META: RESEARCH IN HERMENEUTICS, PHENOMENOLOGY, AND PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY
VOL. XIV, NO. 1 / JUNE 2022: 7-27, ISSN 2067-3655, www.metajournal.org

Disembodied Ego and Non-human Dasein: The Question of Anthropological Difference

Paul Gabriel Sandu
University of Bucharest

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to discuss the question of anthropological difference from a phenomenological perspective, taking as the point of departure Heidegger's view on this matter and his thesis that the relationship between man and animal is basically an abyss, a chasm that cannot be overcome in any sense, through any mediation, an "abysmal bodily kinship". In order to carry out this analysis, it is necessary to take a brief look at the problem of embodiment. After examining this question, I will turn my attention to Heidegger's first confrontations with Husserlian phenomenology and thus to the concept of life (*Leben*) developed by Heidegger in his first lectures held in Freiburg. In the course of these lectures he develops, step by step, the terminology employed in *Being and Time* and in later works, in order to raise the question of anthropological difference. To complete the overview of the analysis concerning anthropological difference as explained from Heidegger's perspective, I will try to argue, from a hermeneutical perspective indebted to Derrida that the difference between *humanitas* and *animalitas* cannot – and should not – be conceived of as absolute.

Keywords: anthropological difference, humanism, animality, embodiment, Dasein, ego, attunement (*Befindlichkeit*), being-in-the-world

1. Introductory remarks

One of the fundamental ideas developed by Heidegger in the letter he sent to Beaufret in order to answer to his question: "Comment redonner un sens au mot 'Humanisme'?", is that the human – and, by extension, his essence, that is, his humanity –

* This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research, CNCS – UEFISCDI, project number PN-III-P1-1.1-PD-2019-0586, within PNCDI III.

cannot be understood in terms of the seemingly indisputable metaphysical definition of man as a rational animal. Moreover, in his discussions on this subject, Heidegger also rejects any attempt to define the human being on the basis of (his) animality. In his Letter on "Humanism", Heidegger even claims that the starting point for understanding animality itself must be the human 'essence', which Heidegger conceives as existence: "Thus even what we attribute to the human being as animalitas on the basis of the comparison with 'beasts' is itself grounded in the essence of ec-sistence." (Heidegger 1998, 247)

The aim of this paper is to discuss the question of anthropological difference from a phenomenological perspective, taking as the point of departure Heidegger's view on this matter and his thesis that the relationship between man and animal is basically an abyss, a chasm that cannot be overcome in any sense, through any mediation, an "abysmal bodily kinship" (Heidegger 1998, 248). In order to carry out this analysis, it is necessary to take a brief look at a central problem of Husserlian phenomenology, namely the problem of embodiment (of the transcendental ego). After examining this question, I will turn my attention to Heidegger's first confrontations with Husserlian phenomenology and thus to the concept of life [Leben] developed by Heidegger in his first lectures held in Freiburg. In the course of these lectures he develops step by step the terminology employed in Being and Time and in later works, to raise the question of anthropological difference. To complete the overview of the analysis of anthropological difference as explained from Heidegger's perspective, I will briefly discuss a few passages from the Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics (1929/30), attempting to sketch Heidegger's „ontology of animality" by contrasting it with the existential-ontological analysis of Dasein.

In the final part of this paper I will try to argue, from a perspective indebted to Derrida that the difference between *humanitas* and *animalitas* cannot – and should not – be conceived of as absolute. On the contrary, the difference between them must be thought of as a 'belonging together' of the two. The rejection of any common denominator risks making any form of relationship between the former and the

latter if not impossible, at least unintelligible and, moreover, risks isolating the animal – and animality as such – in an inaccessible strangeness that allows no form, however diluted, of otherness. But, precisely because the human world is a world that he has always already shared, in the most diverse ways, with all other animals – and to a greater extent with some than with others - I will conclude this study by trying to problematize the type of anthropological difference proposed by Heidegger in the Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics and in the Letter on "Humanism", showing that, viewed in itself, Heidegger's conception is fundamentally contradictory.

2. Bracketing the body

Bracketing the world and all validity claims based on it is the overture of Husserl's transcendental-phenomenological method. By means of this *epoché*, not only is the natural attitude towards the world is short-circuited, but also my own self-understanding as an inhabitant of this world, as a human self, as a living body, as a psychophysical reality. A major consequence of this phenomenological bracketing is that my human embodied self becomes a simple object of worldly experience; a thing among other things[1]. This short circuit of the lived body is fundamental for the establishment of an essential difference between pure psychology and transcendental phenomenology. If this difference collapses, Husserl's philosophical project seems threatened. Derrida brings to light in the most eloquent way both the identity and the essential difference between pure psychology and transcendental phenomenology, between psychological and transcendental consciousness, an otherwise very complex problem in itself which cannot be discussed here. However, it is worth reviewing the observation of Derrida, who considers that "[L]a conscience transcendantale n'est rien de plus ou d'autre que la conscience psychologique. Le psychologisme transcendantal méconnaît ceci: que si le monde a besoin d'un supplément d'âme, l'âme, qui est dans le monde, a besoin de ce rien supplémentaire qu'est le transcendantal et sans lequel aucun monde n'apparaîtrait. Mais on doit à l'opposé, si l'on est attentif au renouvellement husserlien de la notion de

'transcendantal', se garder de prêter quelque réalité a cette distance, de substantialiser cette inconsistance ou d'en faire, fût-ce par simple analogie, quelque chose ou quelque moment du monde" (Derrida 2005, 13).

The idea of an essential difference between psychological and transcendental consciousness only makes sense if my whole psychophysical existence, and thus my own body, are placed in brackets. The disembodied transcendental subject seems to be, therefore, the cornerstone of Husserl's transcendental phenomenology. Nevertheless, the question of embodiment – which is not only given directly but is also the condition of phenomenological donation in general – is one of those question to which Husserl constantly returns, oftentimes from radically different perspectives, rewriting, reinterpreting and revising on many occasions his own position regarding this fundamentally ambiguous relationship between the transcendental *ego* and the embodied human self.

The idea that the lived body is itself constituted in the flow of consciousness already appears in some manuscripts dating back to 1908 (Hua XIII, 5). However, Husserl notes from the outset that there is a problematic interdependence between body (as it is constituted in consciousness) and consciousness, which relies on the body and its perception. He tries to explain this interdependence by insisting that the body is not a mere representation of consciousness (*Bewusstseinsvorstellung*), but something that constitutes itself in consciousness (Hua XIII, 6). However, this statement is not able to clarify the problem of the constitution of one's own body. Moreover, Husserl insists in the same passage that the body is only "an indication for a specific unity of consciousness" (Hua XIII, 6) an explanation that only further complicates the matter. Another attempt to solve the puzzle of the constitution of the body is modeled on the constitution of spatial objects in general. But this endeavor is too doomed to failure, because the human body, unlike all other physical objects is by no means constituted based on its adumbrations, nor is it a kinesthetic summation of the various perspectives in which it is given to us, but is rather, as Husserl writes in the same paragraph, "a system of real or possible sensations" (Hua XIII, 7) that can belong to me or to another.

In a 1909 manuscript, Husserl turns his attention again to this issue of the incarnation of the transcendental self, bringing a new concept into play, namely that of self-perception (*Selbstwahrnehmung*). He argues that the lived body (*Leib*) - understood as a phisical body (*Körper*) is given to me through self-perception (Hua XIII, 24). However, Husserl places the term *Selbstwahrnehmung*, self-perception, in quotation marks, which is often a sign in his case that the term needs to be further clarified – a kind of implicit formal indication *avant la lettre*. In his attempt to clarify this concept, he distinguishes in the same passage, in an unequivocal manner, between the ego of self-perception, the "psychophysical reality" – which, he cautions, should not be equated with the concept of man – and the pure ego. This hermeneutical perspective is in line with the idea of a "disembodied" transcendental self, one whose own body needs to first be constituted, in one way or another, in consciousness. For if the ego of self-perception were the transcendental ego, then the phenomenological difference, namely the difference between the psychological and the transcendental self – which is crucial for Husserlian phenomenology – would simply collapse: the transcendental ego would cease to be transcendental if it simply "discovered" his own body with the help of self-perception, since his body, as a psychophysical reality, belongs to the world placed in brackets through *epoché*, as I pointed out from the beginning. If the body "constitutes" itself, so to speak, through self-perception, how can it be reduced to transcendental consciousness, and what is the element that would allow me, as transcendental ego, to regard this lived body as mine? Whose body is this, since the transcendental self is literally a disembodied ego? To whom beongs the transcendental self, since my body is constituted through self-perception? Husserl can't really answer these questions. That is why, in the next passage, he notes: "Wahrgenommen wird der Leib als 'mein' Körper, und zwar gründet dieses 'mein' zunächst in eigener, zu beschreibender Erscheinungsweise, die ihn auszeichnet vor andern wahrgenommenen Körpern. Wahrgenommen wird dann auch, und zwar als zugehörig zu diesem so ausgezeichneten Körper,

alles 'Seelische', ihn als 'mein» dadurch charakterisierend'[2] (Hua XIII, 25).

Husserl tries to define the (human) body as a special type of physical body, which differs from all other bodies in its specific mode of manifestation. If the (human) body can fundamentally be conceived as a physical body (spatial object) to which something extra thing is added, then the problem of its transcendental constitution is almost solved.

The problematic and ultimately contradictory nature of this perspective is nevertheless exposed by Husserl himself. In *Ideen II*, for example, the question of constitution of one's own body occupies a prominent position. In order to clarify the matter, Husserl the distinction between two fundamental ways of constituting the body as a starting point for his endeavor. On the one hand, he argues, the body is constituted as a physical object, as matter, and on the other hand, as a sensitive "thing", as a "system of perceptions". In a strange way, according to Husserl, the body is both an object and a subject-object (Merleau-Ponty 1960, 165). In a passage from a manuscript dating from 1914/15, the problematic nature of the constitution of the lived body is braught to light perhaps in the most radical manner: "Mein Leib ist das Hier, aber er ist nie im objektiven Raum als Objekt erfahren: 'ursprünglich' erfahren, wahrgenommen im primären Sinn, nicht Einheit von Erscheinungen von derselben Struktur wie ein Außending. Und so bin ich mir auch nicht gegeben als 'in' einem objektiven Ding 'waltend' und als einem Objekt zugehörig"[3] (Hua XIII, 240).

This is one of the few places where Husserl seems to be explicitly aware of his residual Cartesianism, which he resolutely rejects[4]. The concept of a body understood as a vehicle or organ controlled or maneuvered by an ego is obviously tributary to the Cartesian distinction between *res extensa* and *res cogitans*. Precisely because of the fact that Husserl seems to have internalized – at least to some extent – the Cartesian dualism, he cannot give a satisfactory account of the problem of embodiment and he cannot explain how the relationship between the ego and its lived body ought to be understood. His view that the lived body is nothing more than a physical body endowed with certain sensory fields is precisely

what prevents him from adequately addressing the question of embodiment (Cf. Overgaard 2005, 200). Despite his explicit rejection of Cartesianism in this specific passage, Husserl will continue to use the terminology of Cartesian metaphysics. The passage quoted earlier clearly states that the lived body should not be confused with its bodily manifestation. The specific character of the lived body (*Leiblichkeit*) is not something that belongs, in one way or another, to a physical body (spatial object), which can thus be understood as "mine", nor is it a result or an epiphenomenon of the juxtaposition between *res extensa* and *res cogitans*.

In the passage quoted earlier, however, Husserl explains only *ex negativo* the meaning of the original experience through which, according to him, my own body is given, because it is not at all clear whether these expressions he uses ("'originally' experienced" and "perceived in the primary sense") are synonymous with the concept of *Selbstwahrnehmung*. In order to try to solve this intricate problem concerning the embodiment of the transcendental ego, we need to return to the first part of the passage discussed here, in which Husserl puts forth the idea of a fundamental aspatiality of the body. If "the body never appears in the objective space", then one very specific question immediately arises: How should we understand its specific mode of manifestation, of appearance. Husserl's answer to this question is the following: the body is the "absolute *here*", but this here has a very special character, since it "does not designate the place where the self is, but designates the self itself" (Figal 2015, 4). The world around me, things and other people are all perceived from this nullpoint of orientation, from this absolute here, but it would be wrong to say that this is where my body is, since this absolute here is precisely my body, its own mode of "manifestation". Within the space accessible through this absolute here, there is only one "thing" that cannot appear: precisely this nullpoint of orientation, i.e. precisely my own lived body. The body opens up a space in which it fundamentally cannot appear, precisely because it functions as a condition for the possibility of phenomenality as such. Consequently, the body remains fundamentally inapparent. The body cannot be conceived as the

totality of some adumbrations or perspectives, it is not "a phenomenon in the sense of phenomenology" (Hua XIII, 442). This phenomenological inaccessibility specific to the body, this strange, but necessary, opacity of it is precisely what makes possible the transparency of the phenomenal world.

But if the body is in a sense inapparent, how can we talk about "its transcendental constitution" (Hua XV, 549)? In several manuscripts Husserl tries to make plausible the idea of a self-constitution (*Selbstkonstitution*) of the body. But what exactly does it mean that the body constitutes itself? Doesn't that mean that the very constitution of my own body presupposes a body already constituted? This explanation seems to lead us to a dead end.

3. Husserl's residual Cartesianism and the irreducibility of the body[5]

The difficulty of the problem of embodiment, however, has to do, in my opinion, primarily with the fact that the body can neither be bracketed through *epoché*, nor can it be reduced to or constituted from consciousness.[6] The body cannot be constituted within the transcendental consciousness or through it, within the limits of the original or primordial sphere, since it is the very condition of possibility for this original sphere. Husserl himself acknowledges this fact, when he writes: "Jedes andere Ding meiner originalen Sphäre ist für mich so da, aber *vermittels* meines Leibes und seiner Originalität, *vermittels* seiner originalen Kinästhesen"[7] (Hua XV, 567). It is therefore clear that one's own body cannot be the mediator of the originality of objects constituted within the primordial sphere of the ego and at the same time be itself constituted within it. It follows that the only way to answer this question is to have as a starting point the idea that consciousness is always already embodied.

The question concerning the relation between ego and its lived body, whether this relationship is conceived as constitution, deduction etc. is meaningless, because the embodiment of the ego is the necessary condition for the possibility of any relationship with something outside the ego in general and for donation as such. The subject does not have a

body-vehicle or a body-organ, it is a body: the evidence of the body is, in a sense, as apodictic as that of the *ego cogito*. Husserl always talks about the life of consciousness or the living present, without ever clarifying this concept of life. Derrida considers these Husserlian concepts extremely problematic and even speaks of the "enigma of the concept of life", noting that life somehow "escapes" the transcendental reduction (Derrida 2005, 9). But why is this relevant? Precisely because it indicates in the clearest way that the body has, in fact, never been short-circuited, that it cannot in principle be bracketed, that the body evades the phenomenological epoché no matter how radical it is conceived – an idea that Merleau-Ponty formulates in an exceptionally clear manner, in a passage from the *Phenomenology of Perception*[8].

In other words, the transcendental ego is always already embodied, which does not only mean that its body cannot be "short-circuited", but also that it can never be completely detached from the world. This does not mean that transcendental phenomenology is impossible, but that the way the phenomenological reduction functions must be rethought. And it is no wonder that this is the task that Husserl was particularly concerned with in his last writings and unpublished manuscripts, in which he oftentimes speaks about what he calls radicalized reduction.

4. Back to the things themselves, back to the factical life!

From the first lectures held in Freiburg, Heidegger set out to develop a new concept of phenomenology, conceived, in the first instance, as "pre-theoretical science". Heidegger's critique of Husserl's theoretical approach – which short-circuits the concrete lived-body and the whole world itself, ending up with the aporetic transcendental ego – focuses primarily on rejecting Husserl's theorising approach which objectivises life, "mortifying" it in order to explain it. (GA 56/57, 11) As an alternative to this reflexive phenomenology, Heidegger develops the idea of a hermeneutic phenomenology, which should understand life through itself, without pursuing a scientific understanding of it. In a sense, Heidegger continues the

Husserlian, Cartesian-inspired approach from the point where it got stuck. His point of departure, however is not Husserl's disembodied ego, but the "factical life" as such, the human "subject" in its concreteness. (Cf. GA 56/57, 65) This novel approach is supported by the way in which Heidegger himself chooses to formulate the most urgent task of phenomenology, that of uncovering the true, unobjectified life, the factical life as such before any mortification or reification. (Cf. GA 59, 156)

But what does Heidegger mean when he talks about factical life – an extremely ambiguous concept with multiple possible uses? From Heidegger's phenomenological perspective the phenomenon of life is never considered in a psychological, anthropological or biological way. In a lecture held during the summer semester of 1922, Heidegger arrives for the first time at an unequivocal definition of what he considers to be the task of philosophy in general: "Die Problematik der Philosophie betrifft das Sein des faktischen Lebens. […]. Das heißt, Philosophie ist […] Ontologie der Faktizität."[9] (GA 62, 364)

What is really relevant for Heidegger is precisely the capture and explanation of factual life according to its essential possibilities of being, the uncovering of an "ontological infrastructure" that subtends facticity. The fact that Heidegger would abandon the concept of factical life in favor of *Dasein* becomes therefore a perfectly justifiable fact, since the German term, usually translated as existence, is constructed from the infinitive of the verb sein (to be) and is thus much better suited to Heidegger's onto-phenomenological approach.

The fundamental thing that both concepts – that of factical life and that of *Dasein* – have in common is a "specific dynamics (*Bewegtheit*) of life" (Figal 2003, 37). The concept of *Dasein* is much more suited for Heidegger's phenomenological and hermeneutical perspective and helps him explain the two dimensions that were only implicit in the concept of life, namely facticity and existentiality, at the cost of what one may call the biological dimension of factical life, the fact that each and every life is a life of a living body, an embodied factical existence. And if the question of embodiment was never approached other than absolutely incidentally during the first critical confrontations with Husserlian phenomenology, the ontological turn of

Heideggerian phenomenology will make tackling *Dasein's* body even more difficult, if not impossible, since the human existence is basically reduced to an *ek-sistence* of a disembodied self. Like Husserl, after all, Heidegger retains only the scheme, the ontological infrastructure of life, and does not account for its vitality, for its living character. Through the concept of *Dasein*, Heidegger disembodies the self of the factical life.

5. Existentiality, animality and anthropological difference

In works such as *Being and Time* or *What Is Called Thinking?* Heidegger does not discuss the question of embodiment or the issue of anthropological difference explicitely, although he develops a complex phenomenological and hermeneutical analysis of the hand, to which he largely reduces the problem of body[10]. In *Being and Time* he develops a whole regional ontology based on the phenomenological and hermeneutical analysis of the hand, which he later understands purely as a function of the *logos*, since he states that: "Only a being can speak, that is, think, can have hands and can be handy in achieving works of handicraft." (Heidegger 1968, 16). Nevertheless, the question of the lived body plays a central role in his lecture *Fundamental Problems of Metaphysics*. Heidegger argues here in favor of an ontological abyss between the world-poor and self-absorbed animal, whose being is defined as a state of captivity, and the world-forming man, whose being is defined as the state of openness that allows him access to the manifestation of being as a whole. On the basis of this difference of essence between human and animal, which is actualy implicitly assumed in the reduction of the living character to existentiality, Heidegger practically denies man his animality, trying to conceive the human body not as an organism, but as something grounded in the ec-static character of existence. Heidegger tries to argue, using a laborious terminology created practically in opposition to the terminology of existential-ontological analysis employed in *Being and Time* that the animal loses its world in the very moment it has it, being always already completely absorbed by it. The animal is completely absorbed in itself and captivated (*hingenommen*) by

the things in the world (GA 29/30, 359) and thus incapable of having a relationship with the world as a whole. The world of the animal is not a poor one, compared to the rich world of man, it is not a rudimentary world, but the poverty of the animal world consists in the fact that this "world" is always only on the verge of being a world. The animal is always on the verge of having a world, every time it interacts with what surrounds it, and yet its every interaction absorbs it without rest, captivates it.

Considered from this perspective, Heidegger's claim that "even what we attribute to the human being as *animalitas* on the basis of the comparison with 'beasts' is itself grounded in the essence of ec-sistence." (Heidegger 1998, 247) becomes perfectly clear. From an ontological perspective, the human has nothing in common with the animal, his being cannot be understood in terms of *animalitas* and therefore the metaphysical definitions of the human being, which defines him as *animal rationale* must be rethought, according to Heidegger, in order to take into consideration the "essence" of man, that is, his existentiality.

But although Heidegger explicitly rejects the metaphysical definition of what was traditionally understood as human nature, he is not at all willing to subject the metaphysical concept of animality to a similar radical "destruction", even if he criticizes the understanding of the organism in mechanical terms or in terms of a vital principle. The concept of humanism and humanity is obviously the expression of a metaphysical understanding of human existence, but also the opposition humanity-animality in general belongs to and is indebted to the metaphysical tradition. In an essay whose starting point is Heidegger's understanding of animality, Derrida questions the very nature of the anthropological difference. Derrida argues that no philosopher, from Plato to Heidegger, protested against this general term in the form of the singular, namely that of *animal* (Derrida 2002, 408). That is why, Derrida argues, philosophy has always assumed that there is a unique and irreducible boundary between humanity and animality, the latter forming what Derrida calls "a single and fundamentally homogeneous set that one has the right, the theoretical or philosophical right

to distinguish and mark as opposite, namely, the set of the Animal in general, the animal spoken of in the general singular" (Derrida 2002, 409).

In his attempt to reject this metaphysical perspective based on the traditional understanding of the anthropological difference, Derrida introduces a new concept "a double clone or a portmanteau word, a sort of monstrous hybrid, a chimera" (Derrida 2002, 410). This new concept, *animot*, formed by the agglutination of the words "animal" (*animal*) and "word" (*mot*), is a word that does not exist in French although its pronunciation is identical to that of *animaux* (the plural for animal): "*Ecce animot*. Neither a species nor a gender nor an individual, it is an irreducible living multiplicity of mortals." (Derrida 2002, 409). Animot is a concept by which Derrida indicates, in fact, that the term animal can only be used *sous rature*, that is, accepting and assuming its hermeneutical inadequacy, and that the homogeneous unity which this concept claims to designate is only a fictional, non-existent one. Moreover, by making up this impossible linguistic chimera which violates all the rules of the French language, yet leaving the feeling, when heard, that it obeys them – animot should be pronounced, as previously mentioned, just like *animaux* –, Derrida brings to light in the most ingenious way a fundamental form of (hermeneutical) violence to which the animal has always been subjected in western thought.[11]

Although Heidegger emphasizes at every turn that there is an essential difference between human and animal, there are certain cracks in his seemingly homogeneous conception, certain passages in which his own perspective seems to be put into question and where the anthropological difference becomes problematic for Heidegger himself.

For example, it is true that, according to Heidegger, it is not possible for animals to exist in the same world with us, that it would be absurd to speak of a kind of being together of humans and animals, much less of a being together of animals. Being-with, the fact of being together, is reserved, *par excellence*, for those beings whose "essence" is existence, to cite a recurring definition in *Being and Time*. However, Heidegger himself is forced to admit that, in one form or another, animals

live with us, share our world (GA 29/30, 308). But to paraphrase a question that gives the title of a Heideggerian study, *what is called "living"*? It is clear that if human and animal share the same world by living together, life is not something that can be explained solely in terms of existence, it cannot be grounded in the essence of existence, as Heidegger would argue, without falling into contradictions, since this would lead to the collapse of the anthropological difference. If we were to try to understand both the life of the animal and that of the human in terms of existence, we would be compelled to admit that the life of the animal should also be understood, at least to a certain extent, in terms of existence! It follows that in order to argue in favor of an essential difference between *humanitas* and *animalitas*, life – or, more precisely, the living character of the living being – must be understood other than in terms of existentiality. Heidegger himself admits that "we can only determine the animality of the animal if we are clear about what constitutes the animality, the living character of a living being, as distinct from the non-living being which does not even have the possibility of dying (*Möglichkeit zu sterben*). A stone cannot be dead because it is never alive" (Heidegger 1995, 265). Heidegger does not clarify here this distinction he makes between living and non-living being, and he never returns to it, to discuss it more thoroughly, in the course of this lecture or anywere else, as far as I am aware.

It is worth noting, however, that in this passage Heidegger speaks of the "possibility of dying", which seems to be the defining character of the living being. This statement is interesting for two reasons. First of all, because when he discusses the specific character of the animal being, Heidegger does not attribute it possibilities, but only abilities or faculties (*Fähigkeiten*). Therefore, the discussion about the possibility of dying, which is defining for the living beings implies or at least indicates a terminological fracture that Heidegger himself, otherwise extremely precise and acribic when it comes to terminology, does not seem to notice. Secondly, the idea that the living being is defined by its possibility to die seems to contradict other passages in the same work, in which Heidegger denies the animal precisely this possibility of dying. (Cf. GA

29/30, 388). Moreover, in *Being and Time* he explicitely states that only *Dasein* has the possibility of dying: "The ending of that which lives we have called 'perishing'. Dasein too 'has' its death, of the kind appropriate to anything that lives; and it has it, not in ontical isolation, but as codetermined by its primordial kind of Being. In so far as this is the case, Dasein too can end without authentically dying, though on the other hand, *qua* Dasein, it does not simply perish while other living beings can only end." (Heidegger 1962, 247) Given the terminological coherence between the two works, which Heidegger repeatedly invokes, both implicitly and explicitly, when referring to paragraphs in *Being and Time*, this incongruity is extremely eloquent. Death and dying is, *par excellence*, a possibility of Dasein; and not any possibility, but a possibility which has an extraordinary character that makes it different from any other possibility, in so far as it is an insurmountable possibility, "the possibility of the impossibility of any existence at all" (Heidegger 1962, 262). The possibility of dying, as the extreme possibility of Dasein, is precisely the possibility "to project itself on its ownmost potentiality-for-Being means to be able to understand itself in the Being of the entity so revealed-namely, to exist." (Heidegger 1962, 262-3) From this passage, which is by no means the only one or even the most eloquent, it is clear that death or the possibility of dying belong, according to Heidegger, exclusively to the sphere of existentiality, of the human being conceived as Dasein.

But here lies the problem: The ownmost possibility of Dasein can in no way be understood as the defining "property" of the living being, without falling into a whole series of difficulties, or without admitting that Dasein shares something fundamental with all other living beings. However, it cannot be disputed that while in *Being and Time* Heidegger reduces both life and death of living beings (organisms) to physiological processes (Heidegger 1962, 264), in his lecture of 1929/30 he clearly states that when the living character of the animal is under discussion: "It is not sufficient merely to provide a morphological description of the animal's form, its limbs, and so on; it is insufficient to explore the physiological processes and then to add on some form of animal psychology. For in all of

this we have already presupposed that the animal is alive, that in its behavior the animal is also disposed in a certain manner." (GA 29/30, 266). The need to answer the question concerning the nature of the living character (of the "essence of life") thus leads Heidegger back to the question of death and the possibility of dying – previously considered to be something that is solely reserved for the human Dasein – and therefore confronts him with the question regarding the enigmatic relation between animality and existentiality. If the possibility of dying is something that all living beings have in common, Heidegger's whole ontological project needs to be rethought.

Another interesting detail that can be found in the same passage discussed earlier is that Heidegger states here that the animal "is also disposed in a certain manner" (*so und so ist*), that is, in other words, as I will try to show, that it has a *mood*. Heidegger uses this expression – "so und so sein" – several times in the course of his famous lecture, but he always employs it only when discussing the fact that Dasein is defined, in its essence, by what in *Being and Time* is called mood (*Befindlichkeit*). For example, he begins §68 of his lecture noting that: "We already know from our introductory observations that attunements as such are not merely subjectively coloured experiences or epiphenomenal manifestations of psychological life but rather fundamental ways of Dasein itself, in which one is attuned in such and such a way (so und so ist), ways of Dasein in which Dasein becomes manifest to itself in such and such a manner" (GA 29/30, 410). If both Dasein and animal share this fundamental dimension that constitutes, together with understanding and discourse the structural articulation of care, which is, in turn, understood as the being of Dasein, than one has to admit that the two – Dasein and animal – have something fundamental in common. Mood/state-of-mind (*Befindlichkeit*) together with understanding and discourse constitute the Being of disclosedness which essentially belongs to Dasein (Heidegger 1962, 180). But since mood seems to be something that defines the animal, it follows that it too has a kind of disclosedness (*Erschlossenheit*) and, therefore, a world it is thrown into, and a world it can share with other (human) beings. The question if understanding and

discourse also belong to the specific 'disclosedness' of the animal is too complex to be raised here and would require an extensive analysis that goes far beyond the scope of this paper.

In this way, living character (the "essence of life") and existentiality ("the essence of existence") could be conceived, at least in principle, without being reduced to one another, but rather as somehow correlated or intertwined, as sharing a common denominator. This would obviously lead to the shattering of the anthropological difference and thus open the way for a reflection on the relationship between *animalitas* and *humanitas* in a horizon different from the metaphysical one to which Heidegger himself is – albeit in a small extent – indebted to. After all, following in Derrida's footsteps, the difference between *humanitas* and *animalitas* can only be thought of in conjunction with the closeness, the affinity of the two.

NOTES

[1] Cf. for example: E. Husserl, Hua VIII, 71: "Ich, gemäß meiner gewöhnlichen Ich-Rede, besagt Ich, das Menschen-Ich. Konkret voll genommen, bin ich beseelter Leib, psychophysische Realität, zur Welt, dem All der Realitäten gehörig. Ich bin ein Objekt meiner mundanen Erfahrung unter anderen. Muss ich davon nicht scheiden dasjenige Ich, das hierbei das Subjekt der Erfahrung ist, das Ichsubjekt für das Ichobjekt?"

[2] "The body is perceived as 'my' body, and this 'my' is initially based on its own appearance, that is still to be described, and which distinguishes it from other perceived bodies. Everything that is 'soul' is then also perceived, namely as belonging to this so distinguished body, thereby characterizing it as 'mine'" (my translation).

[3] "My body is the Here, but it is never experienced in objective space as an object: 'originally' experienced, perceived in the primary sense, not a unity of appearances, with the same structure as a spacial object. And so I am also neither given to myself as 'controling' an objective thing, nor as belonging to an object" (my translation).

[4] In his work on the husserlian phenomenology of embodiment and the constitution of subjectivity, J. Taipale invokes a series of other passages from Husserl's work in which the understanding of the lived body as a vehicle is explicitly rejected by Husserl (Cf. Taipale 2014, 60).

[5] For a more detailed account of this issue, cf. Paul Sandu, *Koexistenz im Ineinander* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2021), 80-89.

[6] This irreducibility of the body is asserted perhaps in the clearest form by Schmitz, who regards the body as the foundation of the personality (*Persönlichkeit*). (Cf. Schmitz 2014, 45).

[7] "Every other thing of my original sphere is there for me […], but *through* my body and its originality, through its original kinaesthetics" (my translation).
[8] Cf. Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), 467: "Si, réfléchissant sur l'essence de la subjectivité, je la trouve liée à celle du corps et à celle du monde, c'est que mon existence comme subjectivité ne fait qu'un avec mon existence comme corps et avec l'existence du monde et que finalement le sujet que je suis concrètement pris est inséparable de ce corps-ci et de ce monde-ci."
[9] "The problem of philosophy concerns the being of factual life [...]. This means that philosophy is an ontology of facticity" (my translation).
[10] A more elaborate discussion of this issue can be found in my paper, "Dasein, Raum und Leib – Eine Kritik der Existenzialanalyse von *Sein und Zeit*", *Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai-Philosophia* 59, no. 3 (2014): 17-33.
[11] Following Derrida's suggestion, the term "animal" is intentionally crossed out to emphasize its hermeneutical inadequacy.

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Paul Gabriel Sandu has received his PhD degree in Philosophy at the Albert-Ludwigs-University in Freiburg with a thesis on the question of transcendental intersubjectivity in Husserl's phenomenology. His main fields of interest are French and German phenomenology, but also Schelling and the German Idealism. He translated a couple of phenomenological works by Edith Stein, Hermann Schmitz, Jürgen Habermas, but also Schellings Philosophical Investigation into the Essence of Human Freedom. He is teaching assistent at the University of Bucharest.

Address:
Paul Gabriel Sandu
Faculty of Philosophy
University of Bucharest
Splaiul Independentei 204, București 060024
Email: paulgabriel.sandu@filosofie.unibuc.ro