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HANDING DOWN MEANING. GENERATIVITY, HISTORICITY, AND THE MATERNAL AS A QUASI-TRANSCENDENTAL FIELD

ABSTRACT

This paper proposes a phenomenological reconfiguration of the relation between transcendental constitution and historicity, especially through the notion of the "maternal", "natality" and "fecundity". Rather than approaching these features as a thematic object, symbolic figure, or empirical domain, the paper reconstructs them as a generative field in which meaning is instituted, transmitted, and renewed across time. Starting from Edmund Husserl's late analyses of teleology, intersubjectivity, and generativity (especially in *The Crisis of European Sciences* and the manuscripts on intersubjective inheritance) the paper argues that the validity of sense depends not on ahistorical formal conditions, but on historically operative processes of transmission and reactivation. This framework is developed through the Milan School's reception of Husserl. Enzo Paci's interpretation of phenomenological rationality as an infinite, ethically charged task of reactivation discloses the temporal and intersubjective conditions of reason, while Giovanni Piana's analyses of *tradere*, generativity, and intersubjective inheritance show that historicity is not external to transcendental life but constitutes its very mode of existence. Within this context, the maternal emerges as a structural configuration that articulates continuity without identity, inheritance without automatism, and renewal without rupture. The paper further clarifies this generative structure through a dialogue with Hannah Arendt's notion of natality and Emmanuel Levinas's analyses of paternity, fecundity and diachrony. While Arendt does not thematise the maternal in the sense proposed here and Levinas develops the maternity primarily as a figure of ethical substitution, I argue that their accounts of beginning, plurality, fecundity, and responsibility articulate complementary dimensions of the generative field reconstructed in this paper. On this basis, the maternal is finally characterised as a historical a priori and, more precisely, as a quasi-transcendental field: historically variable and embodied, yet structurally constitutive of the possibility of meaning, responsibility, and historical continuity. The paper concludes by suggesting that this reconceptualisation allows phenomenology to address its own historicity without abandoning its critical ambitions, opening a path toward a generative critique of transcendental reason.

KEYWORDS
Phenomenology;
Generativity;
Historicity;
Quasi-Transcendental;
Maternal

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Introduction. Historicizing the Transcendental through the Maternal

In Husserl's late phenomenology, the problem of validity is inseparable from the problem of history (see Carr 1974; Ni 2018 and Nobili 2024). For him, the ideality of meaning (most visibly in the sciences) does not endure by virtue of an abstract permanence, but only insofar as it is instituted, consolidated, transmitted, and repeatedly brought back to presence (see Bernet, Driker-Ohren, and Saber 2023 and Mensch 2016). In *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, Husserl insists that theoretical constructs cannot be understood independently of the *practical* conditions of their formation, stabilization, and reactivation. Idealities live only through a return to their *intuitive* origins, a return that is never definitive but must be continually renewed if sense is not to congeal into empty objectivity. This concern also motivates Husserl's critique of Modern objectivism (see Valenti 2025). The increasing autonomy of abstract scientific constructions is accompanied, he argues, by a progressive loss of meaning, resulting in science that becomes "meaningless for life" as such (Husserl 1970: 6). Such objectivism rests on a forgetfulness of origins, namely of those concrete and intuitive practices that originally oriented the scientific constitution and guaranteed its evidential and cumulative grounding. What is lost in this process is not only sensitivity to intuitive evidence, but also the active role and *responsibility* of the knowing subject, who risks becoming a mere executor of inherited results rather than a participant in the historical and cumulative life of reason. Against this background, Husserl rearticulates teleology as the internal form of rational existence. Accordingly, teleology does not designate a final goal toward which reason advances, nor an external finalism imposed from without. It names, rather, the historically structured responsibility to renew sense by bringing it back to presence (see Miettinen 2014, 2021 and Serban 2024a on the more and more pervasive role of teleology in Husserl late production).

Accordingly, in §15 of *The Crisis*, Husserl characterizes philosophy as an ongoing process that "hones and enriches the core of the becoming of philosophy" and describes philosophers as "bearers of this teleology," grounded in "our personal intentions in the unity of our historical task" (Husserl 1970: 70). Rationality here unfolds only through acts of reassumption and enrichment that bind together generations "for one another and with one another", drawing upon a shared spiritual heritage and pursuing a common "surviving goal" that is rediscovered and reactivated rather than merely preserved (Husserl 1970: 70–71). Teleology, understood in this way, already implies a *generative* structure of rational grounding. Every act of renewal substitutes itself for earlier sedimentations without abolishing them. Moreover, it conserves sense precisely by taking it up again for a new present and for others yet to come[1].

1 Indeed, *substitution* here does not imply replacement or negation of earlier sedimentations. It designates the phenomenological process of reactivation through which inherited sense is preserved precisely by being taken up again and brought to presence within a new historical horizon (see Cahoone, 1986: 5; Pradelle, 2013: 297-98). The same

Accordingly, validity persists only through such acts of renewal which are at once preservative and transformative. This generative dimension becomes increasingly explicit in Husserl's analyses of scientific praxis and historical transmission. In §40 of *The Crisis*, the transformation of prescientific life into scientific life is said to presuppose "an infinite horizon of inactive validities which function with them in flowing mobility," forming a "single indivisible, interrelated complex of life" (Husserl 1970: 149). Past achievements are thus not inert deposits but living resources, continually reclaimed through *Bildung*, communalization, and critique. The *Origin of Geometry* offers a paradigmatic articulation of this insight, making explicit the historical and intersubjective conditions of ideal validity[2]. There, Husserl identifies an intersubjective and historical a priori underlying every ideal institution: an open infinitude in which meaning becomes what it is only through its transmission and critical reassumption across generations. Language and, above all, *writing* secure the technical possibility of this transmission by enabling ideal constructions to be "understood for all future time and by all coming generations of men," and thus to be "handed down and reproduced with the identical meaning" (Husserl 1970: 377). At the same time, Husserl insists that no ideality survives by itself. The persistence of sense depends on what he calls a "propagative process of transferred meaning", binding together an open chain of generations of researchers, again, "working for and with one another" (Husserl 1970: 355–356, 363).

It is within this context that the question of generativity and transmission (and with it the phenomenological relevance of the *maternal*) becomes

semantic field will later be extended to generative substitution, as in the succession of human generations through birth and death, where substitution names a progressive explication, recovery, and sublation of sense rather than its loss. In this latter context, substitution acquires explicit ethical correlates, without abandoning its phenomenological grounding.

2 The *Origin of Geometry* constitutes one of Husserl's most explicit attempts to think the historical and intersubjective conditions of ideal validity from within transcendental phenomenology. There Husserl shows that ideal objects (paradigmatically geometrical ones) do not subsist as timeless entities, but acquire enduring validity only insofar as they are linguistically articulated and materially fixed in writing. Writing enables the sedimentation of meaning beyond the immediacy of intuitive presence and makes possible its transmission within a living tradition, in which past, present, and future contributors remain in communication (Husserl 1970: 355–360; Landgrebe 2011: 10, 38; Fink 1995: 174–176). Geometry thus exemplifies a process of idealisation that is intrinsically historical, intergenerational, and always perfectible, grounded in a continuous synthesis of past and new acquisitions whose "persisting manner of being" cannot be understood apart from its temporal and sociogenetic constitution (Husserl 1970: 355; Thierry 1995: 94). In this sense, the *Origin of Geometry* is emblematic for the present paper: it discloses a historical a priori of meaning grounded in transmission, reactivation, and renewal, thereby anticipating the generative logic later articulated in Husserl's manuscripts on intersubjectivity and generativity. The emphasis on inheritance, continuation, and responsibility across generations provides a crucial phenomenological background for understanding the maternal not as an empirical origin, but as a quasi-transcendental field of sense transmission and historical renewal.

unavoidable (see Serban 2024b)[3]. In this paper, the maternal does not designate a thematic domain, a biological origin, or a metaphorical image. It names, rather, a generative function: the historically operative passage through which sense is brought into the world, handed over, and rendered available for renewal beyond the sovereignty of its originators. More precisely, the maternal will be treated here as a field rather than as a subject, substance, or originary event. By "field" I mean a relational configuration in which embodied dependency, temporal succession, intersubjective mediation, and separation operate together as conditions for the institution and transmission of sense. Such a field conditions historical experience without determining in advance the forms that experience must take. It makes transmission possible while leaving open the ways in which what is inherited will be reassumed, contested, or transformed by those who receive it. If the validity of meaning depends on its capacity to be transmitted, reactivated, and renewed beyond the lifespan of individual subjects, then transcendental constitution cannot be fully accounted for in terms of purely *formal* conditions. What comes into view instead is a *field* of conditions that are historically variable and yet constitutive of experience: a domain in which constitution is inseparable from inheritance, mediation, and the temporal labour of reassumption. Husserl explicitly approaches this problematic in his late manuscripts on intersubjectivity and generativity, where analyses of pairing (*Paarung*), generative temporality, and intermonadic inheritance reshape the very sense of transcendental life. In the manuscripts gathered under E III – especially in E III 5 – as well as in the later volumes of *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität*, references to sexual mating, generation and maternity emerge in connection with originary institution, separation, and the generative continuity of sense across generations[4]. Even if

3 By "maternal", this study does not refer to maternity as a metaphor, nor does it thematize pregnancy or gestation as empirical phenomena. Rather, it adopts a phenomenological perspective on what it concretely means to bring into the world and to hand over (that is, to institute, sustain, and transmit sense beyond oneself). The maternal is thus approached as a generative structure in which emergence, separation, and renewal are articulated together, grounding the possibility of teleological reactivation and historical continuity. In this sense, it designates a quasi-transcendental field: neither a biological fact nor a symbolic figure, but a phenomenologically accessible condition of generativity and responsibility through which finitude is progressively explicated and renewed within a shared historical horizon. Analyses explicitly devoted to pregnancy and embodied maternal experience remain indispensable (Depraz 2003; Ferrarello 2025; Heinämaa 2014; Miglio 2021; Serban 2022; Smith 2016; Staehler 2025; Trigg 2021), but exceed the scope of the present inquiry.

4 Husserl does not develop a systematic concept of maternity, nor does he treat it as a thematic object of analysis. References to maternity appear instead within his late investigations of generativity and intersubjectivity, especially in manuscripts devoted to birth, corporeal pairing (*Paarung*), and the intermonadic transmission of sense. In this context, maternity figures as a concrete site in which originary institution (*Urstiftung*), separation, and continuity intersect. The manuscript group E III (particularly E III 5) is crucial because it explicitly addresses the problem of teleology, generative temporality beyond individual monadic constitution. Here Husserl analyzes birth not merely as

these remarks remain episodic rather than systematic, they indicate a decisive shift: accordingly, phenomenological constitution must be thought through the conditions of its transmission, not beside them. This is the point at which, I believe, the category of the quasi-transcendental becomes methodologically clarifying. What is at stake is not the thematic introduction of empirical content into transcendental philosophy. Rather, it is the emergence of a constitutive field that is neither universal and ahistorical in the classical sense nor reducible to brute facticity. Within this framework, the maternal can be understood both as a historical a priori and, more precisely, as a quasi-transcendental field. These expressions designate related but distinct dimensions of the argument. "Historical a priori" describes the mode in which the relevant conditions operate: they are instituted and sustained through historical practices of embodiment, inheritance, mediation, and transmission rather than existing as timeless forms outside history. "Quasi-transcendental," by contrast, identifies their philosophical status. These conditions are constitutive of the possibility of meaning and historical continuity, yet they do not ground experience from an ahistorical position; they themselves exist only through the processes they condition.

The maternal is paradigmatic of this structure because it articulates continuity without requiring identity between what generates and what is generated. It enables inheritance without reducing transmission to repetition and renewal without construing novelty as absolute rupture. Its constitutive force therefore lies precisely in its historical and relational character. The maternal does not precede history as an invariant schema subsequently instantiated in empirical life. It operates within history as the configuration through which sense can emerge, be sustained, separate itself from its origin, and become available for further constitution. In this way, it allows transcendental phenomenology to acknowledge historically mediated conditions of possibility without reducing validity to contingent context. The claim of this paper is that this generative field becomes conceptually explicit through the Milan School's engagement with Husserl's late manuscripts[5]. In Enzo Paci and Giovanni Piana, *maternity*

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an empirical event, but as a transcendental-genetic threshold through which subjectivity enters an already operative world-horizon and becomes inserted into an intersubjective chain of generations. E III 5 thus marks a shift from static and genetic analyses toward a genuinely generative account of transcendental life, in which inheritance, tradition (*Tradierung*), and renewal become structural conditions of meaning. The importance of these manuscripts lies precisely in showing that the transcendental constitution presupposes historically mediated conditions of emergence and transmission, without thereby collapsing into empirical anthropology. For the manuscript context, see Zur *Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität* (Husserliana XIII–XV) and the Digital Husserl Manuscript Archive (KULeuven).

5 By "Milan School" I refer to the phenomenological tradition developed in Milan around Enzo Paci from the late 1950s onward, and continued by figures such as Giovanni Piana. This tradition emerges in continuity with the critical rationalism of Antonio Banfi, from whom it inherits a strong emphasis on the historical responsibility of reason and on philosophy as an open, task-oriented practice. Characterized by a historically

is not treated as a marginal theme but as a privileged access to the intersubjective and teleological articulation of transcendental historicity. It is the site where constitution, transmission, and responsibility converge. The comparative architecture of the argument should therefore be understood as deliberately asymmetrical. Husserl, Paci, and Piana provide its phenomenological and historical core: the claim that transcendental constitution must be understood through generativity, intersubjective inheritance, and the historical transmission of sense is reconstructed from within this trajectory. Arendt and Levinas enter at a different level. They are not presented as belonging to the same line of reception, nor as supplying an alternative foundation for the argument. Their concepts of natality, fecundity, and maternity are introduced comparatively in order to clarify two implications of the generative structure already established: the openness of historical beginning and plurality in Arendt, and the diachronic structure of separation, vulnerability, and responsibility in Levinas. The comparison is thus intended to differentiate dimensions of generativity rather than to assimilate heterogeneous philosophical projects.

On this basis, the following sections reconstruct (i) Paci's account of phenomenological rationality as an infinite, historically situated task of reactivation and responsibility; (ii) Piana's grounding of historicity in intersubjective inheritance, *tradere*, and infinite generativity; and (iii) a comparative engagement with Arendtian natality and Levinasian fecundity and maternity, through which the political and ethical dimensions of generative temporality are further differentiated. These analyses prepare the final claim that generativity is not an optional supplement to transcendental inquiry, but one of the conditions through which its claims to validity can remain historically operative.

Phenomenological Rationality, Historicity, and the Task of Transmission in Paci

In *Tempo e verità nella fenomenologia* di Husserl, Enzo Paci develops an interpretation that does not merely re-read Husserl's phenomenology but redefines its very conception of rationality[6]. In his work, phenomenology is not

and ethically oriented engagement with Husserl's phenomenology, the Milan School focuses in particular on time, intersubjectivity, generativity, and the socio-historical implications of transcendental inquiry. Rather than treating phenomenology as a system of timeless structures, it emphasizes its interpretive, critical, and socially embedded character, drawing extensively on Husserl's unpublished manuscripts and situating phenomenology within broader debates on history, culture, and responsibility (see Papi 1990 and Renzi 2023).

6 This text is selected for its particular relevance to the present argument. It includes, in its appendix, the first Italian translation of materials from Husserl's E III manuscripts, which are central to the analysis of generativity and intersubjective historicity developed in this study. It also marks the beginning of Paci's mature philosophical phase, in which phenomenology is explicitly rearticulated as a historically and socially responsible form of rationality (see Paci 1963).

understood as the disclosure of timeless structures detached from historical life. It is articulated instead as a historically situated rational practice, inseparable from the temporal and intersubjective conditions in which meaning is constituted, transmitted, and renewed. What is at stake in Paci's reading is therefore not a marginal correction of Husserl's project, but a decisive shift in the understanding of *reason* itself. This shift is grounded in a reconfiguration of the Husserlian *cogito,* as exposed in fourth and fifth *Cartesian Meditations*. Rather than functioning as an abstract point of absolute self-presence, the cogito appears as finite, horizon-bound, and personal: a *persona-monad*e (that is, a concrete stream of intentional life rather than an isolated metaphysical substance) whose intentional life is always already exposed to time and to others (Paci 1961: 16). Rationality, in this sense, cannot be secured once and for all. It unfolds within finitude as a task that must be continuously assumed and renewed in the course of historical existence.

The task-like character of phenomenological rationality is articulated by Paci through the Husserlian motif of *immer wieder* ("again and again" or "always anew"; see Trincia 2022). Indeed, scientific and phenomenological inquiry are characterized by the necessity of "always beginning again", of repeatedly reactivating meanings that have been sedimented, obscured, or lost. As Paci emphasizes, the persistence of sense depends on acts of reappropriation through which meaning is reconquered as the genetic correlate of intentional life (Paci 1961: 18). Accordingly, meaning is never simply preserved. Conversely, it survives only insofar as it is taken up *anew within lived experience*. From this perspective, historicity does not appear as an external limitation imposed upon rationality, but as its very mode of operation. This becomes particularly clear in Paci's reflections on time and reduction. Moreover, presence itself must be understood temporally: "when one speaks of presence, one must think of temporality, of the task of rendering the past alive" (Paci 1961: 59). Indeed, phenomenological reduction does not suspend history in order to reach ahistorical essences. Rather, it discloses the processes through which meaning is sedimented, forgotten, nefariously *fetishized*, and potentially reactivated[7].

7 From this perspective, the maternal dimension of sense does not concern origin as possession, but transmission as responsibility. What is at stake is not who owns meaning, but whether meaning can be released from fixation and allowed to remain historically alive. Moreover, in Paci's work, the problem of fetishization and commodification marks a decisive transformation of Husserl's critique of objectivism into a socio-historical and political analysis. While Husserl diagnoses the loss of meaning resulting from the sedimentation and autonomization of scientific idealities, Paci radicalizes this diagnosis by showing how such processes are structurally connected to capitalist forms of appropriation. In *Relazioni e significati* (vol. II, 1965), he explicitly links the temporal alienation of meaning to the alienation of labour, arguing that when products are detached from the concrete processes and subjects that generated them, they become abstract, exchangeable, and exploitable (Paci 1965: 203–215). This line of thought is further developed in *Funzione delle scienze e significato dell'uomo* (1963), where Paci interprets the mathematisation and formalisation of knowledge as practices that conceal their genetic and historical constitution, thereby facilitating commodification (Paci

Historical materials become meaningful only when they are transformed from inert residues into living documents capable of speaking again within the present. This reinterpretation extends to the very notion of phenomenological essence. Essences are not abstract entities detached from experience, but "things that have a sense for us" (Paci 1961: 91). At this point, the epistemological stakes of Paci's reading become even more explicit. Phenomenology is no longer a neutral descriptive enterprise; it becomes a *critical* practice oriented toward the recovery of meaning from alienated and reified forms. Paci thus characterizes phenomenology as a "phenomenology of reason" unfolding within historical time, engaged in a struggle against alienation and against the commodification of meaning (Paci 1961: 92–93).

Rational inquiry acquires, in this way, an intrinsic ethical dimension: it responds to the responsibility of preserving and renewing the sense of human experience against its objectivistic reduction. The temporal and critical dimensions of phenomenological rationality are further deepened in Paci's account of intersubjectivity. Drawing on Husserl's analyses in the *Cartesian Meditations*, intersubjectivity is no longer treated as a secondary problem added to an already constituted subjectivity. It appears instead as the very space in which rationality is formed and sustained. The relation to the other is not simply given. Rather, it must be cultivated through an open-ended process of inquiry, education, and formation. Paci explicitly describes this process in pedagogical terms, characterizing the relation to the alter ego as an "exercise" and as a form of *paideia*, i.e., a continuous formative practice through which subjectivity is shaped in and through its relation to others (Paci 1961: 132–136). Within this framework, the *lebendige Gegenwart* ("living present"; see Held 2010 and Olbromski 2011 on this concept) is not conceived as a punctual now, but as a dynamic temporal field that includes both evidence and its unrealized potential (Paci 1961: 137). What emerges here is a conception of phenomenological reason as essentially historical: not because it is relative to its time, but because it exists only through acts of reactivation, transmission, and shared responsibility. As Paci writes, the task that the ego accomplishes together with other egos consists in the "human presentification of cosmic time" (Paci 1961: 138). Rationality is thus intrinsically collective and oriented toward a future that it cannot fully anticipate.

This generative orientation becomes finally patent in Paci's interpretation of *Urstiftung* ("originary institution") and *Paarung* ("pairing"), developed with reference to Husserl's analyses in E III 5. Here, the original institution

1963: 121–130). Against this background, presentification acquires a civic and ethical meaning: reactivating sense becomes a critical practice aimed at reclaiming the dignity of those who produce and inherit knowledge. As Paci insists, only a science capable of renewing its meaning through historical reappropriation can function as a force of liberation rather than domination (Paci 1963: 128–145). Presentification thus names a finite yet open process of totalisation, through which both intellectual and practical labour resist objectification and remain bound to communal responsibility. For a contemporary perspective on this see Angus 2021.

is understood as a "temporal creation" that is always already intersubjective (Paci 1961: 144). In this context, the transcendental cogito "has given way to the couple", and with it to an original collectivity from which the person emerges through separation rather than indifferentiation (Paci 1961: 145). Here, *Paarung* designates the associative pairing through which another embodied subject can be experienced as analogous without being reduced to the self. For Paci, this intersubjective structure becomes the basis of a common presentification through which objectivity and a shared world become possible (Paci 1961: 147–150). Indeed, the apparent permanence of meaning does not rest on the supposed eternity of logical or mathematical objects, but on the capacity to re-presentify them within the temporal horizon of the *Lebenswelt*. Their seeming supratemporality is grounded instead in omnitemporality: in our ability to draw them "always again" from an ante-predicative lifeworld (Paci 1961: 151). Rationality thus depends on the continuity of an intermonadic universe in which meaning is transmitted, transformed, and renewed through historically situated institutions and practices. Although the maternal relation is not yet fully thematically developed at this stage, the structural logic of Paci's account already calls for a generative figure capable of articulating inheritance, separation, and renewal without collapsing them into identity. This structural requirement comes to explicit expression in Paci's description of the Husserlian "world of reason" as a "maternal world," in which birth, loss, and rediscovery form a "submerged continent" of human experience (Paci 1961: 250). The maternal does not designate here an undifferentiated origin to which rational life might return. It names, rather, the generative configuration through which sense is instituted, relinquished, and made available for historically new acts of appropriation. Separation is therefore not opposed to teleological continuity but constitutes its operative condition. Teleological progress, in this context, should not be understood as a linear development toward a predetermined completion, nor as the automatic accumulation of rational achievements. It designates an open and fallible process through which sedimented meanings are brought back into relation with the intuitive, practical, and intersubjective conditions of their validity. Progress occurs when inherited sense is neither passively repeated nor simply superseded, but critically reactivated within a new historical horizon. What is transmitted persists only by becoming susceptible to interpretations and uses that its originators could not fully anticipate.

The maternal structure is teleological in precisely this non-finalistic sense. It sustains continuity by enabling what it brings forth to separate itself from its origin and to enter an intersubjective history of renewed constitution. As Paci observes, the preservation of identities within the concreteness of historical and social life "allows the transformation of pregnancy into a genetic, cosmic, and historical fact" (Paci 1961: 252). Pregnancy here does not provide a biological model for historical development; it renders visible a logic in which generation involves both continuity and release. The maternal consequently belongs not to a single monad, but to the intermonadic community as the field in which inherited sense can be preserved only through its transformation.

Taken together, these analyses allow phenomenological rationality to be understood as an infinite task rather than a completed achievement. Reason unfolds through finite acts of reactivation within a historical horizon structured by in-finite intersubjectivity and generativity. Reflection itself becomes a relational act, for "*riflettere è relazionarsi*" (Paci 1961: 187), situating the subject within a web of inherited meanings and future possibilities. Thus, in its later stage, phenomenology does not seek to escape time, but to inhabit it critically, acknowledging that meaning lives only insofar as it can be transmitted, renewed, and transformed. The problem of transmission, already implicit in this account, will be explicitly thematized in the following section through Giovanni Piana's engagement with Husserl's unpublished manuscripts, where the generative structures of historicity are brought fully into view.

Generativity, Intersubjective Inheritance, and the Maternal Structure of Historicity in Piana

In *Esistenza e storia negli inediti di Husserl*, Giovanni Piana radicalizes the conception of phenomenological rationality articulated by Enzo Paci by locating historicity at the very core of transcendental constitution. Through a sustained engagement with Edmund Husserl's unpublished manuscripts, Piana shows that historicity is not an external determination imposed upon transcendental life, but the structural form through which subjectivity itself becomes possible. What is decisive in this move is the shift from a merely contextual understanding of history to a structural account of generativity. Accordingly, transcendental existence is historical because it is generative through and through. From the outset, Piana emphasizes that phenomenological reduction does not lead back to an isolated ego[8]. As Paci already observes in the preface of this oeuvre, objectivity can be scientific only if it begins with the constitution of the other; the objective world is always intersubjectively founded (Piana 1965: VIII–IX).

This claim resonates with Husserl's analyses of intersubjectivity in the manuscripts, where the world appears as the correlate of a plurality of monads bound together within a shared horizon (Husserl, A V 7). Subjectivity thus emerges as always already situated within a totality of monads and human societies, unified through relations of mediation, inheritance, and transmission. On this basis, Piana reformulates the very beginning of subjectivity. The origin of transcendental life is not conceived as the awakening of a fully constituted ego, but as a process of becoming-awake within an already operative horizon. Subjectivity begins not as an "ego that is awake," but as "an ego that awakens"

8 In his lectures on Husserl's *Crisis*, Piana repeatedly insists on the need to distinguish the legitimate pursuit of objectivity from what Husserl himself calls "objectivism". While objectivity aims at intersubjectively valid knowledge, objectivism designates the hypostatization of scientific results detached from their intuitive and historical conditions of formation. This slippage, Piana argues, risks turning science into a merely technical or algorithmic enterprise, estranged from its original telos and from the scientists' own responsibility toward meaning (Piana 2013: 19–21).

(*un io che si desta*), whose awakening presupposes an always inherited world of sense (Piana 1965: 58; Husserl, C 8 I). The beginning of experience is therefore mediated by a pre-personal and pre-reflective historicity that is affectively and corporeally transmitted. What matters here is not the punctuality of origin, but the continuity of an inherited horizon within which awakening becomes possible. The generative character of this historicity becomes especially clear in Piana's analyses of birth and corporeality. Drawing on Husserl's manuscripts, he insists that the born body is not merely the product of generation but itself bears a generative orientation: "the body that is born is born in the corporeal encounter of father and mother, and it is a body that is not only generated but ultimately generative" (Piana 1965: 61). Birth therefore cannot be relegated to the empirical margins of transcendental analysis. It marks instead a threshold at which corporeality, intersubjectivity, and historical transmission converge. The subject enters experience as one who has already been generated within relations and horizons that precede its own acts of constitution, while at the same time acquiring the capacity to participate in their continuation and transformation. Husserl's E III 5 becomes decisive at this point. Piana reads the analyses of generativity developed there as disclosing an originary relational configuration in which continuity arises through corporeal encounter without suppressing differentiation. What is at stake is not an undifferentiated unity prior to individuation, but a generative nexus in which the emergence of distinct subjects is itself the condition for the continuation of sense. This makes it possible to understand teleology as spanning what is "not yet constitutive" and what is "already constituted" within a shared temporal horizon. The intersubjective present in which the awakening monad finds itself is thus not self-grounding: it explicates an implicit temporality whose conditions precede any individual present and are transmitted through generative relations (Piana 1965: 62).

What is decisive in Piana's move is that inheritance is no longer treated as a secondary cultural phenomenon, but as a constitutive structure of subjectivity itself. The Latin *tradere* (to hand down, transmit, or deliver over) names this structure particularly well. *Tradition* does not consist of the preservation of fixed contents across time. It designates the process through which subjects become what they are by receiving a historically formed world of sense and necessarily reshaping it in the act of taking it up. Tradition is not conceived as the transmission of fixed contents, but as the process through which identity is constituted historically[9]. Referring to Husserl's analyses of temporality and habituality, Piana defines identity as a process rather than a state: to be within tradition means to belong to a nexus in which one becomes what one is through a necessary reshaping of inherited meaning (Piana 1965: 64; Husserl, A V 5, 3;

9 Piana explicitly connects this account of tradition to Husserl's analysis of writing in the *Origin of Geometry*. While technical mediation and sedimentation are necessary for the transmission and validation of idealities, they also introduce the risk of objectivism, namely the loss of contact with intuitive origins. In his view, scientific concepts and written formulations must remain open to *Rückfrage* if they are not to become fetishized and instrumentalized (Piana 2013: 47–49; 57–58).

C 17 V). Generativity thus designates the human capacity both to be generated within a possible personal constitution and to transmit, in turn, meaningful and characterological traits. This generative nexus unfolds as infinitely iterable. Finite subjects are inserted into a chain of generation that exceeds individual lifespans, participating in what Piana describes as an "infinite generativity" (Piana 1965: 65; Husserl, C 17). The infinitude at stake here does not refer to the indefinite persistence of particular subjects, nor to the reproduction of an identical historical community. It characterizes instead the open horizon within which finite subjects receive, reshape, and transmit a world of sense that precedes them and will survive them. Generativity is "infinite" because no individual act of constitution can exhaust the historical nexus in which it takes place: what is inherited always remains available for further reassumption, correction, and transformation. The finitude marked by birth and death is therefore not opposed to this infinitude but constitutes its very mode of realization. Historical continuity exists only through a succession of finite lives whose discontinuity prevents transmission from becoming mere repetition.

This is the function of what Husserl and Piana call *Brückenglieder*, "bridging members" or "connecting links," through which continuity is maintained across the discontinuous temporalities of successive generations (Piana 1965: 68; Husserl, C 17 V). Such mediation does not abolish temporal distance. On the contrary, it allows an inherited sense to remain effective precisely because it must be taken up again from another position and within another present. The continuity of history is therefore neither substantial nor immediate: it is constituted through acts of transmission that preserve a relation to what came before while opening it to what can no longer be determined by its origin. Within this framework, education and formation acquire a generative significance. The subject intentionally carries within itself its "human educators," belonging to the same humanity across temporal distance (Piana 1965: 69; Husserl, C 11 III). Formation is thus not merely socialization into an already constituted world. It is one of the practices through which inherited sense becomes available for renewed constitution. In this respect, Piana's "infinite generativity" already contains the structural logic that the present paper designates as maternal: to generate is not simply to reproduce what one has received, but to sustain a continuity that requires the emergence and separation of another bearer of sense[10]. Phenomenology itself is therefore understood as an inherited task rather than a doctrine to be applied[11]. As Piana emphasizes, phenomenology is

10 Piana insists that scientific progress must be understood as intrinsically procedural and fallible. Fallibility is not a defect to be eliminated, but a positive trait inseparable from the very content of scientific practice. Through Rückfrage, science can critically reassess its own presuppositions and resist the improper extension of mathematization to domains that require intuitive and lifeworldly grounding, a point that directly echoes Husserl's critique of Galileo in the *Crisis* (Piana 2013: 60–65; 78).

11 A distinctive aspect of Piana's interpretation lies in the explicit link he establishes between epistemological rigor and an eudaimonistic horizon. The clarification of scientific meaning is not an end in itself, but contributes to what he describes as a richer

a "humanization of the world," and its scientificity is not presupposed but must be continuously clarified and reappropriated (Piana 1965: XV). It is against this background that the maternal acquires its specifically phenomenological significance. Rather than designating a private relation, a gendered subject, or a biological substrate, it names the generative structure through which inherited sense becomes capable of passing beyond those who instituted or transmitted it. The maternal therefore does not coincide with one term within the generative chain. It characterizes the relational configuration in which generation entails both dependence and separation: what comes after receives a world that it did not constitute for itself, yet it can inherit that world only by taking it up from a position that is irreducibly its own. Continuity is consequently maintained neither through fusion nor through the reproduction of identity, but through a mediated passage in which the emergence of difference is itself constitutive of historical persistence. In this sense, the maternal provides a concrete phenomenological articulation of Piana's infinite generativity: it names the structure by which finite subjects can sustain a history that exceeds them precisely because what they transmit is released from their possession and entrusted to further acts of constitution.

Generation implies separation, and separation is the condition of *relation*. Taken together, Paci's and Piana's readings of Husserl reconfigure phenomenological rationality not by abandoning transcendental validity, but by revising the mode in which such validity exists. In Paci, reason ceases to appear as an achieved possession and becomes an open-ended task of presentification, critique, and renewal. In Piana, this task is shown to presuppose a generative and intersubjective structure that no individual subject institutes from the beginning: every act of rational constitution takes place within an inherited horizon that must be received and reshaped. The shift is therefore from self-sufficient constitution to generative constitution, from the preservation of already secured meanings to their recurrent reactivation, and from an abstract universality to a validity capable of enduring only through historically situated acts of transmission. This does not amount to reducing reason to historical contingency. On the contrary, Paci and Piana make it possible to understand historicity as the operative form through which transcendental claims remain available across time. Rationality is historical not because its validity is exhausted by a particular context, but because validity can persist only insofar as finite subjects repeatedly assume responsibility for what they inherit. The maternal gives this structure its most concrete articulation: it names a mode of continuity in which what is handed down can survive only by becoming separable from its origin and available for a renewed constitution. The maternal is neither a purely empirical condition nor a formal transcendental principle. It occupies an intermediate level. It is historically variable, embodied, and relational, yet

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and "happier" life, oriented by desires and hopes rather than by mere factual accumulation. When science loses sight of this projective dimension, it risks becoming alienating both for its practitioners and for society at large (Piana 2013: 19, 79).

structurally constitutive of experience. Precisely for this reason, it can be approached as a quasi-transcendental field in which the conditions of possibility of historical experience take shape. At this point, the first part of the argument reaches its conclusion. Through Paci's and Piana's engagement with Husserl's late manuscripts, the paper has established the generative and intersubjective structure of transcendental historicity and identified the maternal as its most concrete phenomenological articulation. Yet, the task that remains is to clarify the conceptual status of this articulation. The following section will therefore examine how the maternal and generativity can be understood as a historical a priori and as a quasi-transcendental condition, without abandoning the critical ambitions of transcendental phenomenology.

Natality, Fecundity, and the Generative Field of Historical Constitution in Arendt and Levinas

The generative structure that has emerged through the Husserlian and Milanese framework can be further clarified by turning to two distinct philosophical articulations of beginning, continuity, and alterity: Hannah Arendt's account of natality and Emmanuel Levinas's analyses of fecundity and maternity. Their role in the present argument is comparative rather than genealogical. Neither Arendt nor Levinas is invoked as extending the Husserlian analyses reconstructed above, and their concepts should not be assimilated to one another. Rather, they make explicit two dimensions of generativity that the phenomenological account developed in §§2–3 leaves structurally open: the capacity for beginning and plural initiative in Arendt, and the diachronic transmission of life and responsibility through separation in Levinas. Arendt does not thematize the maternal in the specific sense proposed here; Levinas, by contrast, explicitly invokes maternity in *Otherwise than Being*, although primarily as a figure of substitution, vulnerability, and ethical exposure. The purpose of the comparison is therefore not to identify natality, fecundity, and maternity, but to ask how each discloses a different modality of a generative field that exceeds the self-sufficiency of individual subjectivity.

In *The Human Condition*, Arendt famously displaces the philosophical primacy of mortality (contra Heidegger) by placing natality at the centre of human action and historical life (see Champlin 2013; İlhan Demiryol 2023 and Totschnig 2017 on the concept of natality). Natality names the fact that "new people are continuously coming into the world," each of them unique and capable of initiating processes that interrupt established chains of events (Arendt 1958: XXIX–XXX). Against any conception of history governed by necessity or automatic repetition, Arendt insists that *action* is always bound to the possibility of beginning anew. Action, in contrast with labour and work, as she writes, is "the only activity that goes on directly between men without the intermediary of things or matter" and corresponds to the condition of *plurality*, i.e., "to the fact that men, not Man, live on the earth and inhabit

the world" (Arendt 1958: 7; see Menga 2021: 86-105)[12]. Here, the capacity to act is thus inseparable from the fact of birth: "the new beginning inherent in birth can make itself felt in the world only because the newcomer possesses the capacity of beginning something anew, that is, of acting" (Arendt 1958: 9; see Diprose and Ziarek 2018: 32-51). Natality, in this sense, does not designate a biological event, but articulates the structural possibility that history may remain open. Arendt's concept does not itself provide an account of the maternal conditions of beginning. Read from the generative perspective developed in the preceding sections, however, it raises a further question: under what conditions can beginnings be received, sustained, and handed over without being absorbed into automatic repetition? The maternal, as reconstructed here, names precisely this dimension of reception and transmission. It complements rather than grounds Arendtian natality: natality emphasizes the irreducibility of the new, whereas the maternal foregrounds the relational and historical conditions through which the new can enter a shared world and acquire a history (Arendt 1958: 8–9; see Guenther 2006: 32-43). Indeed, action always exposes itself to irreversibility and risk, yet it also bears what Arendt describes as a *boundless* capacity to initiate relations and to reconfigure constellations of meaning, such that "the smallest act in the most limited circumstances bears the seed of the same boundlessness" (Arendt 1958: 190–191; see Vatter 2006)[13]. For this reason, natality functions as the positive condition of political life par excellence, opposing any attempt to master history through fabrication or technical control. History remains open because it is continuously "invaded by strangers," newcomers whose actions and reactions cannot be fully anticipated by those already present (Arendt 1961: 61–62; see Butler 2015: 99-122). Read in light of the phenomenological reconstruction developed in §§2–3, Arendt's notion of natality can be understood as a political articulation of a more general generative structure. What Paci describes as

12 By *plurality*, Arendt does not mean a mere numerical multiplicity of individuals, but the irreducible condition that human beings are simultaneously equal and distinct: each is capable of acting and speaking, yet no one can replace another. Plurality thus names the ontological condition under which action, beginning, and history are possible. Within the economy of this paper, plurality is significant insofar as it designates a generative field in which meaning and history emerge only through relations that neither collapse into identity nor dissolve into anonymity. In this sense, Arendt's concept of plurality resonates with the phenomenological emphasis on generativity and transmission developed in §§2–3, while providing a political articulation of the same structural openness.

13 Arendt's subtle idea of boundlessness does not imply eternity or an infinite substance of action. It refers instead to the structural excess of action over the moment of its occurrence: an act, once initiated, enters a web of relations whose temporal extension cannot be fully anticipated or delimited by its agent. Boundlessness thus names a form of supra-temporality grounded in finitude, whereby finite initiatives acquire open-ended historical consequences. In the context of this paper, this in-finitizing structure resonates with the generative logic of transmission and renewal, rather than with any metaphysical conception of the eternal.

the phenomenological task of "rendering the past alive" through finite acts of reactivation (Paci 1961: 59), and as the "explicitation of potentiality" within historical time (Paci 1961: 103), here finds a concrete expression. Indeed, natality names the structural possibility that sense, action, and history do not merely persist, but can be taken up again and redirected. In this respect, natality converges with the Husserlian and Milanese emphasis on renewal (*immer wieder*) as the very form of rational and historical life.

A different articulation of generativity emerges in Levinas. It is important, however, to distinguish two moments of his analysis. In *Totality and Infinity*, the decisive concepts are fecundity, paternity, and filiation. Fecundity names a form of transcendence in which existence continues without reproducing itself as identity: the son is neither the repetition nor the possession of the father, but the very "relationship" with the "Other" (Levinas 1969: 267; see Hutchens 2004; Poirié 1996). Continuity is consequently inseparable from separation[14]. The future opened by fecundity belongs to the self and yet exceeds its powers, since what continues it does so by becoming irreducibly other. This is why Levinas can describe fecundity through a "rupture" of continuity and "continuity" of rupture (Levinas 1969: 270–273). Separation does not interrupt generativity from the outside; it is the condition through which generativity escapes repetition. In this respect, Levinas's account closely resonates with Piana's analysis of *tradere*. In both cases, what is transmitted remains historically effective only by passing into a subject or generation that cannot be reduced to its origin[15]. Yet Levinas radicalizes this structure by giving it an explicitly ethical temporality. Fecundity opens up a future that the present cannot possess, and thus exposes the subject to a continuity whose meaning will be assumed by others.

The significance of the maternal becomes explicit in *Otherwise than Being*. Here Levinas no longer approaches generativity principally through the father–son relation, but introduces maternity as a privileged figure of substitution and vulnerability. Maternity is described as the bearing of the "other" in the "same" (Levinas 1998: 75): a structure in which subjectivity is constituted through exposure to what it cannot assimilate or master. This image belongs

14 In Levinas, filial separation is not a deficiency of continuity but its very condition. Fecundity implies that the son both continues and exceeds the father: sense advances precisely because it is not preserved through identity, but through a separation that allows for renewal. The disappearance of the father is therefore not merely a loss, but an enabling withdrawal that opens the future. Read phenomenologically, this structure corresponds to a logic of emergence: meaning comes to presence by detaching itself from its origin, and continuity is maintained only as a discontinuous continuity. In this sense, fecundity resonates with the phenomenological motif of wakeful life, in which sense persists not through uninterrupted presence, but through repeated acts of awakening, reactivation, and presentification across temporal breaks.

15 This Levinasian understanding of responsibility toward those who cannot reciprocate will later be developed by Bernhard Waldenfels through the notion of *responsivity*, which emphasizes the asymmetry of ethical response to claims that precede intention, reciprocity, and mastery, especially those arising from absence, alterity, and the not-yet-given.

to Levinas's broader account of diachrony, in which responsibility precedes freedom and the self is constituted as answerable for an alterity that cannot be synchronized with its own present (Levinas 1998: 111–114; see Bergo 2011)[16]. Levinasian maternity should therefore not be identified without remainder with the maternal field proposed in this paper. Its primary function is ethical: it gives radical expression to substitution, vulnerability, and responsibility for the other. Nevertheless, it illuminates a decisive feature of the generative structure reconstructed here. Continuity does not require the incorporation of the other into the same; it can be sustained precisely through exposure, non-coincidence, and the relinquishment of mastery. In this respect, fecundity and maternity together provide an ethical articulation of the same problem that Paci and Piana approached through transmission and intersubjective historicity: how something can continue beyond itself without determining in advance what will come after it.

What maternity exemplifies is a mode of temporality in which continuity is sustained by giving place to the other, rather than by securing identity. Taken together, Arendt and Levinas disclose different dimensions of generative temporality without collapsing them into a common conceptual vocabulary. Natality gives political form to the capacity for beginning: history remains open because newcomers can initiate processes that cannot be deduced from what precedes them. Levinasian fecundity, and later maternity, disclose the complementary problem of continuity through alterity: what persists does so by passing into relations and temporalities that escape the mastery of the present. The maternal field proposed here is not identical with either of these concepts. It names the broader generative configuration in which beginning, reception, separation, transmission, and renewal become mutually implicated. Arendt illuminates its dimension of novelty and plurality; Levinas clarifies its diachronic and ethical structure of non-possession. Read together with Husserl, Paci, and Piana, these analyses make it possible to understand historical constitution as a process in which continuity is sustained neither through immutable identity nor through sheer rupture, but through the capacity of sense to be handed over to others whose appropriation of it remains irreducibly open. It is in this restricted sense that the maternal can be approached as a quasi-transcendental field: historically and corporeally instantiated, yet constitutive of the processes through which meaning becomes transmissible beyond the finite subjects who institute and inherit it.

16 In Levinas, substitution designates neither a functional replacement nor a moral heroism, but the originary exposure through which subjectivity is constituted as answerable before itself. The self is "substituted" insofar as it bears the other in advance, in a diachronic structure irreducible to intentional synthesis. Read phenomenologically, substitution names a generative discontinuity: subjectivity emerges by taking upon itself what precedes and exceeds it, thereby allowing sense to persist beyond individual presence. In this way, Levinas radicalizes the phenomenological task, shifting it from the mastery of meaning to the responsibility of receiving, carrying, and handing over sense.

Conclusion. The Maternal as a Quasi-Transcendental Field of Historical Responsibility

This paper has argued that the maternal provides a conceptual key for rethinking the relation between transcendental constitution and historical becoming. The central claim is not that maternity should become a new thematic object of phenomenology, but that generativity discloses a dimension of constitution that cannot be understood apart from transmission. Husserl's late analyses of teleology, intersubjectivity, and historicity show that meaning persists only through the processes of institution, sedimentation, reactivation, and renewal. Validity is therefore not detached from history: it remains operative only insofar as finite subjects can inherit sense, return to its conditions of formation, and hand it on within new historical horizons. The critique of objectivism in *The Crisis* can accordingly be read not only as a critique of abstraction, but as a demand that reason assume responsibility for the historical processes through which its own meanings remain alive.

The Milanese reception developed by Paci and Piana makes the consequences of this claim explicit. In Paci, rationality becomes an infinite and fallible task of presentification rather than an achieved possession; in Piana, this task is grounded in an intersubjective generativity through which every subject receives a world that precedes it and participates in a history that exceeds it. Their contribution is therefore not simply to add historicity to transcendental phenomenology, but to show that historical transmission is one of the modes through which transcendental validity exists. The maternal names the structure of this passage at the point where inheritance and separation become inseparable: what is transmitted can endure only by becoming available to subjects who will not simply reproduce the intentions of those who came before them. The comparative engagement with Arendt and Levinas has differentiated two implications of this generative structure. Arendtian natality shows why historical continuity must remain open to beginnings that cannot be deduced from the past, while Levinasian fecundity and maternity show why continuity through time depends upon separation, non-possession, and responsibility for an alterity that exceeds the present. These concepts do not collapse into the maternal field proposed here. They instead clarify its political and ethical dimensions: generative continuity requires both the possibility of the new and the relinquishment of mastery over what is handed on.

Understood phenomenologically, the maternal does not refer to a biological substrate or to a symbolic archetype, but to the historically operative conditions under which sense can be instituted, handed over, and renewed. The maternal can consequently be characterized as a conditioning field in a precise sense. It is a field because the relevant conditions of meaning do not reside in a single subject or principle, but in a relational configuration of embodiment, dependency, temporal succession, mediation, and separation. It is conditioning because these relations make possible the institution and transmission of sense without determining the specific meanings, practices, or forms of life that

will emerge from them. Its quasi-transcendental character lies precisely in this combination: the field has constitutive force, yet it does not stand outside the historical processes it conditions. As a historical a priori, it exists only through institution, inheritance, and reactivation; as quasi-transcendental, it marks the fact that these historically variable relations nevertheless participate in determining what can count as meaningful, transmissible, and historically, the notion of a conditioning field also resonates with Merleau-Ponty's later account of institution. Institution does not impose a fixed form upon what follows; it inaugurates a field of possibilities that subsequent events can resume only by transforming it. What has been instituted remains operative without functioning as a determining cause, and historical continuity is sustained through reprises that are neither repetitions nor absolute beginnings. The parallel is instructive for the present argument: the maternal likewise conditions a future by making transmission possible while leaving the form of its continuation fundamentally open. This affinity does not make the maternal reducible to Merleau-Pontian institution, but it situates the proposed quasi-transcendental field within a broader phenomenological attempt to think conditions of possibility as historically instituted rather than timelessly given. This reconstruction may also provide a basis for dialogue with contemporary accounts of embodied dependency, vulnerability, and non-sovereign subjectivity, but such extensions exceed the scope of the present inquiry. Phenomenology can therefore address the conditions of its own historicity without either mastering them from an ahistorical standpoint or surrendering validity to historical institution. Reason lives historically insofar as it can be handed down, critically taken up again, and transformed by others. Generativity, on this account, is not a limit placed upon transcendental reason from outside, but one of the conditions through which reason can have a history at all.

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Rikardo Valenti

Prenošenje smisla. Generativnost, istoričnost i materinsko kao kvazi-transcendentalno polje

Apstrakt

Ovaj rad predlaže fenomenološku rekonfiguraciju odnosa između transcendentalne konstitucije i istoričnosti, posebno kroz pojmove „materinskog", „nataliteta" i „plodonosnosti". Umesto da se ovi aspekti razmatraju kao tematski objekat, simbolička figura ili empirijsko područje, u radu se oni rekonstruišu kao generativno polje u kojem se smisao ustanovljava, prenosi i obnavlja kroz vreme. Polazeći od kasnih analiza teleologije, intersubjektivnosti i generativnosti Edmunda Huserla (posebno u delu *Kriza evropskih nauka* i rukopisima o intersubjektivnom nasleđivanju), rad zastupa tezu da važenje smisla ne zavisi od bezvremenih formalnih uslova, već od istorijski delatnih procesa prenošenja i reaktivacije. Ovaj okvir dalje se razvija kroz recepciju Huserla u Milanskoj školi. Enco Pači svojim tumačenjem fenomenološke racionalnosti kao beskonačnog, etički prožetog zadatka reaktivacije otkriva vremenske i intersubjektivne uslove uma, dok analize *tradere*, generativnosti i intersubjektivnog nasleđivanja Đovanija Pijane pokazuju da istoričnost nije spoljašnja transcendentalnom životu, već konstituiše sam njegov način postojanja.

U tom kontekstu, materinsko se pojavljuje kao strukturna konfiguracija koja artikuliše kontinuitet bez identiteta, nasleđivanje bez automatizma i obnavljanje bez raskida. Rad dodatno pojašnjava ovu generativnu strukturu kroz dijalog sa pojmom nataliteta Hane Arent i analizama očinstva, plodonosnosti i dijahronije Emanuela Levinasa. Iako Arent ne tematizuje materinsko u smislu koji se ovde predlaže, a Levinas materinstvo razvija prvenstveno kao figuru etičke supstitucije, zastupam tezu da njihova shvatanja početka, pluralnosti, plodonosnosti i odgovornosti artikulišu komplementarne dimenzije generativnog polja rekonstruisanog u ovom radu. Na toj osnovi, materinsko se konačno određuje kao istorijski a priori i, preciznije, kao kvazi-transcendentalno polje: istorijski promenljivo i otelovljeno, a ipak strukturno konstitutivno za mogućnost smisla, odgovornosti i istorijskog kontinuiteta. Rad se zaključuje tvrdnjom da ova rekonceptualizacija omogućava fenomenologiji da tematizuje sopstvenu istoričnost, a da pritom ne odustane od svojih kritičkih ambicija, otvarajući put ka generativnoj kritici transcendentalnog uma.

Ključne reči: fenomenologija, generativnost, istoričnost, kvazitranscendentalno, materinsko