontal intentionality, that is in the interplay between presence and absence, is no coincidence. As Merleau-Ponty was later to point out, if intersubjectivity is to be possible, there must be a prior intrasubjective alterity, that is a contamination of absolute self-presence and self-identity. If I am to meet the Other as a self, I have to be able to face myself as an Other.¹⁹ This thought can however already be found in Husserl, who frequently compares empathy with memory, since both are kinds of temporalizing presentations (Vergegenwärtigungen) (Hua XV 588-589):

Die Selbstzeitigung sozusagen durch Ent-Gegenwärtigung (durch Wiedererinnerung) hat ihre Analogie in meiner Ent-Fremdung (Einfühlung als eine Ent-Gegenwärtigung höherer Stufe - die meiner Urpräsenz in eine bloß vergegenwärtigte Urpräsenz) (Hua VI 189).²⁰

Thus there is a structural similarity between the de-presentation effectuated by original temporalisation and the self-alienation taking place in empathy (Hua XV 634), and Husserl seems to have considered the fracture of the subject's self-coincidence, and the introduction of alterity and absence in its core, all of which is due to the process of temporalisation, to be a condition of possibility for empathy, i.e. concrete intersubjectivity.²¹

Although this train of thought does not entail that the Other is already co-functioning in my auto-temporalisation, it nevertheless shows that the possibility of intersubjectivity has been provided for, already on a very fundamental level, through the interplay of presence and absence found in temporality.

3.

That Husserl gradually paid more and more attention to the matter of transcendental intersubjectivity is indisputable. Whether this 'intersubjective transformation' of transcendental phenomenology indicates a decisive break with his earlier egological concept of phenomenology as an apodictic science has been a matter of discussion. It has been claimed that the whole notion of philosophy as a pure science must be abandoned the moment the transcendental foundation turns out to be the nos cogitamus, since it does not possess the apodicticity of the ego cogito.²² Thus the nos cogitamus has been taken to be non-apodictic since the experience of the Other is as fallible as any other kind of spatial perception.²³ Whereas it is true that Husserlian phenomenology does in fact undergo decisive changes due to the incorporation of transcendental intersubjectivity, the argument presented is problematic. As we have seen, it is necessary to distinguish two different kinds of relation with the Other. One is the concrete and a posteriori experience of the embodied Other, which like all other perceptions is presumptive in character. Another is the a priori and apodictical character of our relation to the open intersubjectivity. Thus, Husserl is quite specific in stating that the explication of my transcendental horizon of the present leads me to the transcendental and actual co-present Others and their horizons, making it obvious, that every ego is characterized by an apodictic and universal structure of intersubjectivity (Hua XV 192). Although it remains possible that each and every of my concrete experiences of the Other turns out to be fallacious (Hua XIV 474-75), this consideration does not warrant any conclusion concerning the non-apodicticity of the nos cogitamus. Even if I knew with certainty that a universal plague had killed all but myself, my experience (as horizontal) would still be dependent upon the contribution of transcendental intersubjectivity (Hua I 125, Hua XV 6, Hua IV 81).²⁴

The implicit reference to the perceptions of possible Others as inherent to my horizontal intentionality indicates the intrinsic intersubjective structure of the horizon. Although this structure does neither prove nor presuppose the actual existence of Others, it is important to notice, that we have once and for all transcended a solipsistic position claiming that the world could, in principle, be constituted by a sole ego, since the plurality of possible perceptions implied is quite clearly a plurality which I am in principle incapable of sustaining myself. As mentioned already, they are not my possible perceptions.

Husserl eventually reached the conclusion that a radical examination of the transcendental ego would inevitably lead to transcendental intersubjectivity,²⁵ the task of the present article has been to provide some arguments for this conclusion, showing in concreto how part of the very intentional-constitutive life of the ego is permeated by the Others.

NOTES:

This study is based on research done at the Husserl-Archives in Louvain, Belgium. I thank the director of the archives, Professor S. Jsseling for the permission to quote from Husserl's unpublished manuscripts. Thanks also to W.R. McKenna for a number of useful remarks.

1. For a defence of Husserl's concept of constitution cf. D. Zahavi: Husserl und die transzendente Intersubjektivität - Eine Antwort auf die sprachpragmatische Kritik (Phaenomenologica. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1996). Let me add that I actually believe Husserl's introduction of the primordial reduction to achieve at least two important tasks: 1) It stresses the necessity of operating with an irreducible subjectivity if one is to make room for any coherent notion of intersubjectivity, 2) and it rejects the easy 'solution' of simply presupposing intersubjectivity dogmatically.

2. For a fuller presentation of Husserl's concept of perception see D. Zahavi: Intentionalität und Konstitution. Eine Einführung in Husserls Logische Untersuchungen (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 1992).

3. To give a complete and exhaustive account of all the aspects of horizontal intentionality is a task which exceeds the aim of this paper. Among the features which further analyses would have to explore, but which are of no immediate relevance for the argument developed here, a few can be mentioned: 1) the difference between inner and outer horizon and their relation to the world as the all-encompassing horizon; 2) the relationship between the horizon, time-consciousness, our kinaesthetic possibilities and the constitution of objective space; and 3) the eidetic structure of the horizon. For an examination of some of these topics see D. Zahavi: "Husserl's Phenomenology of the Body" Études Phénoménologiques 19 (1994), pp.63-84.

4. It is true that the horizontal appearance of my perceptual object (and the implied differentiation between present and absent profiles) is correlated with my being situated in a central 'here' (Hua IV 158); and it is also true that the object is only given horizontally, because it is in principle impossible for any perceiving subject to be situated 'here' and 'there' simultaneously. This observation does not warrant the conclusion, however, that the

horizontal givenness of the object merely manifests the finiteness or corporeality of the observer - and Husserl is known for his rejection of any anthropological interpretation of the horizontal structure. Ultimately, it is the ontological structure of the object (its transcendence and worldliness) which necessitates that it can only be given for a subject situated in a 'here'. As Husserl declares in Ideas I, even God would have to perceive the object through its adumbrations (Hua III 351).

5. To claim that it is possible to see the backside simultaneously, namely in a mirror, is of course to overlook the fact that what is seen is a mirror image and not the backside of the object.

6. I am indebted to H. Kojima: "The Potential Plurality of the Transcendental Ego of Husserl and its Relevance to the Theory of Space" Analecta Husserliana 8 (1978), pp. 55-61, for this last argument and in general for some stimulating ideas on horizontal intentionality. The most important influence has, however, been the classical article by K. Held: "Das Problem der Intersubjektivität und die Idee einer phänomenologischen Transzendentalphilosophie" in U. Claesges & K. Held, ed., Perspektiven transzendentalphänomenologischer Forschung (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972), pp. 3-60.

7. I thank D. Lohmar for this observation.

8. It is important not to misunderstand Husserl at this point. He is not claiming that our experience of someone implies that we have a thematic and elaborated presentation (Vergegenwärtigung) of the profiles present to that person (as Arp claims and subsequently criticizes. Cf. K. Arp: "Intentionality and the public world: Husserl's treatment of objectivity in the Cartesian Meditations" Husserl Studies 7 (1991), pp.91). Husserl's claim is, that the Other's experience is co-validated (in Mitgeltung) when we experience him/her. And this can take place without the Other's profiles being intuitively given (to us) in any way (Hua VI 307-08, Hua XIII 469, Hua XV 83-84).

9. This concept of possibility resembles the one used by Husserl when maintaining that true being already on the pure pre-predicative level refers a priori to a possible intersubjective verification (Hua IX 431, Hua XIV 289, 390, Hua XVII 243, Hua VI 469).

10. These reflections can be expressed in a different and less technical manner that discloses a poignant similarity between Husserl's analyses and Merleau-Ponty's theory of perception (cf. M. Merleau-Ponty: Phénoménologie de la perception (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1945), pp. 390, 406; M. Merleau-Ponty: Signes (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1960), pp. 23, 214-16; M. Merleau-Ponty: Le visible et l'invisible (Paris: Tel Gallimard, 1964), pp. 89, 187-88): The objects that I perceive and intend are characterized by a transcendence and a horizontal manner of appearance that reveal their being for other subjects. Since my object of perception always possesses profiles that can be perceived by other subjects, it refers to them continually and is as a result intrinsically intersubjective.

11. Husserl analyses this problem in his treatment of the encounter between homeworld and foreign world. Cf. Hua XV 214, 428-37.

12. M. Theunissen: Der Andere (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1977), p.84.

13. It would be wrong to take this argument to be the outcome of a regressive (unphenomenological) examination of the conditions of possibility for concrete intersubjectivity. The argument consists in a concrete analysis of horizontal intentionality, i.e., at no point has it been argued that there must be an apriori intersubjectivity, because concrete empathy would otherwise be impossible.

14. This question Husserl answers positively a page later.

15. Cf. Hua XV 446, 455, 465, 492, 645 and K. Held: "Das Problem der Intersubjektivität und die Idee einer phänomenologischen Transzendentalphilosophie" in U. Claesges & K. Held, ed., Perspektiven transzendentalphänomenologischer Forschung (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972), pp. 46-47.

16. Actually, Husserl even operates with a third type of transcendental intersubjectivity. In addition to the open intersubjectivity that is active in our horizontal intentionality, and the concrete experience of the embodied Other, which is directly connected to the change in our categories of validity, there exists a founded but different and

irreducible third kind of transcendental intersubjectivity that belongs to the level of generatively-handed-down normality, conventionality, and tradition. To account in detail for this third type of intersubjectivity would, however, demand an examination of Husserl's use of the categories normality, generativity, and historicity and would exceed the space of the present paper. An extended analysis can be found in Zahavi 1996. See also A.J. Steinbock: "Generativity and generative phenomenology" Husserl Studies 12 (1995), pp. 55-79.

17. My attempt to prove the existence of an intersubjective dimension prior to any concrete bodily encounter with the Other has involved an investigation of perceptual intentionality. This, however, is not the only way. It is well known, that Husserl also operates with a concept of instinctual intentionality, and he explicitly states that there exist a pre-theoretical and pre-active kind of intersubjectivity, which precedes and makes possible concrete sociality: "Nur kurz hinweisen kann ich hier noch darauf, daß solche Verbundenheit nicht nur durch soziale Akte hergestellt werden kann. Wie die Einzelsubjekte ihre Aktivität auf dem Grund einer dunklen, blinden Passivität entfalten, so gilt dasselbe auch von der sozialen Aktivität. Aber schon die Passivität, das instinktive Triebleben kann intersubjektiven Zusammenhang herstellen. So ist eine Geschlechtsgemeinschaft in unterstem Grund schon hergestellt durch das geschlechtliche Instinktleben, mag es auch erst in der Erfüllung seine wesentliche Intersubjektivität enthüllen." (Hua IX 514. Cf. IX 486, XV 593-94, Ms. E III 9 28b). The most extensive account of this dimension can be found in I. Yamaguchi: Passive Synthesis und Intersubjektivität bei Edmund Husserl (Phaenomenologica. The Hague: Nijhoff, 1982); J.G. Hart: The Person and the Common Life (Phaenomenologica. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1992); and N. Lee: Edmund Husserl's Phänomenologie der Instinkte (Phaenomenologica. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1993).

18. It should be clear that the account given of Husserl's concept of 'open intersubjectivity' necessitates a reevaluation of the similarities and differences between Husserl's theory and the accounts given by Heidegger and Sartre. Not only does Husserl's concept seem to bear a certain affinity to Heidegger's concept of Mitsein, Husserl also appears to anticipate Sartre's claim that our relation to the Other as it manifests itself in the being-with and in the concrete recognition of the Other are two different problems which demand separate clarifications (J.-P. Sartre: Being and Nothingness (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956) p.248). It would also eventually be necessary to confront Husserl with Sartre's accusation that the attempt to introduce an a priori concept of intersubjectivity negates the real alterity and transcendence of the Other (pp. 249-250). This task would exceed the limits of this paper (cf. however Zahavi 1996), but it can be noted that Sartre's reading of Husserl was highly perceptive in at least one respect. In Being and Nothingness he writes: "Thus each object far from being constituted as for Kant, by a simple relation to the subject, appears in my concrete experience as polyvalent; it is given originally as possessing systems of reference to an indefinite plurality of consciousnesses; it is on the table, on the wall that the Other is revealed to me as that to which the object under consideration is perpetually referred - as well as on the occasion of the concrete appearances of Pierre or Paul" (p.233).

19. M. Merleau-Ponty: Phénoménologie de la perception (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1945), pp. 402-3, 413, 427-28; M. Merleau-Ponty: Signes (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1960), p. 215; M. Merleau-Ponty: Le visible et l'invisible (Paris: Tel Gallimard, 1964), p. 74.

20. Cf. Hua I 144, III 325, VIII 175, IX 456, IX 536, XIII 188, XV 447, XV 641.

21. For similar and related observations cf. J. Derrida: La voix et le phénomène (Épiméthée, 1967), p.40; J. Derrida: L'écriture et la différence (Éditions du Seuil, 1967), p.195; R. Bernet: La vie du sujet (Épiméthée, 1994), pp.303-4; N. Depraz: Transcendance et incarnation (Paris: Vrin, 1996), chap. V; J. Benoist: Autour de Husserl (Paris: Vrin, 1994), chap. II; and J.G. Hart, who even characterizes the retention and protention as 'feeble forms of empathy' (The Person and the Common Life, p.225).

22. D. Carr: "The 'Fifth Meditation' and Husserl's Cartesianism" Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 34 (1973), pp.14-35.

23. D. Carr 1973, pp. 32-35.

24. This interpretation can be supported by D. Cairn's transcription of a conversation he had with Husserl the 4th of June 1932, where Husserl stated: "...it is an apodictic transcendental fact that my subjectivity constitutes for itself a world as intersubjective. The other self is therefore a necessary intentional 'object' of the absolutely evident structure of my awareness. Furthermore this other self is necessarily coequal with my self. My transcendental self, by virtue of its evident structure, perceives itself as without any superiority over the other self.

(I am an intentional object for him, as he is for me; he is an absolute constitutive consciousness, as I am.) This is all part of the apodictic facticity of my transcendental subjectivity. It does not depend on the fortuitous constitution of a particular object of valid Einfühlung in perception, but is simply an explication of the fact that I do intend a world as necessarily intersubjective. (That is what I mean by calling it a world. If it were not intersubjective, it would not be a world). Strictly it is an (open?) infinity of other subjects which is required by the apodictic factual structure of my transcendental consciousness, not one other subject"(D. Cairns: Conversations with Husserl and Fink (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), pp. 82-83).

25. Cf. Hua VI 275, 472, Hua XV 17, 73-75, 403, Hua IX 344.