

WHAT ETHICS DEMANDS OF INTERSUBJECTIVITY: LEVINAS AND DELEUZE ON HUSSERL

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Husserl's *Cartesian Meditations* culminates with the fifth Meditation's extensive account of intersubjectivity and the transcendental community. Central to this account is the phenomenological explication of the experience of the other. The first four Meditations, by contrast, focus on an examination of the *ego cogito* as transcendental subjectivity and offer an explanation of the manner in which the ego constitutes the field of transcendental experience—leading to the elucidation of the *ego cogito* as transcendental idealism. The fifth Meditation, then, while the summit of Husserl's phenomenological investigation, also emerges as a response to the most serious objection that might be levied against that investigation, viz. that phenomenology, conceived as self-explication of the ego—of the subjectivity that is constitutive of being and sense—entails solipsism. Husserl, of course, is aware of this objection; he himself draws attention to it in the second Meditation. In the fifth Meditation, however, it emerges that transcendental subjectivity is always already a transcendental *intersubjectivity*. Hence the presentation of this final piece to the phenomenological puzzle results in an apparent dialectical *coup*, for it purportedly reveals that the solution to the problem of solipsism was always right there, latent in the articulated structure of (inter)subjectivity itself and thus that the problem was strictly methodological and never had a foothold at the constitutional level.

In what follows, I will examine and evaluate the fifth Meditation—and this apparent “dialectical *coup*”—vis-à-vis the following

questions: (a) Is Husserl's account of intersubjectivity consistent with his earlier explication of transcendental idealism? (b) Does this account in fact dispel the spectre of solipsism? (c) Does Husserl provide a suitably robust notion of the Other, one which challenges the primacy of the ego and which can thereby underpin an account of the genuine face-to-face ethical relationship? While (c) may be extrinsic to Husserl's account, it is nonetheless the most crucial question we can pose, and in answering it we will anticipate the views of thinkers such as Levinas and Deleuze—thinkers influenced by Husserl precisely because they find a consideration of this question inescapable.

I. INTERSUBJECTIVITY IN HUSSERL'S FIFTH MEDITATION

The ostensible objective of the fifth Meditation is to provide a response to the concern that transcendental phenomenology leads to solipsism. Hence Husserl's introductory question: "When I, the meditating I, reduce myself to my absolute transcendental ego by phenomenological epoche do I not become *solus ipse*?" (Husserl, *CM*, 89). The axial phenomenological operation of epoche would seem to leave the meditating I bereft of all connection to the objective world, for it requires the I to place in parenthesis all that is taken for granted by common sense, viz. the acceptance of the objective world as real. This is precisely the "universal depriving of acceptance" (Husserl, *CM*, 20) that is required in order for the ego's *cogitationes* to emerge as pure phenomena. This suspension of acceptance is the first step towards the phenomenological attitude which makes possible the intentional analysis of the structure of pure consciousness. Epoche paves the way to the specification of the I as pure ego; the I thus acquires the pure ego that the Cartesian ego cogito fails to reach.¹ For this very reason, however, the meditating ego is even further immersed in solipsism than is the meditating ego at the end of Descartes' second Meditation. The solipsism facing Husserl, then, is perhaps even more tenacious than that facing Descartes.²

Husserl suggests that a consideration of other egos will allow the problem of solipsism—and the problem of the objective world, which is really just the same problem alternatively stated—to be navigated. Transcendental idealism, after all, restricts the meditating ego to the stream of its conscious processes and the constructions of those processes. All apparent actualities in the "objective world," then, are ultimately grounded in these intentional processes and belong to the

ego. But other egos, Husserl suggests, “surely are not a mere intending and intended in me” (Husserl, *CM*, 89). Is it the case, however, that other egos escape the purview of the I’s phenomenological sphere? This is precisely the question to which Husserl devotes himself in the initial sections of the fifth Meditation. “We must discover,” he decides, “in what intentionalities, syntheses, motivations, the sense ‘other ego’ becomes fashioned in me” (Husserl, *CM*, 90). The suggestion is that the examination of the experience of the other ego will somehow lead us to the route out of solipsism.³

Husserl first attends to the way in which the external world is experienced by me. The key point is that I experience the world “as other than mine alone, as an intersubjective world” (Husserl, *CM*, 91). Put another way, we might say that, rather than experience a world, we experience intersubjectivity. Others are simply “there for me” in my commerce with the external world. We have here what, following H. Peter Steeves, we might call a “social ontology,” in which, at a basic level, “the Ego and the Other are constituted together” (Steeves, 84). Insofar as the ego experiences a world—and is thereby constituted as a “self”—it experiences others.

Nonetheless, we cannot abandon the fundamental insight of transcendental idealism. That is, we must maintain that any sense that any existent thing (including other egos) can have for me “is a sense in and arising from my intentional life” (Husserl, *CM*, 91). At the very least, the limits of this fundamental principle must be explored. For this reason, Husserl effects a further reduction—the reduction of all experience to my sphere of ownness. If intersubjectivity is in fact basic, constitutive in some way, then it remains when everything else is reduced away. Or, it drops out and the question then is: how is intersubjectivity constituted?

The reduction to my sphere of ownness, then, is a particular sort of epoche; the point is to delimit “the total nexus of that actual and potential intentionality in which the ego constitutes within himself a peculiar ownness” (Husserl, *CM*, 93). The constitutional effects of the ego with respect to the “objective world” are bracketed and existent things as “other” are excluded from our thematic field. In this manner, we reach the core of radical ownness and what is peculiar to me as pure ego, viz. a monadic matrix of intentionalities. This monadic structure is all that is left after the reduction to my sphere of ownness. However, while the “objective world,” the “Nature” of natural science experienceable by everyone, no longer remains in this reduced

stratum, the ego's intentionalities remain—intentionalities directed towards what is other. We may screen off what is other, however the "psychic life of my Ego . . . including my actual and possible experience of what is other, is wholly unaffected" (Husserl, *CM*, 98). This "possible experience" includes the possibility of other egos.

Having reached this original sphere, we are still unable to do away with the possibility of the other ego. As Steeves puts it, "we are unable to reduce experience completely so as not to have a notion of Others" (Steeves, 83). Given that intersubjectivity remains even in the primordial sphere of ownness, we must account for the process that permits us access to the ego of the Other. That is, if the other ego is not ours, if it is another sphere of ownness, how can it remain after the reduction to our sphere of ownness? In order to address this crucial question, Husserl appeals to the notion of *appresentation*.

The fact that my intentionality can be directed towards something that is excluded from my sphere of ownness makes it evident that the other's essence can be only *indirectly* accessible to my consciousness. For, as Husserl recognizes, "if what belongs to the other's own essence were directly accessible, it would be merely a moment of my own essence" (Husserl, *CM*, 109). A certain mediacy must be present in intentionality—a mediacy which makes present the "there-too" of the other just as the subjective stream of my intentional processes in my sphere of ownness makes present the "here." Hence there is a co-presence of the "here" and the "there-too"; this making "co-present" is what Husserl dubs "appresentation" (Husserl, *CM*, 109).

The other cannot be experienced by me as a result of a direct presentation—it can only manifest itself via appresentation. Appresentation is based on *apperception*, an analogizing transfer of an original sense to a new instance (Husserl, *CM*, 111). This analogizing transfer, however, does not involve an inference from analogy;⁴ rather, as we intuitively grasp the sense "other," we transfer back to a similar sense given beforehand in our sphere of ownness. The new case can only be new insofar as it is given beforehand in an instituting primordial sphere. The "transfer" thus involves the enriching of the instituting already-given case through the apprehension of the new case. As Husserl explains, the sense "other" "in further experience which proves to be actually new may function in turn as institutive and found a pregiveness that has a richer sense" (Husserl, *CM*, 111).

This "analogizing transfer" returns us to the idea that the other ego is constituted simultaneously with my ego. For only if there is

this simultaneous constitution can we speak of “the actually new which can function as institutive.” While the essence of the other ego can never be an object of direct perception (but only apperception), it remains the case that “*ego* and *alter ego* are always and necessarily given in an original ‘pairing’” (Husserl, *CM*, 112). “Pairing,” then, functions as the constitutive component of the experience of the other. It first takes place when the other enters my perceptual field. We thus are presented with two phenomenological data—ego and other ego—“data appearing with mutual distinctness [but which] found phenomenologically a unity of similarity and thus are always constituted precisely as a pair” (Husserl, *CM*, 112).

Pairing is a “passive synthesis” designated as association; this association provides me with a sort of empathetic intuition into the essence of the other.⁵ Again, our apprehension of the other cannot be direct; it can only take place via the associative mechanism of pairing. Pairing reveals that, as Kersten puts it, “there is an inward for me which, however, is never of essential necessity mine but for me always yours, and only yours in so far as it is for me” (Kersten, 252). In other words, each ego apperceives the other in accordance with the sense of the other; there is reciprocity of apperception.

It must be noted that the notion of pairing as an associatively constitutive component of my experience of the other *does* seem to solve the problem of solipsism. We might, along with Steeves, call this the “fringe benefit” of pairing.⁶ To return to the questions posed in our introduction, then, we can affirm that the notions of appresentation and pairing do seem (a) to provide an account of intersubjectivity which is consistent with Husserl’s transcendental idealism. Moreover, this account of intersubjectivity does (b) appear to dispel the spectre of solipsism. We have moved beyond (to employ Buber’s locution) the vibration of the I in its lonely truth.

However, the satisfaction of (a) leaves us with problems with respect to (c), (the question whether Husserl provides a notion of the other which actually challenges the primacy of the ego). For Husserl’s focus, *pace* transcendental idealism, is still on the apperception of the other by the ego. Pairing, while an associative passive synthesis, nonetheless “first comes about when the Other enters *my* field of perception” (Husserl, *CM*, 113; emphasis added). The question for Husserl, then, is: how is the apperception of the other in pairing possible? Our concern, however, is to recognize the way in which

Husserl's examination of this question points towards a negative response to our own question (c).

II. THE PRIMACY OF THE EGO

We have said that the fifth Meditation represents something of a "dialectical *coup*" for Husserl. That is, the examination of intersubjectivity—as a means to the solution of the problem of solipsism—reveals that subjectivity, while it may appear to be a *solus ipse*, is in fact always already an *intersubjectivity*. My ego is constituted simultaneously with the other's ego in the associatively constitutive operation of pairing. The ego is always given with its other-directed intentionalities; when the ego emerges, the alter-ego emerges and vice-versa. Construed in this fashion, the problem of solipsism becomes a pseudo-problem, one that dissolves as soon as the structure of (inter)subjectivity is made clear.

However, the inter-related notions of appresentation, analogical apperception and pairing still leave us with difficulties from the standpoint of (c) above. Claims to reciprocity aside, pairing is a mechanism which nonetheless operates in the ego's sphere of ownness. Pairing arises, as Husserl tells us, when the other enters my perceptual field. Ultimately, Husserl is not prepared—given his commitment to a thorough-going transcendental idealism—to relinquish the priority of the ego. Despite the role of the alter-ego in pairing, the other remains a " 'modification' of myself" (Husserl, *CM*, 115). Indeed, Husserl maintains that the only way to explain the possibility of pairing—and of *apperception*—is to conceive of the other as an intentional modification of my sphere of ownness. Analogical apperception may not be an inference in the traditional sense, but the fact remains that the other ego is "conceivable only as an analogue of something included in my peculiar ownness" (Husserl, *CM*, 115). Primacy must be accorded to my ego if the possibility of apperception is to be accounted for.

Far from being a genuinely other, independent ego existing in its own primordial sphere—a sphere of radical alterity—the other is reduced to an analogue of *my* ego; it exists as "another version of me" (Steeves, 87).⁷ This may not render Husserl's account inconsistent—indeed, as he sees it, this move is required in order to preserve the consistency of his phenomenological elucidation of the ego—and while it does not plunge transcendental phenomenology back into the

problem of solipsism (other egos *do* exist, but only insofar as my intentional sphere is modified), it does deny pairing's claim to genuine reciprocity. More problematically, it calls into question the authenticity of constitutive intersubjectivity; if the other is a mere analogue of my subjectivity, it is difficult to see how subjectivity, my stream of subjective intentional processes, is not primary. For this reason, as Anthony Steinbock points out, "intersubjectivity is one of Husserl's major blindspots" (Steinbock, 66).⁸

Again, while the ethical demand for radical heterogeneity at the heart of intersubjectivity may be somewhat extrinsic to Husserl's thought, it is not extrinsic in the sense that Husserl does seek an account according to which genuine intersubjectivity is at work at the constitutive level. Constitutive intersubjectivity is a requirement of the social ontology, the notion of community, Husserl wants to establish. The primacy of the ego precludes exactly this sort of social ontology. Everything proceeds *from* my sphere of ownness. The other has the mode "there" and I have the mode "here." Yet the mode "there" is conceived purely in relation to "here." I apperceive the other as having a mode of appearance of the sort I should have "if I should go over there and be where he is" (Husserl, *CM*, 117). The other ego is not a positive constitutive element of intersubjectivity; rather, it is constituted via abstraction from my own subjectivity. In other words, the other *stays* over "there" and we still have a homogeneous sphere of ownness impervious to the movement of a heterogeneous other. Contrary to Husserl's earlier assertions that ego and alter ego exist in a state of mutual dependence, the ego now clearly "retains its independent existence as founding or grounding" (Steinbock, 68).

Husserl's failure to clear space for the *radically heterogeneous* other is reflected in the work of later thinkers who, while profoundly influenced by Husserl's phenomenological excursions—which first suggest the need for and the possibility of a non-foundational analysis of the social world—nevertheless find it necessary to critique his treatment of intersubjectivity. Two such thinkers are Emmanuel Levinas and Gilles Deleuze. Each, in his own way (Levinas explicitly and Deleuze, as always, more obliquely), fastens upon the ethical implications of assigning primacy to the ego and its sphere of ownness.

Deleuze is concerned with the presuppositions of the very image of thought that posits a metaphysical, Cartesian ego. For Deleuze, the ethical moment can emerge only in the confrontation between two

non-egoic sets of intensities on a field of immanence—a confrontation in which neither player can claim primacy or priority. In the confrontation itself—in the *event* of that meeting—the ethical moment emerges; the focus is on the event and not on the subjects involved. Indeed, the challenge of Deleuzian ethics is to conceive of the ethical moment without invoking the notions of “ego” or “subject.” Deleuze’s work, and *Difference and Repetition* in particular, contains a vivisection of the metaphysical ego. At best, we can speak of “passive selves” operating in problematic fields in relations to questions. But these “selves are larval subjects” (Deleuze, *DR*, 78), collections of “furtive contemplations” drawing difference from repetition. The “dissolved self” is not a static metaphysical ego that could undergo modifications;⁹ rather, it is nothing other than modification, a perpetual play of difference. The larval subject thus “does not fit the categories of the I and the Self” (Deleuze, *DR*, 258). Clearly, then, the appeal to a Cartesian framework in which an independent ego—or the subjective processes of that ego—constitutes the world and other egos is the mistake *par excellence*.¹⁰

In the first chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, for example, Deleuze criticizes the “Thomistic echoes in Husserl” (Deleuze, *DR*, 66). Just as Aquinas arrives at an account of being through the apprehension of sensible quiddities, assigning being to the divine via abstraction from the sensible phantasm, so Husserl constitutes the objective world—and other egos—via a sort of abstraction (dubbed “analogizing apperception”) from the phenomena immediately accessible to the conscious ego. Aquinas proceeds via sensible quiddities; Husserl proceeds via the ego’s stream of subjective intentional processes.¹¹ The point with respect to Husserl is that this phenomenological approach leads him to posit a constituting Cartesian ego—a subjectivity which accounts for all other subjectivities and for the objective world itself. The mistake of according primacy to the ego, a mistake characteristic of the representational model of thought generally, is thus the mistake of “ensuring the convergence of all points of view on the same object or the same world, or [of] *making all moments properties of the same Self*” (Deleuze, *DR*, 56). Deleuze’s remarks thus contain a metaphysically driven criticism as well as an ethical criticism. He takes aim at a certain conception of the ego, one predicated upon a received ontological framework, or “dogmatic image of thought.” The critique is less explicitly ethical than one of the sort mounted by Levinas. The constituting, metaphysical ego closed-up in

itself cannot partake in the ethical confrontation on the plane of immanence; it can only subsume all otherness into its autonomous sameness. With this image, the other is reduced to the status of either an object or a subject. However, as Deleuze points out, "it is not even clear that thought . . . may be related to a substantial, completed and well-constituted subject" (Deleuze, *DR*, 118). Quite the contrary: thought is a "terrible," Dionysian movement "which can be sustained only under the conditions of a larval subject" (Deleuze, *DR*, 118). But Deleuze's analyses, driven as they are by the desire to unveil the Dionysian world shrouded by this dogmatic image of thought, are not without an ethical motive. While the dogmatic image of thought represents a profound betrayal of what it means to think, it also represents a profound betrayal of the larval subject's relationship with the other in the heterogeneous ethical moment. For "there is no love which does not begin with the revelation of a possible world as such, enwound in the other which expresses it" (Deleuze, *DR*, 261). Perhaps at no other juncture do the concerns of Deleuze and Levinas so poignantly converge.

Still, there are relevant contrasts and they come into even sharper focus when we consider the work of Levinas. For Levinas, the ethical moment arises only when the ego is confronted by the absolute other that ruptures its apparent autonomy. The ego is utterly passive in the face of the other, for the other cannot be assimilated by the subsuming ego; the ego is torn asunder, accused by the other. While Levinas is profoundly influenced by Husserl's theory of internal time consciousness,¹² he is nonetheless highly critical of "the position of the subject in the philosophy issued by Husserl" (Levinas, *OTB*, 96). The Husserlian ego gathers all divergencies met with in experience into a schema of the present—the present of intentional consciousness. "In Husserl, the time structure of sensibility is a time of what can be recuperated by the ego" (Levinas, *OTB*, 34). The upshot is that the Husserlian ego gathers all encountered otherness into the synchrony of its structure. The otherness of the other ego is "the originality of something included in my particular ownness" (Husserl, *CM*, 123). Levinas's entire objective, however, is to reveal the diachrony at the heart of the ethical moment. The ego does not subsume the other into its autonomous being, for the other confronts the ego from a sphere of pure alterity which is refractory to all categories of a totalizing subjectivity. The other cannot be reduced to a moment of the same, of "Being," for it signifies pure difference—it emerges from an "other-

wise than Being." The ego does not constitute the other ego through a "passive synthesis"; on the contrary, the ego is vulnerable to the other and its vulnerability is a "wounding, a passivity more passive than all passivity" (Levinas, *OTB*, 15).¹³

What is really at issue for Levinas is Husserl's characterization of the subject's intentional synchronizing activity. Husserlian internal time consciousness precludes genuine otherness because it focuses on what can be recuperated by the intentional ego; it emphasizes the continuity of the temporal flow of intentional processes. "Subjectivity" for Husserl signifies collusion with essence, whereas, for Levinas, "subjectivity" signifies precisely "the possibility of a break out of essence" (Levinas, *OTB*, 8). For Husserl, "time is . . . a recuperation of all divergencies, through retention, memory and history" (Levinas, *OTB*, 9). "Time" is the time of what returns, of what can be assimilated by the ego's intentional temporal flow. Subjectivity for Levinas, however, indicates a diachronous time, a lapse, or pre-ontological gap, in this synchronizing flow: "a lapse of time that does not return, a diachrony refractory to all synchronization, a transcending diachrony" (Levinas, *OTB*, 9).

This "lapse" is signalled then by the ego's preoriginary, pre-ontological responsibility for the other—precisely the responsibility effaced by the Husserlian account. My responsibility for the other indicates a diachronous time, "a time that does not enter into the unity of transcendental apperception" (Levinas, *OTB*, 140). It is not that—as for Husserl—the ego is constituted simultaneously with the other. It is, rather, that the ego is constituted by being accused by the other. The sameness or reciprocity required by analogical appresentation—"pairing"—is precluded by the ego's obsession with the other as radical alterity, the purely heterogeneous, in proximity. Proximity is a non-reciprocal relation. Obsession, or the "one-for-the-other" is non-reciprocity; it "is not the one trans-substantified into another" (Levinas, *OTB*, 141). The responsibility for the other makes of the I a "me": an accused subjectivity constituted on the basis of this accusation. The accused me "escapes the concept of an ego in ipseity" (Levinas, *OTB*, 84). The encounter with the other is not a moment of knowing where the ego can apperceive the other via an analogizing transfer. Such a transfer takes place in what Levinas dubs the "Said." Rather, the encounter with the other is a moment of obsession, a moment of the "Saying"—prior to all ontological significations—in which the other comes at me as if from on high. Most importantly,

“the knot of subjectivity consists in going to the other without concerning oneself with his movement toward me” (Levinas, *OTB*, 84). There can be no apperception of the other by the ego; there is only my responsibility for the other. Subjectivity is thus constituted, not in a synchronic moment of apperception but in a diachronous moment of accusation. Subjectivity is martyrdom and persecution (cf. Levinas, *OTB*, 146).

The contrasts are thus quite clear: where Levinas seeks to reveal heterogeneity, Husserl seeks to establish the autonomy of the ego; where Levinas emphasizes the diachrony of the ethical confrontation, Husserl stresses the synchronizing operations of a self-contained ego. Indeed, Levinas’s entire ethical enterprise is set in stark opposition to Husserl’s fundamental phenomenological commitment, viz. “that everything existing for me must derive its existential sense exclusively from me myself” (Husserl, *CM*, 150). Levinas demands the absolute, irreducible other, whereas Husserl allows for only the logical other. As Steinbock notes, with the notion of “pairing,” “[Husserl] only really wins back the logical ‘other,’ a ‘second I’” (Steinbock, 68).¹⁴ This “second I,” or “other by analogy,” is clearly not the absolute other required by Levinasian ethics,¹⁵ nor is it the non-egoic, reduced subjectivity sought after by someone like Deleuze. The ego’s commerce with the other may, for Husserl, result in the constitution of the social world, but—to invoke another phrase from Martin Buber—the seed remains in the ego.

Before closing, a note on the motivations underlying Levinas’s and Deleuze’s respective critiques is in order. Levinas is concerned with the ethical moment, with my confrontation with the other, which is prior to all significations in the Said. It is a preoriginary, pre-ontological moment. Levinas’s thought thus contains a critique of ontology, insofar as it effaces this preontological, ethical moment. That is, Levinas contests ontology’s claim to being first philosophy.¹⁶ In contrast, Deleuze’s critique is not so much ethically motivated as it is motivated by a desire to unmask dogmatism in thought generally. Deleuze objects not to ontology as first philosophy per se. Indeed, we might say that Deleuze does a fair bit of “ontologizing”—perverse, irreverent, anarchical ontologizing, but ontologizing all the same. What Deleuze objects to is dogmatic ontology—any image of thought which denies and seeks to suffocate the active, creative forces of difference which animate thought and render it truly productive and affirmative. Levinas’s and Deleuze’s respective critiques con-

verge on the rejection of the traditional metaphysical subject, but they get there by different routes and for different reasons. Levinas rejects ontology as first philosophy because it is the ethical face-to-face encounter which is in fact foundational; Deleuze rejects *dogmatic*, representational ontologies which sublimate the active, productive elements of thought.

We can conclude, then, by re-addressing the three questions posed at the outset of our discussion. The fifth Meditation's account of intersubjectivity is (a) consistent with Husserl's earlier explication of transcendental idealism and does seem (b) to dispel the spectre of solipsism. However, (a) and (b) render it impossible for Husserl to (c) provide a suitably robust notion of the Other (one which challenges the primacy of the ego and which can thereby underpin an account of the genuine face-to-face ethical relationship).

NOTES

1 For more on the crucial phenomenological notion of *epoche*, see Natanson, pp. 56–61 (see the bibliography at the end of this paper).

2 As pointed out above, it does not take Husserl until the fifth Meditation to acknowledge this problem. In the second Meditation, for example, he tells us that *epoche*, conceived as “pure egology,” “apparently condemns us to a solipsism” (CM, 30). He opts, however, to leave the consideration of this difficulty until the final Meditation. For more on Husserl's recognition of the problem of solipsism, see Kersten, pp. 258–59.

3 In this way, the fifth Meditation really becomes an elucidation of—to use J. N. Mohanty's phrase—“the complete structure of the transcendental theory of experience of the other” (Mohanty, 72).

4 For more on the non-inferential nature of this “transfer,” see Steeves, p. 85.

5 This is what Mohanty has in mind when he tells us that Husserl is “aware of the idea of empathy as constitutive of the other ego” (Mohanty, 71).

6 Steeves, p. 89. See also Steeves's excellent extended discussion of the mechanism of pairing, pp. 86–90.

7 Natanson also recognizes the analogous nature of the other ego in this

context. Transcendental “intersubjectivity” does establish the identity of the other ego, but it is merely an “analogous identity” founded on a sameness which is “the prime achievement of intentionality” (Natanson, 101).

8 Steinbock, however, goes on to argue that this negative assessment of Husserlian intersubjectivity can be maintained only if we restrict ourselves to the *Cartesian Meditations*, in which Husserl “puts forward a Cartesian Idea of philosophy” (Steinbock, 67). The later Husserl, by contrast, “breaks with the egological account espoused in the fifth Cartesian Meditation” (Steinbock, 72). Our concern at present, however, is with the Husserl of the *Meditations*; an examination of the later works is beyond our purview. All the same, even Steinbock concedes that in the later Husserl, the ego is still accorded a certain privilege (cf. Steinbock, 75–76). The framework of the *Cartesian Meditations* is eschewed—and a more vital intersubjectivity is sought after—yet Husserl maintains the primacy of the homeworld of the ego. It does not seem, then, that this is approach is any more promising in the context of the present discussion (for more on Husserl’s later phenomenology, see Steinbock, 70–77 and Mohanty, 72).

9 For more on the Deleuzian notion of a “dissolved self,” see *Difference and Repetition*, pp. 276–77.

10 My objective here is not to present a full account and defense of Deleuze’s “ethics of the event.” The point, rather, is to recognize that Husserl’s account of intersubjectivity, with primacy assigned to the ego, cannot satisfy the demand for genuine heterogeneity.

11 Again, cf. *CM*, p. 127.

12 Husserl’s theory of temporality is particularly important with respect to one of the guiding questions of Levinas’s enterprise, viz. “does temporality go beyond essence?” (*Otherwise Than Being*, 31). Levinas recognizes much of value in Husserl’s theory, specifically his account of the “lived and the sensed” and his “polemics against psychologism” (*Otherwise Than Being*, 32). It would certainly be a mistake to single-out Husserl as the object of Levinas’s unmitigated criticism. There are no whipping boys for Levinas. Nevertheless, subjectivity remains an intentionality for Husserl, and to *this* core Husserlian tenet Levinas is compelled to object. It is for *this* reason that the contrast with Husserl stands as one of the most fruitful avenues of approach to the Levinasian subject.

13 On this point, Levinas does not shy away from what might sound like hyperbole. While the subjectivity of the subject for Husserl is constitutive of the other ego, for Levinas “the subjectivity of the subject is persecution and martyrdom” (146). Far from constituting the other ego as an analogue of itself, “the ego [is] stripped of its scornful and imperialistic sub-

jectivity" (146). Faced with the irreducible other, the ego has no recourse but to say *me voici*, "here I am."

14 Steeves also recognizes that the Husserlian ego never really confronts the irreducible other. Husserl, he points out, "makes room for Others in a sort of 'logical space' " (Steeves, 87), but this space is still subject to appropriation by the ego (Cf. also Kersten, 256).

15 Adriaan Peperzak, one of the foremost commentators on Levinas, is also extremely helpful on this point. While praising Husserl for recognizing that consciousness is constituted by affective and practical intentions—in addition to objectifying, presenting and representing intentions—he points out that Husserl still strives towards "the absolute self-possession of a transcendental ego including the truth of all givens in the knowledge of Itself" (Peperzak, p. 15; cf. also pp. 14–19, *passim*).

16 Again, it is the hubris or presumptuousness of ontology that Levinas attacks. As he points out, his way of thinking "does not fail to recognize being or treat it, ridiculously and pretentiously, with disdain" (Levinas, *OTB*, 16). The point, rather, is that being—and ontology—takes on its just meaning only on the basis of proximity and the primordial ethical relationship.

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