

BERNHARD WALDENFELS AND THE PHENOMENOLOGY  
OF THE FOREIGN

BERNHARD WALDENFELS I FENOMENOLOGIJA STRANOG



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## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE AN ALIEN? BERNHARD WALDENFELS AND POLITICS OF RESPONSIVE INTERCULTURALISM

### ABSTRACT

The author analyzes the politics of responsive interculturalism in Bernhard Waldenfels' thought, starting from the assumption that after Husserl's phenomenology only two fundamental concepts – body and the Other – should be considered. In contemporary German “post-phenomenology” the first concept was systematically articulated by Hermann Schmitz, while the latter theme has been advanced in Waldenfels' works as the phenomenology of the alien, up until the end of Western metaphysics. In the two parts of the discussion, the author draws on his fundamental hypothesis about aporias and paradoxes of interculturalism, since responsiveness and xenology cannot reach the positive definition of the concept of culture in the era of global entropy. The analysis, therefore, deals with the questions: (1) what is the responsiveness of man in relation to the Other, including the different ways of his presence in the world; and (2) whether the Other as alien and uncanny (*Unheimlich*) calls into question the basic assumption of phenomenology as such – the intentionality of consciousness?

### KEYWORDS

alien, phenomenology, responsiveness, irreducible asymmetry, interculturalism, body

### Introduction

If we should ask what remains of Husserl's phenomenology and its study of intentional consciousness, the answer would probably be as follows – a *body* and *Other*. When Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Levinas introduced into contemporary philosophy “the spirit of turn” of all metaphysical categories, abandoning its original starting point in the questioning of relations of Being, beings and the essence of man, phenomenology remained with no signifiers – Husserl's return to the so-called natural attitude. The question of consciousness and self-consciousness, which was so important concerning the assemblage of contemporary philosophy, denotes a redirected issue regarding the conditions of the possibility of thinking of what is not just the affiliation of the human decency with the tense, but rather the place of the encounter with the views and structures of Western metaphysics. Heidegger had rightly appointed onto-theological framework of history. The reason is that thinking necessarily begins with the question of Being and with the first cause, whether the primordial source of overall beings (*arché*). If phenomenology in the contemporary technical way of constructing the artificial intelligence and

artificial life lacks the object of its orientation, such as the manifest forms of human consciousness, then the only remaining area of its “resurrection” can possibly be distinguished in the *body* and *the Other*. By analogy, since metaphysics has been signified by the concept of subjectivity (the mind) of the new era, the return of the body to the post-metaphysical view of the Twentieth Century should not be understood from the return to materialism and physicalism, even less so to some dark side of psychologism. The body is considered in contemporary philosophy with the same riddle as consciousness but on the very different foundations of what the metaphysics of the mind has established. The term of the Other has developed with Husserl’s criticism of Cartesian heritage in contemporary thinking. And yet he did not radically break through the frames of subjectivity and self-consciousness or did not come out of the steel embrace of egology and anthropology. So, the contributions to his idea of transcendental intersubjectivity largely go in the direction of thinking of the community space constituted outside the reign of “I” and Ego (Schutz 1957: 81–107; Zahavi 1994).

As far as the first approach is concerned, it is well-known that it can be found mostly in Merleau-Ponty’s existential phenomenology, while another approach is shown in the most significant Levinas’ work *Totality and Infinity* (*Totalité et infini*) from 1961. There are multiple overlaps. For both French thinkers, the *body* and the *Other* at the same time signify the way into a labyrinth of feeling and an ethical call for freedom and justice in the community. The differences, of course, are unquestionable between their phenomenological research. In the contemporary philosophy, however, new approaches can be summarized as a *phenomenological analysis of the body* with the principal representative of Hermann Schmitz (Schmitz 2011) and as a *phenomenological analysis of the alien* with the Bernhard Waldenfels as the main thinker. The task of this review is to show how and in what way Waldenfels can even set up the problem of the Other as an alien, and also the way to an internal turn of phenomenology. This way of thinking Heidegger himself left almost immediately after the publication of *Being and Time* at the end of the 1920s. We should not neglect this fact. In the two parts, we would like to perform the critical reading of Waldenfels’ texts with regard to two questions: (1) what is the responsiveness of man in relation to the Other, including the different ways of its presence in the world; and (2) can we even think the Other as strange and unknown, and therefore uncanny (*Unheimlich*), without questioning the fundamental premise of phenomenology as such - the intentionality of consciousness?

## 1. Between responsiveness and “irreducible asymmetry”

In the lecture, which Bernhard Waldenfels entitled “Homo respondens”, held on the occasion of the foundation of FORhUM in Ljubljana in November 2014, where he developed items of phenomenology responsiveness with regard to the question of alien and the Other, first sentences are more than indicative:

Man is a being who puts himself in question. (...) Anthropology, which seeks to redeem each and every other egology, inevitably ends in an ideology that leaves the idea behind us dimmed. Since any speech is improperly or out of focus, someone is questioned - Who am I? - with a question - Who are you? (Waldenfels 2015: 8).

Developing further the different definitions of man through the history of metaphysics (*homo sapiens*, *homo erectus*, *homo faber*, *homo ludens* etc.), seems to be an attempt to realize purely phenomenological horizons as being questions-answers, which is much more than pointing out what we already knew about Heidegger's *Being and Time* (*Sein und Zeit*). In it, though, he does not speak of a man, but of a *being-there* (*Dasein*) whose essence lies in its existence (Heidegger 2018: 12). However, Waldenfels does not even care to remind us of this state of affairs, but rather to establish a different notion of the relationship between man and what is becoming irretrievable in our time. This is, of course, the technical term of communication which, unlike the so-called immediate one, triggers an excessive response. Moreover, it is as if a man is required to constantly be the one who answers the questions. And they are simultaneously performative statements and conceptual language games, commands, orders, suggestions, announcements. If, then, instead of Heidegger's "hermeneutic circle" in which the issue of necessity assumes a question about the man and Being, he wants to go a step further and see why the man himself must ask whether he would have any chance of being human, then it is obvious that anthropology, as well as egology, cannot escape the darkness of their own origins. Waldenfels really did not care about a new version of Descartes's suspicion in everything beyond thinking as a self-reflection of Being, beings and the essence of man. On the contrary, the subject of reflection lies in the relationship between two interrelated issues. Though formally here we deal with egology in the new garment and the phenomenology of the Other which is always derived from this or that concept of the subject, and which has also been the underlying problem of Husserl's intersubjectivity, it might be unquestionable to encounter something truly uncanny and mysterious (*Unheimlich*). If a man must ask himself, is his "destiny" quite determined by the inability to answer the question "Who am I?" without answering the question "Who are you?"

In the text of the lecture, by no means does Waldenfels give a "positive" or "negative answer" to the question of man, because it would mean that he had already assumed the results of some anthropology ranging from philosophical to structural and cybernetical. Man, therefore, at the very least, is always "somewhere in-between", halfway between animal and God, even though this "being in-between" (*Zwischenwesen*) is actually the one that only allows the Other (animal or God?) to become a philosophical problem (Waldenfels 2015: 7). Why? Not because it would stoop to the level of solipsism and epistemological constructivism, but because the thinking that belongs to the human way of telling the being necessarily holds the determinants of singularity and contingency. That is what Waldenfels has to assume, at the same time, as an improper assumption of the entire Western philosophy. "I" and "You" are not possible without a relationship that allows the existence of a person as a person, and the one who has yet to question it. Let us get rid of misunderstandings. It is not a matter of his will or desire to break down the "subject" to elementary particles. The necessity of self-determination of man comes from the necessity of his freedom. It paradoxically reveals itself in answering questions. Answer something that was dumped beforehand with the expectation of a solution of what was pre-thrown (gr. πρόβλημα, *problem*) means only the possibility of openness and uncertainty of his mode of existence. In the technical

landscape of the world turned into gadgets and autonomous objects this really becomes the question of everyday survival.

The responsive ethics of the Other thus has a phenomenological “advantage” to the ontological foundations of the world. But we shall make the big mistake if we attribute it to Waldenfels as the appropriation of ideas from Levinas’ critique of metaphysics. No ethics of the Other is preceded by the question of the limits of the relationship between man and other beings and worlds (Waldenfels 2002: 63–81; Paić 2013: 346–392).<sup>1</sup> Instead of such “radical” cuts, which have a tendency to deal with Heidegger’s “destruction of traditional ontology,” an attempt to create a turning point in thought, starting from what the metaphysics of the West had been from the very beginning in Greece, and that was the question about the body and human sensitivities (ethical-aesthetic turn of ontology), Waldenfels offers much more cautious and acceptable attempt at a “more practical” solution of the contemporary world. That does not come out from what is still called phenomenology. Unlike Schmitz, for example, it does not seem reasonable to deduce the notion of phenomenology to empirical science or any newer aspect of positivism (Waldenfels 1999: 43). It should be noted that his analysis, as is evident in the lecture “Homo respondens”, always patiently and interpretatively circulates around the same questions about the other, the stranger, the alien, what is neither “I” nor “You”, but it must be shown in essence as a question of how “I” and “You” can, at all, have their meaning by providing a break with traditional metaphysics of self and subjectivity, from Descartes to Hegel. In any case, it will seem strange why we would move in our analysis in reverse order: from the present thought path, towards the transmitted and largely adopted as the main determinant of its phenomenology, to the Other as an alien. The answer might be simple. Waldenfels from the very beginning of his observations sees a kind of “phenomenology of modernity”, and therefore to trace Husserl, Levinas and Merleau-Ponty is to try to find a new starting point for understanding the Other without the illusions that the Other as an alien (*Fremden*) can become “integrated” in the phenomenology of its own (*phänomenologie des Eigenen*). If we take this statement into the language of contemporary political practice, then refugees and homeless people in search of their own “new” identity can never lose their memories of living in homeland overnight and become pseudo-cosmopolitan beings without something of their own. The process of integration into a new (political) community presupposes a painstaking building of that “third” as the bond/relationship of “own” and “alien”.

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1 In the text titled “The Boundaries of Orders” Waldenfels explains that the notion of modernity is marked by two important discoveries: (1) the discovery of ourselves (“We”), which cannot be reduced to earlier times, nor to any social, political and cultural order, and (2) the discovery of contingency, which means that every order can become different than it is. In this way, the social alternatives of individualism and holism, particularism and universalism, relativism and absolutism appear in everyday discourse of the identity of a modern man. But instead of such logic either-or, Waldenfels advocates a “constitutive paradox”. It is about entering an alien figure into the world. This eliminates any form of consensus about the mutual relationship of what it is “Same”. Hence, living with that foreign and unknown means experiencing a different kind of limit and limitation (Waldenfels 2004: 71–86).

However, when Waldenfels deals with the problem of the Other, his intentions are essentially different from the way of thinking of the unconditional ethics of the Other by Emmanuel Levinas. In the book, *The Strangeness of Modernity: The Phenomenological Crossing Borders (Verfremdung der Moderne: Phänomenologische Grenzgänge)* from 2001, in the second chapter we can see the foundation of un-transgressiveness in the thinking of an alien as a stranger. Namely, the stranger is not someone other in the sense of selfishness and selfhood, someone very close to whom we address as “our” neighbour. It is the “irreducible strangeness” of his mode of existence. Certainly, we can precisely say that what modernity is at the same time should be a simultaneously exciting and a conflicting epoch of the world. The problem of an alien was in a strangely visible way a crack in Greek philosophy already in Plato (the Greek term ξένος *xenos* means someone who is not a member of “my” or “our” community, who is in the position of a borderline because it is neither “here” or “there”). In his work *The Laws* (Νόμοι) about a state with regard to the freedom of association in the community, it is a vague noun, as the political and policy provides an additional mystery and ambiguity (Plato 1988). Unlike Greek democracy and its dark places, constraints and disaggregations by sex/gender, ethnic origin and social class exclusion (women, strangers, slaves), modern era could be characterized by the aspiration of fulfilling political rights in principle for all citizens. But regardless of this standardized process that remains in the sphere of formal civil rights, it might be clear that anything that does not belong to the nation-state rooting and its leading culture and politics is considered as uncannily strange and unacknowledged. In his book, Waldenfels cites the German humorist Karl Valentin:

“Stranger is an Alien even in the strangeness”.

There is no doubt that this cannot be highlighted about Husserl’s intersubjectivity, by means of which we can retrieve the position of the Other from our “perspective” of thought. But thinking cannot be reduced to the act of reflection and self-reflection of an intentional subject. Its complexity is in that what comes from the contingency of the event, and it affects the human affectivity and performance of the language. The thinking, then, could never be a neutral act of indifferent computing in dealing with things. In the encounter with the Other, as Merleau-Ponty clearly showed, I have experience of the body of my own existence. It is not only the test concerning the ethical reasons of compassion for the suffering of the Other (Merleau-Ponty 1945). We should devote much more attention to the test of what has been established over time in the paradigm of modernity in the West – about the rational thinking of science, capitalist social order, the system of values, and finally the meaning of culture. Alienableness of an alien should be almost impossible to be seen from the traditional metaphysical idea of a subject and object, which has its origins in the new era. What remains is to search for the meanings and notion of the Other in its stranger/alien position, thus questioning the security of the existential organization of my “own” (Waldenfels 2001). What does all this have to do with the responsiveness of a man and his ability to answer the questions asked and to ultimately question himself? Waldenfels has become aware, from the very beginning of dealing with the question of “phenomenology of the alien”, that a man can no longer be determined philosophically via some of

his external attributes. Labour and technology, science and production, however, belong to the human way of securing material existence. But for the Greeks, these were areas that had lower formal rank than pure theory. *Praxis* and *poiesis* have the decisive power in the historical advancement and development of Western civilization. Nevertheless, the essence of human existence, no matter how important it is, is solved on the ground of confrontation with the Other as its own boundary of human dignity and this ultimately has an ontological significance. The man as a free being in its immediate ability to communicate with each other confirms itself as a being who can only answer the question about the conditions of possibility of self-transformation into something else entirely, and even inhuman just as we bear witness to experiments with artificial intelligence and its astonishing and simultaneously problematic issues in the *posthuman condition* (Paić 2011).

The man as a *homo respondens* recalls, as Waldenfels says, Aristotle's definition of a human as a living being who possesses logos (ζῶον λόγον ἔχον, *zoon logon echon* or *animal rationale*). The problem is that the mind in the sense of a transcendental subject does not rise in the modern age to the language as a saying, although many evidences will support Rorty's "linguistic turn" or Habermas' "post-metaphysical thinking" in which language has the function of the fundamental signifier of contemporaneity. However, with the introduction of cognitive-digital machines, human thinking and communication have become visual, so language can no longer be considered as a decisive instance of mediation. Instead, Waldenfels introduces into circulation what connects the language, body and freedom of human decision to a situation that is not predetermined by the "necessity" of society, politics and culture. Everything is contingent and becomes subject to change. Hence, the phenomenology of responsiveness does not refer to the expected human responses in the sense of mere confirmation of the statement to the orders and of pointing them out. What is really a responsivity? In the aforementioned lecture, Waldenfels argues that this term must be understood from the "strangeness of modernity", which means that "a man who responds is neither a lord of things nor their ball to play" (Waldenfels 2015: 8). What kind of answers should be "expected" from the contemporary man? First of all, they are "technically standardized, normal and creative responses", but their performance is shown as the communicative opportunity of encounter and dialogue with the Other on the very different social and cultural assumptions from all previous periods in history. The reason is self-explanatory. We live, in fact, in a globalized order of the rule of techno-scientific production results, which are visible in what sociologist Manuel Castells calls the "network society" and what media theoretician Vilém Flusser named a "telematic society" (Paić 2008).

In Waldenfels' book about "strangeness of modernity" except the phenomenological description of the state of affairs with the position of man and the world, much more attention was paid to the new approach to a foreigner as such. It is therefore not by chance that interpersonal inter- and trans-discursivity means the path of open dialogue with Other. Nothing is closed in itself. As long as this alien in its "strangeness" finds itself in the very idea of "self-propriety" of a subject that answers the question of the Other as an alien, it is so certain that there is no royal way of integrating it into the value system of the dominant culture. But Waldenfels in his *phenomenology of the alien* cannot establish a model of communication that



would fall below the level of Habermas' "ideal speech situation" as a condition for the possibility of the post-national constellation of democracy (Habermas 1981: 107–108). Therefore, responsiveness is always in relation to the pathos of corporeal affection. We are not machines. In addition, we do not have an obligation to listen to the orders of some kind of uncanny program to accept instructions for the further operation from the office of "Big Other". After all, we do not behave just like mass audiences at stadiums or as an unbridled crowd ready to chase selfish individuals in autocratic tyranny. Freedom of non-response allows responsiveness to be both resistance and protest, and subversion and disadvantageous system based on the idea of engaging and disconnecting the Other. In various studies, discussions, and lectures during 1997–2001, Waldenfels clarified what *phenomenology of the alien* (*Phänomenologie des Fremden*) means. Interestingly, the topics and concepts developed, such as "order" (*Ordnung*), "the pathos" (*Pathos*) "response" (*Antwort*), "body" (*Leib*), "attention" (*Aufmerksamkeit*) and "interculturalism" (*Interkulturalität*), are an extremely complex network of what remains of the phenomenology after Husserl. Between the *body* and *the Other* in their complex relationship, it should be obvious that Waldenfels' basic "categories" and "existentials" are related to the consideration of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology and existential phenomenology of body and Levinas' ethics of the Other. It is, therefore, significant to point out that his way of thinking denotes precisely the place between Husserl and French contemporary thinkers who were first in the 20th century to seriously take into consideration the relationship between man's corporeality and the perception of the Other. These six terms are not ranked in line with the spirit of classical metaphysics. After all, hierarchical order just creates the inevitable and inescapable exclusion of the Other. It could be therefore legitimate to introduce into the discussion the concept of the "irreducible asymmetry" (*untilgbare Asymmetrie*) between "individuality" and "alienness" (Waldenfels 2006: 28; Gmainer-Franzel 2008: 115–117).

Such asymmetry clearly points to the problem of constituting something that can no longer be carried out on the basis of intentional consciousness. This term meant the orientation of thought in the sense of reflection on the subject of consciousness. For the late Husserl, the discovery of the concept of the life-world (*Lebenswelt*) had far-reaching consequences to the new phenomenology. The thinking takes place as an event in the space-time world. Therefore, it encompasses the whole man as a person with all his possibilities of understanding and knowledge about the Being. The mind, hence, is not pushing more superior feelings. In this regard, phenomenology and psychoanalysis were related to the discovery of a primarily human body in the world. Namely, the *body of the Other* in its eccentric "foreignness" tells us that we are close to each other only in the distance. His/her "I" must be affirmed in relation to my "I" from something that connects us to humans. Obviously, it could not be any more of a fiction of a cosmopolitan community of mankind by Kant and his followers in the sense of the ruling of the universal over the particular. The experience of the relationship with the Other as "the Other" takes place on the perception and attention as a moment of perception of his/her body. For Waldenfels' language as the means/purpose of communication, it is always the task of establishing "responsive rationality". The problem arises, of

course, because the dialectical logic of the synthesis of opposites in the meaning of opposing differences might not enter into force here. However, unlike Derrida and ways of deconstructing logocentrism or Deleuze's ontology differences as becoming (*devenir*, *Werden*) in the process of design-scape of "desiring machines", Waldenfels' direction goes to what reconciles Husserl's desire to transcend physicalism and psychologism awareness and introduction into circulation of "irreducible asymmetry" in that moment. Is it even possible to establish, in real life, an intercultural dialogue between "own" and "foreign", without the constitution of some higher-level instance that this relationship bestows though a quite fragile sustainability? In other words, can there be a true dialogue without the strong hand of the "Big Third"?

The idea of "irreducible asymmetry" refers hence to the autonomy of the relationship beyond the hierarchy and order based on the transcendental authority of the Father/Law, to use the concept of Lacan. Namely, for the relationship to have the confidentiality and the proximity between "one's own" and "the Other" one must suspend any *a priori* form of hostility towards the Other. Within "responsive phenomenology" this becomes a key motive for any further development of initial assumptions about dialogue and interculturality. And what if the "hostility" as opposed to "friendship" is what necessarily arises from the relationship that "singularity" in relation to "alienness" considers cultural set point, and that the other needs in one way or another to accept, because otherwise it will stay out of history? It is interesting that Waldenfels' turn to the whole part of the terms "responsiveness" coincides with high ethical and political revolution of the 1990s in the thinking of Levinas and particularly Derrida. In the case of Derrida, we must not forget that his last seminal work entitled *The Politics of Friendship (Politiques de l'amitié)* has been published in 1994 (Derrida 1994). There is a thought on something unusual for the philosophy of politics from Plato and Aristotle to Hegel. But it could be obvious that non-political elements of thought have become decisive for the understanding of the contemporary world, not more than conceptual-categorical determinations derived from the metaphysics of the mind. Friendship-hostility belongs to the terms of decisionism performed in modern political theory by Carl Schmitt. However, in Waldenfels' use, it is more than obvious that the answer to the question of human identity in the age of global networking of science, technology and information requires different ways of interacting with the Other. We cannot explicitly say that it is about returning to the dark core of the body, or what Lacan calls ethics of psychoanalysis. When the desire for truth and justice becomes the key to understanding the ethical requirements of man, and not Kant's rigorous mental rules and norms, it becomes twisted. However, the foundations are not radically altered. The system continues to act perhaps even better on quite different assumptions.

But Waldenfels is aware that the *politics of responsive interculturalism* must develop into a new experience of relations with the Other as "own strangeness". So, a friendship is not a mere denial of hostility. It belongs to the "irreducible asymmetry", between two participants in the communication process. This requires mutual trust and desire for understanding the Other. Otherwise, everything seems futile. There cannot be a good and just community if freedom does not radiate from participants in dialogue regardless of their cultural differences. In that regard, the

freedom cannot be a phenomenological problem simply because it encompasses the idea that flows from the desire to be free, from that kind of thinking that Heidegger in *Being and Time* appointed as the pre-ontological understanding of Being. To comprehend the desire for freedom is necessarily to acknowledge the Other's freedom to keep "his own", even when it exists in a quite "other" space of life. Thus, the place of foreignness in the experience appears with all the accompanying thoughtful apparatus as a bitter slump of freedom in the space-time of human common being. So many misunderstandings are already present in the very language of speaking with regard to this experience which we have named from the experience of an alien from Plato to Albert Camus. Being-as-an-alien means, in many European languages, something marginal, excessive, uncanny. Waldenfels shows both in English and French languages the foreign and other people are something external (*externum, foreign, étranger*). In fact, it is about something beyond our own area of action. Additionally, to be "strange" assumes a basic concept of a speculative-dialectical system of Hegel, it then appears in Feuerbach's anthropological critique of religion, and reaches a milestone in the early Marx who fixes ontological terms to the concept of labour. Of course, the word-concept is – *alienation (Entfremdung)*. Anyway, what is not "your own" has the meaning of uncanny discomfort. The man is obviously afraid of an encounter with strangers and aliens, and this has the very origins in the ancient times as we have to witness in the traces of the Greeks from Sophocles to Plato (Waldenfels 1990; Waldenfels 1997: 68–69).

Language, therefore, directly points to signs of the Being. Hence in the German language, it is foreign or strange (*Fremde*) and is located between the alienation, or *Entfremdung* (Hegel-Feuerbach-Marx) and the A-effect, or *Verfremdung* (Brecht). To be an alien means to always be elsewhere, outside of your own homeland, extradited to the possible hospitality of "native people" and equally to their "hostility", almost to the rejection of being accepted and recognized in "its own strangeness". There is nothing in advance to give a guarantee that the event of communication on the assumptions of trust and closeness to human understanding will be successful. It seems as if we are talking about something we are constantly encountering in the world-historical events of the political nature: it should be like post-metaphysical thinking in the new order of rapprochement between warring states period and their citizens. But, as Levinas has chosen for the model of his unconditional ethics of the Other the face of refugees and displaced persons from their native homeland and their own country, so Waldenfels necessarily has to have figures of foreigners and guests in another country in his *phenomenology/xenology* (Prole 2017: 172–192). The figure means nothing other than the outline of a universal character (*eidōs*), which Husserl himself often uses in his texts in his late period, and also in the famous work *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. Can philosophy exist without such thoughts? We should immediately note that this does not mean anything but the primacy of modal categories of reality different from possibility. Similarly, philosophy does not mean a mere description of what "is" and how it is happening in space and time. We could determine the main problem of Waldenfels' phenomenology of the Other as an alien by the impossibility of his understanding of "responsiveness", which is just another way of critiquing Habermas' theory of communicative action. Let us not forget that the notion

of communication in the theory of Habermas simply denotes a contemporary way of explaining the complexity of the rare undisputed “life-world” (*Lebenswelt*).<sup>2</sup> It is well known that he took it from the late Husserl’s thinking.

However, the difference between one’s own and another’s world (*Heimwelt* versus *Fremdwelt*) for Waldenfels is not fixed and forever persistent. The difference, namely, originates from Husserl and does not relate to atypical phenomena but is ontologically established. There is much evidence for this claim. Waldenfels mentions the difference between “his” and “foreign” language, which belongs to the “innate” and “learned” (Waldenfels 1993). Responsivity is not possible in a common world without what Plato claims to be philosophical as the thinking of the Being. It designates a dialogue, a conversation in which the position of the Other reveals the impossibility of his conception as a mere other or different “I”. In addition, it could be no coincidence that Plato in the *Laws* embodied an *Alien* or a nameless man in the lead in conducting the dialogue. In an attempt to be able to understand the world inhabited by the irreducible Other, regardless of the differences in culture, there must be a desire to talk. Therefore, this desire is also the highest aspiration of philosophy. In that case, however, a contemporary phenomenology might be manifested in inter- and trans-discursivity. Finding another as my neighbour contemplates at the same time his approach as well as a departure from his own “innate” indifference towards anything that does not belong to what Wittgenstein designated with the statement “the limits of my language mean the limits of my world” (Wittgenstein 1922: 5–6). In it, the place of residence was questioned when an alien as a stranger came into the world. Everything suddenly becomes a space of uncanny discomfort and neglect. Such anxiety represents the highest form of fear of sinking into the abyss of nothingness of the existence of the singular individual, so the fear of the foreign world and its culture assumes the features of loosening the ground of its feet. Hence, a man is in the encounter with the one of his own – faced with the event of a radical change of the world and of life in general. Nobody can remain indifferent about such matters.

2 Husserl’s notion of *the life-world (Lebenswelt)* is articulated in *Die Krisis der Europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie: eine Einleitung in die Phänomenologische Philosophie* (Husserl 2010). In short, the powerful semantic level of the term derives from the question of the meaning and sense of human life in the scientific and technical way of life production in general. In this respect, the notion already has something that will soon become the fundamental notion of modern science but also of philosophy. It is about “life”, about the living that opposes every kind of contingency and human posture. The life-world denotes for Husserl the self-explanatory ground for the emergence of every science, art and human practical arts. It is simultaneously a “primordial sphere”. The term is used in a twin way: (1) as the anthropological foundation of man’s relationship to the world and (2) as a practical, pervasive, concrete life-world. In relation to the socio-cultural environment, the concept of the life-world insofar as it occurs universally and almost the same is what belongs to man as such in all historical epochs. However, the problem lies in the fact that only with the modernity due to method of natural sciences can we detect the spiritual-historical essence of man as irreducible. Preserving the world of life should not be just an ethical duty in every culture and society. It is an imperative of human existence and can only be understood from it by differences and similarities in culturally specific communities and societies (Marx 1987; Luckmann 2002: 55–67).

## 2. The End of Intentionality? Double Strategy Approaching

It is strange, as in its incomprehensibility, meaningless, does not mean any unspecified X who is waiting for it to be determined. The alien *shows that it could be unknown* (Waldenfels 1997: 73).

Waldenfels shows us what was already transparent to Nietzsche and Heidegger: that man as an “incomplete being” or as a being-there (*Dasein*) is always and will always be lacking, and, with the paradoxical aspirations that when approaching the Other remains at a distance, is never to be united with the source of its separation. Therefore, the relationship between “personality” and “alienation” cannot be solved in a dialectical way. There must be a gap between these two modes of being, that is, between these two phenomenological modes of what Heidegger in *Being and Time* has called an authentic notion of time versus vulgar. Without one, the Other cannot be distanced. Likewise, in this game of non-communitarian and asymmetrical nature of human contingency, it is only undeniable that it cannot be radically alienated in the language of self-determination. Being-as-an alien means to be different and viewed from the horizons of difference. We can say that, in advance, Waldenfels, in the wake of Merleau-Ponty, does not understand this difference as “ontological”, as it is for Heidegger an ontological difference between Being and beings, without which even the metaphysics of the West and its history could not be possible. Instead, this difference stems from what is unknown in its essential indefinite nature and is shown in this way. Showing a stranger pass through space-time that is neither authentic nor vulgar, but constituted as a relationship of “one’s own strangeness” towards “the stranger of our own”. We cannot be Other even if we wanted it to be, because we always retain the demonic nature of the factual existence of that before we become the Other. This is not just the problem of contemporary interculturalism. On the contrary, it should be a problem that is crucial for the entire historical-epochal destiny of the West with the arrival of the Christian religion. As is well-known, the authentic time that preaches Christianity with the coming of St. Paul designates the time of presence (*parousia*) as the bonds/relationship between the truth and the freedom of man in relation to God. And this means the possibility of abstinence and radical change of man in his mode of existence (*metanoia*). Changing from the foundation might be possible only when thinking opens space to a different world that comes, as once Nietzsche marvelous wrote – “on the pigeon’s feet”.

Waldenfels, on different occasions, testified the issues of some important sociologists and anthropologists-ethnologists, like Norbert Elias and Claude Lévy-Strauss, regarding the theme of the Other and strangeness which they introduced into the discourse of social sciences and humanities in the second half of the 20th century. The problem is, however, that in the end, it could always be only the “adopting” of the Other (*Aneignung*) and not its “irreducibility”. To appropriate means to integrate something or someone into one’s “own” culture in a way that almost reminds us of the exotics that have features of “domestication”. It is not unusual, therefore, that contemporary discussion will continue to be a sign of “modernist” and “postmodernist”, universalist and particularistic, contextualist and constructive approach, with regard to the question of what is primarily a mystery for Western metaphysics.

It is not just a matter of a stranger as an alien, but moreover, the problem is what we should do with animals and their way of being, regarding the contemporary advancement in neurocognitive sciences and technosciences overall (Paić 2018). In general, each question of the Other might be necessarily a question of anonymous Third, as shown by the contributions of Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and Levinas. What we have shown in Waldenfels' rejection of Habermas' theory of communicative action, is that the problem of "rational responsiveness" continued in all his other writings about the possibility of other specific communities outside Husserl's intersubjectivity. When, for example, Waldenfels argues that "interculturality transcends *trans-culturalism*", while "the difference between one's own and a foreign one leads to *communicative indifference*" (Waldenfels 1997: 78), we always listen to the same old story from Plato to Gadamer. It is, therefore, necessary to break away from the foundations of this "one-way dialogue". Undoubtedly, the hermeneutics cannot be performed on that ground. The reason is that the understanding of the Other as an alien cannot cross the threshold of the so-called "an authentic way of understanding". Namely, we could only listen and hear that Other one as the Other. But it cannot even realise that his "self-interest" is one that challenges our self-confident and self-contained logo-phonocentrism. Answering a foreigner's request means releasing a space for a kind of "responsiveness" different from the one that stands in the foundations of Western metaphysics. That is a reason why Waldenfels has to look for a place where the dialogue and discourse responsiveness in an inter-cultural/trans-cultural sense are not only possible but also the necessary, not to the extent that it requires a change in the direction of thinking. Instead of listening to the wishes of the Other, it is necessary to figure out how the "irreducible asymmetry" can be opened to the fullest extent for the one between "one's own strangeness" and "the Other of our own". In other words, it should be necessary to re-examine how to arrive from the phenomenology of the corporeality of the Other to the primary feeling that leads to interaction in communication, and not to "appropriation" and "domestication".

In a text entitled "Thinking of the Alien" ("Das Fremde Denken"), published in 2007, Waldenfels introduces the distinction between the radical and relative thinking of the foreigner. The latter refers to our knowledge that is always limited, and the example is taken from the foreign language. The radical thinking of an Alien/Other is the one which goes to the very root of things. Hence, foreignness separates itself from *its own* (*Eigenen*) and the *common* (*Gemeinsame*) (Waldenfels 2007: 361–362). It might be very interesting that the latter is derived from the political universalism of Western democracies. Constitutional document as a fundamental law on which modern state rests at the same time assumes the logic of exclusion, because in the case foreigners, those who for various reasons are the citizens of the nation-state, it does not recognize their legitimacy as alienness of political subjects. In order to develop the "philosophy of the alien", Waldenfels' phenomenology must lead to the end of the possibility of the basic concept of Husserl's – intentionality. It is well known that the distinction between *noesis* and *noema* (thoughts and objects) has shaped the essence of the phenomenological approach to the things as such. Starting from the so-called natural attitude, using eidetic and phenomenological reduction (*epoché*), the thinking directly *sees* the essence of being without quasi-mediation.

But in the case of Waldenfels's concept on the trajectories of Merleau-Ponty and Levinas, it should be obvious that both the thinking and its subject can no longer be performed in anthropology and egology. We have seen, however, that Waldenfels strictly denies those traces of phenomenology that remain dimmed. Facing the "irreducible asymmetry" of an alien as such in space-time communication between people in a globally networked society, Husserl's inter-objectivity can no longer be a salvific solution. Why? Let us recall that Husserl understands intentionality as an act of awareness (*noesis*) on the subject (*noema*). Each intentional act has noetic content. Thinking or *noesis* has a realistic character, meaning that things give their own meaning. *Noema* is a "sense" (*Sinn*) of an object. To avoid the attack of Kant's transcendentalism of the subject, Husserl develops the intentional content of the thought mission directed at (1) the intentional object of the act; (2) intentional matter; and (3) intentional nature of the act. Finally, the noetic-noematic structure of consciousness in intentional acts of perception, imagination, memories are the same. By rejecting Berkeley's solipsism and Kant's transcendental idealism, Husserl did not become a cognitive realist. The objects, therefore, in the real world have their meaning only when they are witnessed as the acknowledged objects of our perception, imagination and memories (Husserl 2009). However, this cannot be applied to the figure of an alien. The reason lies in how the manner of his appearing is uncanny indeterminacy and a mystery for consciousness in the meaning of "subject" and "I". To be able to think what is strange in its strangeness Waldenfels comes to the results of French poststructuralism with the revised Habermas' project of the theory of communicative action. Decentered subject matter and a plurality of rationality create the preconditions of the creation of a new space for the thinking of the Other as a foreign/alien (Waldenfels 2007: 363).

Let us see how Waldenfels depicts his *phenomenology of the alien* in view of the assumptions of a new approach to the problem. There are, therefore, several discernible framework definitions, motives, and efforts to it:

- Alien is encountered in the form of the experience of foreignness and is preceded by the knowledge, understanding and acknowledgement of the stranger. Affective relationships here are more important than the rational arrangement.
- Alien is not just a state of disadvantage, but a complement to one's own. This is the approaching that Freud calls uncanny (*Unheimliche*), and Benjamin – *aura*.
- The radical form of foreign matters can only be understood in a paradoxical way as a "perceived inability" that goes beyond our own possibilities. The relationship is asymmetric because I never see you in the same way as myself.
- The strangeness is separated into different dimensions: the stranger of myself, the stranger of the Other, and the stranger of another order. It begins with one's own body, in one's own house and on the ground. An example is the mother language which we learn by listening to the Others. Waldenfels here introduces the notion of *ecstatic extinction* related to the restriction of the Other because the Other is twofold and duplicate. When the rest of myself is established in the reflection of my own, then the ecstatic state of the strangeness is complete.

- Being angry is manifested in all the cornerstones that enable us to live together. In addition to the ecstatic and duplicative form, an outsider also has a third form of so-called *extraordinary* strangeness.
- Alien can only be experienced indirectly as a deviation from the normal and the excess. The examples Waldenfels states are a gift and forgiveness, but also excesses like hate and violence as well as pain and trauma. When a person stands inside and out of culture then he/she can be asserted for him/her as it has been done by philosophical anthropologist Helmuth Plessner when he has determined a man as “eccentric positionality”.
- Annihilation has to be thought in plural because it has a multitude of different forms of foreign as well as *Ordnungen*. This is not of importance to strangers or wanderers, but to patients or victims (Waldenfels 2007: 364–365).

Having in mind all this, we can conclude that Waldenfels is almost comprehensively considering that which enters into the phenomenology of the alien. From the aspects of activities different from feeling to experience, from customs to the cultural habits of man in society and the common way of Being. In particular, it is interesting to use the literature, which is mostly an ethnographic inspiration, in order to spread its widespread insight into “xenological endeavours”. But immediately it becomes clear that we are witnesses of the transgression of disciplinary boundaries, like the one done to the ethnology and anthropology of culture. How much this issue is of a multiple significance is reflected in the contemporary policy of refugees, asylum seekers and stateless people. In recent texts, Waldenfels is increasingly concerned with the understanding of an alien as a refugee in the pluralist cultural societies of the West. It might not be necessary to point out specifically why it should be exactly that. The huge refugee wave of people from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq since 2015 is represented as a serious security policy issue to the European Union and also to the member states, and the way to tackle this “humanitarian issue” has far-reaching consequences for future global relations and possible deficits of democratic principles of equality, freedom and justice in the environment of Europe and the West (Waldenfels 2017: 89–105). In the context of “cultural entropy”, when globalism opposes localism, Waldenfels warns of the possibility of the resurrection of the ideology of “blood and soil”. Therefore, “selfishness” can no longer think of the authentic relationship between man and the ideas that have been attached to the West and the world by the seal of wisdom and knowledge. Threatening, instead, with a danger resulting from the aggressive and paranoid struggle for so-called one’s own identity before endangering external and internal enemies. If we look more closely at how Waldenfels develops his *phenomenology of the alien* in the last texts with regard to the “political entropy” of the global order, we will notice that it is no longer a dispute about the end of intentional consciousness – the keywords of Husserl’s phenomenology. Much more problematic seems that which comes out of phenomenology and could never have been adequately thought, including Merleau-Ponty’s and Levinas’ attempts, and the same applies to all the interpretations of late Heidegger, who repudiated phenomenology roughly after *Being and Time*. Heidegger called it a *being-with* (*Mit-Sein*). As part of post-phenomenological attempts, such as those being done by



Jean-Luc Nancy, we can call it the thinking of the upcoming community (Nancy 2014). Of course, it is in this regard to think of that strange and eccentric first-rate task with regard to the problem of the political constitution of such a community, which can no longer be backward, in the bosom of a nostalgic order of *polis* or the *Republic* of ancient times of democracy (Paić 2013). The alien is not “marginal”, as it could not only be “just” about the normative order of the ruling “innate” culture.

We have seen in the foregoing considerations that Waldenfels is trying to give space to a different notion of the body and mind as a dialogue and responsiveness between the participants in communication. However, his fundamental idea represents the one that connects the feeling, experience and comprehending of the Other as an “irreducible asymmetry” of what is strange and foreign and appears just like such experience. We could paraphrase Marx and say that nothing inhumane is no uncanny to us. Maybe it was before and there, but it is not right now. Why? Because strangers and outsiders cannot, in their mode of relativity and paradoxes, keep up with the riddle, some uncanny elevated object of uncertainty. It changes depending on how much the asymmetry really shows a dual approach strategy. What would otherwise be the policy of interculturalism today, if not just this new approach to learning and taking care of the Other? There is no doubt, however, that this process will be extremely painful. In the era of *technosphere* when artificial intelligence, by accelerating the operation of “thinking” and “acting” in accordance with the programmed responsiveness of the Other, the question of an alien is no more so enigmatic and even eccentric as it could be before technical hyper-modernization. But is the technique a solution to a problem that is disturbed by what is happening in the thriving space of a concrete community and society, politics and ideology? The answer lies in the spirit of Waldenfels’ texts. The technical level of this problem is by no means “neutral”. Let us recall that for the philosopher of technology like Gilbert Simondon even the robot is the alien and the ultimate in the human world.<sup>3</sup> The technology appears, therefore, as it is alienated, strange, and by no means its own. Over time, this way of a relationship has changed. It is not possible to isolate the technique from the socio-cultural context of human existence.

If the Waldenfels has “intentionality transformed into responsiveness” (Waldenfels 2003), then the path of phenomenology in the new conditions of the action of globally networked societies must be labelled as a “post-phenomenological path”. Otherwise, in one place, intentionality should be described as “shibboleth” of phenomenology. It is apparent now that the communication potential of the existence of man in a historical-epochal sense does not hide in the answer to the question of an alien. We said above that the answer assumes not just listening to the war orders and his missionaries, to say what Heidegger named in the 1930s as a trace of his thinking of the *Event (Ereignis)* (Heidegger 2009). What is Waldenfels’ transformation of fundamental phenomenological concepts and categories?

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3 “The machine is an alien; and that stranger who is just creating that human, it evokes it, materializes it, serves him, but always remains out of the reach of the human. The real cause of alienation in the modern world consists in this ignorance of machine, which is not alienation caused by machine, but by the unknown knowledge of its nature and its being, the absence of the world of meaning and its lack of a value table and in the notions that have a share in culture” (Simondon 1958/1969/1989: 9–10).

First of all, in the fact that the word “*Ordnung*” lies now in the foreground, instead of “the world”, and instead of “us” (We) comes the “stranger/alien”. Everything is related to new boundaries and delimitations, and what is particularly important is that the notion of the Other is holding in the meaning taken by Levinas. He even claims that ethics (the Other) becomes the first philosophy or ontology. Waldenfels’ intention is a completely different way of thinking (Friesen 2014: 68–77). Although in our consideration, the term “The Other” is used as a way of presenting an alien and a stranger in an existential situation of deceit in an “order” or “world” that has already been defined as a cultural-plural context of Western civilization, but vice versa with raising the level of communication in the global order of capitalism, there is a clear difference between their mode of Being. The Other is not necessarily a stranger. Moreover, an alien does not have to be the Other in any historical-epochal situation, because its fundamental determinant is to appear and to act in the way of a stranger to someone or something, but even to itself. Marx, for example, has developed the ontological notion of alienation which is alienated from nature, from other people in alienated society, from a man to man, or from himself in his own singular existence. Consequently, it might be only probable to say that the alien is someone quite Other. This is true only when it appears as the opposite order with egologically established awareness of the subject.

How does Waldenfels approach the body on the phenomenological way? It has become commonplace to follow the critique of Descartes’ dualism of the two substances. So it should be the case in his attempt. The synthesis of the mind and corporeality presupposes that the body is manifested through the sensation of seeing and hearing, touch and smell, movement and rest. But in the first place, the body can be understood as a whole of self-defence in all directions. It is not, therefore, a reflection of something derived from transcendental consciousness as the first cause and ultimate purpose of human thought. The body, as well as the machine throughout the history of metaphysics, has been an alien and an unknown territory in philosophy and humanities. Paradoxically, since the new era, when more attention to the scientific sense has begun to be devoted the body, it is increasingly locked in the bonds of physicalism and psychology. But Waldenfels does not approach the same way such as Foucault and Deleuze. His interest in the body is mediated by the achievements of the existential phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty. What makes it crucial for further analysis of the subject within philosophy and humanities refers to the movement in the reverse direction of Husserl’s philosophy of intersubjectivity. Being a body means being in the way of openness of sensitivity, feelings and experiences as the primary ways of intuitive knowledge of the foreign-in-world. Since Waldenfels, as a condition, is phenomenologically embracing the notion of “the world” because it is not in a concrete analysis of human relations in the space and time of encountering different cultural “worlds”, it is self-evident that the body’s self-replication and self-referentiality of the body occur through pathos and responsiveness of events in the relationship between “personality” and “alienation”. The body is never a mere means for any other purpose. In addition, the body denotes a phenomenological indicator of the relationship between man and the world, or, in other words, human existence and its established order of value in living as an articulation of the meaning of the Being.

Why is responsiveness beyond the limits of intentionality? The answer specifies a plan already in the orientation of consciousness toward objects “one-time” as the causal flow of information. This model of communication prevails, though, in the world based on the logic of purpose-aim, cause-effect. However, Waldenfels introduces a decentered subject into circulation and a plurality of rationality in the dialogue between “one’s own” and “alienation”. In this way, it extends the circle of mutual relationship and understanding. But no longer an extraterrestrial object in its materiality—the content of the message or awareness of “the subject”. Responsivity should be noted as a multifaceted model of communication. And in it, even the phenomenon of attention has a moment of the presence of a change of “subject” and “object”. It does not sound pretentious to say that Waldenfels promotes intentionality, starting from what is in quantum physics, cybernetics and contemporary philosophy in the area of the phenomenology of the object. In this case, the inaccuracy of an alien, his insensitivity to intentional intersecting intellect in the object-space of action can make a turn in the essence of phenomenology. So, the phenomenology is now redirected to try not to close the circle from one perspective and listen, but to asymmetrically open in the new possibilities of dialogue and discourse about a stranger as such. Multilateral communication request significantly changes the position of “one’s own” against the “Other”. For Waldenfels, it is perfectly clear that this necessarily critically goes beyond the limitation of access to the Other as an expanded horizon of the meaning of “appropriating” and “integrating” into the predominant “world” of the society and culture with dark origins. We see now that this does not mean just a shortcoming in the thinking of the logo-phonocentrism of the West. It is also a requirement to begin to think what was not possible to think just because the object X (from man to machine) felt excluded. The stranger/alien, therefore, in its existential unease of otherness and exclusion of metaphysical thinking necessarily appear as excess infection (Waldenfels 2009).

There remains, however, a completely different “obscure origin” of what Waldenfels in his lecture “Homo respondens” particularly emphasized. In a strange way, this is the main theme and motif of the metaphysics of the end of modernity. It is the notion of emotions, feelings and awareness. In all relevant philosophical speculations, the notion appears in such a way that it causes the reflection of body and body as a condition of aesthetics and ethics. What was neglected, pushed aside, ultimately having a second-rate character for the new philosophy or ontology of realism, is at once an extraordinary meaning? In the works of Deleuze and Levinas, in Nancy and Waldenfels, we witness the return of feelings to the reflection of a new body of bodies in relation to what neurocognitive science does today. For how else to explain what this post-phenomenology refers to when, instead of the intentionality of consciousness in the acts of perception, experience and memories, advocates responsiveness on the boundary between communicative rationality and the requirement of recognizing the strangeness in one’s own identity. Waldenfels, in his article “Strange in Own: Origins of Emotions” from 2006, already recalls in the introductory sections that Husserl also felt that the notion of feeling grew into a “mentally inward world”. So, this means that it could be “appropriated” from psychology and anthropology and thus lost in the thematization of the positive

sciences of the contemporary age (Waldenfels 2006). But if the feeling is understood in Kant's meaning, then it becomes a relationship between natural and moral laws. In both cases, the feeling is shown by some external means. That is a reason why it appears as a function of something else. Can we ever have a "feeling" for understanding the alien as our own in the other skin and that it does not degrade in the "sentimentalism", in that "merely physicalism", which is certainly not appropriate for reflections in and resides outside the horizon that is established by the transcendental subject of a new era?

When Waldenfels argued that Husserl "freed the feelings from their subjective fingers," giving them intentional meaning, this is not yet sufficient for a phenomenology of the alien. Why? Simply, because the consciousness always encompasses the consciousness of something (object to in this or that sense). But the alien is not just the subject of consciousness. It is the seat as a spiritual and historical of our cognitive synthesis. The totality of the body shows up in factual corporeality as thought-and-action. It goes in the direction of making sense of the meaning of human life and of meaning in the cosmic and divine mode of manifesting the Being. When life makes sense then the universe is in balance too. Feelings, furthermore, belong to the body, and the body is defined as the existential organization of the relationship towards the Other. Since Waldenfels, as we have already demonstrated, transforms the underlying concepts of Husserl's phenomenology over what was the discovery of Merleau-Ponty, then responsiveness is a complex relationship of multiple communication rather than a mere response to an order coming from or out of the interior. However, the body cannot be thought without the duplicity of its origin in natural and spiritual sciences. Therefore, the materiality of the body corresponds to the psycho-social determinants of its proximity and singularity. The body language corresponds to the dialogue with the elements of affectivity and rationality. In general, thinking about a phenomenological feeling means opening up the problem of how bodiliness is spreading and timing as the most unusual. From all other experiences, the feeling of self-collecting experiences denotes a touch of the Other as a "foreign body". But how and what else lies in our neighbourhood, however close, almost as confident as a hug and kiss. In this Platonic notion, our *eros* and *philia* (love and friendship) should be to look for further opportunities in advance when possible phenomenology of commons right now in the days of complete nihilism perhaps opens up new quite outstanding odds.

## Conclusion

Waldenfels' contributions to the new phenomenology are extremely valuable because he shows an original way to connect two fundamental concepts remaining after Husserl in the wake of Merleau-Ponty and Levinas: *the body* and *the Other*. But the way he did it in his numerous books, studies, lectures and talks from the 1990s to today deserves special interpretative attention. We have seen that his thinking can be labelled by a productive connection of German and French phenomenology, with the addition of critical computation regarding Habermas' theory of communicative action. Responsivity and phenomenology of the alien presuppose the decentered operation of the subject of contemporary philosophy and

social sciences and humanities. However, one term in this strict and exact reading of the contemporary state of affairs by means of the notion of a stranger, the guest, stateless persons, in the extension of the term of the Other, remained at the core of this thinking and may be still insufficient subject matter. It is about the concept of *culture*. In the phenomenological discourse, it would be easy to determine that this is the area of regional ontology. In addition, with respect to the term “life-world” that the late Husserl and Habermas develop as a fluid field entering the meaning of what links the “self” and “foreign”. Indeed, Waldenfels, in an effort to understand the “culture wars” in the global order, has created a philosophical framework for interculturalism. Let us leave possible objections to the concept of culture as something between the “life-world” and inters in the objectivity of man, because the problem arises when each post-phenomenology must be calculated with the excess of common being (*Mit-Sein*) in the emerging world of networked societies and cultures. In this way, the encounter with the indefinite and ineligibility of the alien is shown at the same time as an encounter with a foreign culture. In the form of the Other and its identity, culture becomes the question of the relationship between “one’s own” and “Other”.

What makes interculturalism fragile, and also not very effective policy dialogue and open communication, primarily shows in that the culture is not just the sum of the language and customs, but articulations and power of the nation-state in relation to the other. Time has ceased culture to be a mere trace of the spiritual being of man in the scientific-technical world. Power has the features of maintaining continuity in time and rootedness in space and never diminishes only by force and violence. Moreover, what distinguishes the cultural form of power should be its discursive credibility as a way of symbolic communication in the world. In the formal framework of the post-national constellation of democracy, speaking in Habermas’ language, this power can replace only the logic of the formation of the post-imperial sovereignty of “big space” (*Großraum*) as announced by Carl Schmitt, in his *Nomos of the Earth (Der Nomos der Erde)* (Schmitt 1947). Waldenfels’ philosophical attempt, however, is to open the space for intercultural communication from the recognition of the other kind of universe, as opposed to hermeneutics, and universal pragmatists, from the one that always means the disguised triumph of subjectivity in the discourse of egology and anthropology. The problem of this space is not geographical nor can be resolved by reference to the formal frameworks of modern democracy as universal model of resolving disputes between different actors in the dialogue. The place of the stranger becomes the “personality” place. Everything suddenly appears “here” and “now”. Strangers are no more rarity in this interconnected world. From refugees to immigrants to states with economic and political stability, space is becoming more deterritorialized. What does that mean? First of all, there are no “original” residents in it. Cities have been surrounded by ghettos and areas of exclusion for immigrants, aliens and asylum seekers. No illusions should be created any more. The difficult life of the Other cannot be solved over the paths of the utopia of complete integration. The reality might be always more complicated than the models and paradigms of interculturalism.

However, Waldenfels has opened up the problem we face today and we remain without a respectable solution. What is constant in his contemplation is that no

return to the tradition in terms of hermeneutics or pragmatism (Gadamer and Rorty) helps to understand why being an alien means to break into the metaphysical origin of terms with which we have deliberately compared the order of meaning and ultimately proved unsuccessful and unobtrusive for the present intertwined with the aporias and the paradoxes of identity. This self-referentiality of the alien and the foreign, which means that it is impossible to include-exclude the already established order of the idea of the power of the Other, might mean that after all its occurrence it exists as an “intruder”.

Being an alien means being someone else and beyond each and every part of the founding of a common being. It might be the fate of the “same” from Plato’s time to nowadays. Nothing has changed except that destiny has become contingent, and “intruder” is a day-to-day encounter with that uncanny thing, though is disturbing but in an acceptable measure between fear and exoticism. Where, however, an alien comes and why its essence belongs to the upcoming community? This question is no longer a matter of Waldenfels’ phenomenology. With it, they request responsiveness of affective body in communication with other phenomenology hitting its own realization. Perhaps the time has come for us to open up a completely different view of what makes everything strange and unfamiliar in the world, outside the overwhelming phenomenological path. In the beginning, it is necessary to abandon the illusion of the power of the subject and equally the illusion of the power of the community. Beyond the universality and the particularities, the whole and the parts, the place of a mysterious encounter between those who share the destiny of aliens and the world gives more worries of the dignity of the other existence than ours, of this safe and normalized “boredom” which becomes an entropy without authentic culture and politics. To think of in-between “one’s own” and “strangeness” means to prepare new fundamentals for the possible touch of what has always been obscured in the sources and necessarily untouchable during the history of Western metaphysics. Time has come to “enlighten” that darkness. *Maybe...*

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Žarko Paić

Šta znači biti stranac?

Bernhard Valdenfels i politika responzivnog interkulturalizma

Apstrakt

Autor analizira politiku responzivnog interkulturalizma u mišljenju Bernharda Valdenfelsa, počevši od teze da nakon Huserlove fenomenologije valja razmatrati samo dva fundamentalna pojma: telo i Drugog. U savremenoj nemačkoj „post-fenomenologiji“, prvi pojam je sistematski artikulisao Herman Šmic, dok je potonja tema napredovala u Valdenfelsovom delu, i to kao fenomenologija stranog do kraja metafizike Zapada. U dva dela diskusije, autor naznačuje svoju fundamentalnu hipotezu o aporijama i paradoksima interkulturalizma, budući da responzivnost i ksenologija ne mogu da pruže pozitivnu definiciju pojma kulture u eri globalne entropije. Analiza otuda tematizuje dva pitanja: (1) šta je responzivnost čoveka u odnosu na Drugog, uključujući i različite puteve njegovog prisustva u svetu, i (2) zbog čega Drugi kao stranac i neodomaćen (*Unheimlich*) dovodi u pitanje osnovni stav fenomenologije kao takve – intencionalnost svesti?

Ključne reči: stranac, fenomenologija, responzivnost, nesvodiva asimetrija, interkulturalizam, telo