

The four principles of phenomenology

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Abstract This article, published originally in French just after the 1989 release of Jean-Luc Marion’s book *Reduction and Givenness*, consists of a sustained critical study of the manner in which Marion advances from the basic principles of phenomenology. Henry outlines briefly three principles, (1) “so much appearance, so much being,” (2) “the principle of principles” of Ideas I, (3) “to the things themselves!” before entering into a lengthy dialogue with Marion’s proposal of a fourth principle: “so much reduction, so much givenness.” Henry submits each principle to critique, highlighting that they contain confusing premises. Henry is appreciative of Marion’s capacity to root the appearing of phenomena in givenness, but he ultimately finds problematic the gap between the call and response that is a fundamental structure of Marion’s fourth principle. Henry, in contrast, develops his own theme of pure givenness, expressed in the form of subjectivity he calls auto-affection, in the final pages of the article.

Keywords Phenomenology · Jean-Luc Marion · Appearing · Life · Givenness · Ontology

In honor to the deceased author Michel Henry.

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Phenomenology rests on four principles which it explicitly claims as its foundations.

The first—“so much appearance, so much being”—is borrowed from the Marburg School. Over against this ambiguous proposition, owing to the double signification of the term “appearance,” we prefer this strict wording: “so much appearing, so much being.”¹

The second is the principle of principles. Formulated by Husserl himself in §24 of *Ideen I*, it sets forth intuition or, more precisely, “that every originary presentive intuition is a legitimizing source of cognition”² and thus for any particularly rational statement.

In the third principle the claim is so vehement that it clothes itself in the allure of an exhortation, even a cry: “*zu den Sachen selbst!*”

The fourth principle was defined considerably later by Jean-Luc Marion in his work *Reduction and Givenness*, but its importance hits upon the entirety of phenomenological development as a hidden presupposition that is always already at work. It is formulated thus: “so much reduction, so much givenness.”³

These four founding principles of phenomenology have two features that should be underlined from the outset. On the one hand, despite the claim of radicality implicit in their literal expression, *they remain in fact fundamentally undefined*. This indeterminacy is all the more serious and weighs all the more dangerously on the destiny of phenomenology precisely because it concerns a phenomenological indeterminacy in an essential sense. The first consequence of this phenomenological indeterminacy of the foundational principles of phenomenology is the purely formal character of the pronouncements to which they give rise, a character that removes a great deal of their rigor and, thereby, their fecundity.

On the other hand, in spite of their formal character, the four principles contain latent tensions that are hardly compatible with the coherence that one would expect from a system of presuppositions placed at the start of an investigation and charged with ensuring its unity. These tensions are such that, to speak candidly, they result in veritable contradictions.

Let us begin with indeterminacy. The first principle establishes a decisive correlation between appearance and being. This correlation impresses itself upon us with the strongest force because it is wholly immediate: when something appears, it happens to exist at the same time. This correlation is so powerful that it seems to be reduced [*ramener*] to an identity: to appear is thereby identically to be. When the principle says “so much appearing, so much being,” it intends neither the extension, nor in any fashion the intensity of phenomenological and ontological determinations that it brings together, but rather the common identity of their essence. It is to the extent that appearing appears that being thereby “is.” It is to the extent that

¹ Henry fails to cite properly this originally German expression. Drawn from Heidegger and Husserl, in the German, *Soviel Schein—soviel Sein*, is a formula found in Jean-Luc Marion (1998, pp. 59 and 203) and (2004, pp. 94 and 303). Hereafter the French is followed by the pagination of the English translation. The 2004 edition of the text will be cited. The German is found in Heidegger (1985, p. 139). Heidegger writes exactly “Wieviel Schein jedoch, soviel ‘Sein’” in Heidegger (1962, p. 60, no. 3); Husserl writes “Soviel Schein, soviel Sein” in Husserl (1973, §46, p. 133; 1960, §46, p. 103) (Translators’ note).

² See Husserl (1983, §24, p. 44) (Translators’ note).

³ Marion (2004, p. 302, p. 203).

appearing extends its reign that being also extends its own. And this is because they have one and the same reign, one and the same essence.

As soon as we consider further this essential identity between appearing and being, we are obliged to call it into question again. In spite of the supposed identity of their essence, appearing and being do not belong on the same plane. Their ontological dignity, so to speak, is not the same—far from it: appearing is everything, being is nothing. Or rather, being only exists because appearing appears and only to the extent that it does so. The identity between appearing and being is resolved in the establishment of the latter by means of the former. Here the essential identity means that only one and the same power is at work, that of appearing. Without appearance, as long as it does not appear, being is nothing—in the sense that it is nothing at all. Its essence, that which allows it to be, is found only in appearing, which has extended its own essence to it. Its essence consists in the fact of actually appearing.

By contrast, it is pure non-sense to inquire into the meaning of being as such or into that which would allow it to be in some fashion of itself and by itself, through its own power or will. Being itself has neither power nor will. It is nothing but a *flatus vocis*, unless we recognize in it the *sui generis* power that leads it to be and that leads all things to be. This is the power of appearing as it appears.

Phenomenology thus stands higher than ontology. Yet one must observe that this manner of expressing the precedence of phenomenology risks leading us into error. There are not two domains, of which one would prevail for some reason over the other, as if it would play the role of a precondition for the other one which would only be its product or effect. Phenomenology and ontology are not two different things; instead they designate the same thing, one solitary “thing” whose essence is appearing and which is constituted exclusively by it.

It suffices to cite here someone who, well before the development of modern phenomenology, seized the fundamental intuition of all pure phenomenology and was able to raise it to the level of its true concept—something which neither Husserlian nor Heideggerian phenomenology were able to do. At least twice, Descartes reduced being to appearing in such a radical manner that nothing remained of being or of any possible being that was not in substance appearing and, indeed, pure appearing. That is, an appearance in which what appears is the pure fact of appearing as such. In the *Regulae*, Descartes still understood the pure fact of appearing as such in a traditional manner and then designated it by a variety of improper titles, including *lumen naturale*. He then perceived it in its true essence in the piercing intuition of the *Meditations*, when he calls it the *cogitatio*. In the context of this problem, the relation between appearing and being is now laid bare: “thought alone belongs to [the mind] [*que nous sommes par cela seul que nous pensons*].”⁴ This means: the being that we are and to which all being may be reduced (subsisting after doubt)—thus, being in its totality—takes the power of being from appearance and only from the power of appearance. This is formulated in the language of the problem of the *Meditations*: “I am, then, in the strict sense

⁴ Descartes (1983:IX-2, p. 28; 1985: I, p. 195).

only a thing that thinks.”⁵ This means: being resides in appearing and is exhausted in it. Said otherwise, there is no being that would be different in itself from the appearing of appearance and that may not be reduced purely and simply to it.

We now arrive at the third principle: “straight to the things themselves!” Its announcement conjures up a duality of terms. This duality is not a fact of language but refers to what it claims to speak about: “*Zu*” on the one hand, and “*die Sachen*” on the other. “*Zu*” is the access to something, the possibility of reaching it, while *Sachen* designates something which is reached through this access, the content to which such access gives access.

At the very moment that we first proceed to make explicit phenomenology’s rallying cry, to explain it in its simplest form, it is inescapable that we have both fallen back into the most traditional problem and that we have abandoned or rather rejected what the commentary on the first principle procured for us as an essential finding, namely, the identity of appearing and being through the reduction of the latter to the former.

Such is the contradiction. Being is no longer reducible to appearing. It no longer draws the power that makes it to be from the pure fact of appearing, if there are some *Sachen*, some things in themselves, which we should seek to attain and attain by following a certain path, by a means of access that is precisely nothing but the means to attaining these things. They are the end. Being is already there in itself before we recognize it.

The problem of appearing is certainly not resolved by that. In the imperative of phenomenology, the “*Zu*” that leads us to the things directly and without detour is precisely appearing itself. But this appearing, thought as a pure possibility of access, is presented henceforth as subordinate to that to which it permits us access. This subordination goes so far that it is not only the case that the possibility of access is involved in the attaining of the thing that is its true goal. Moreover, the access itself proves to be determined by this goal. It is the nature of the object to be known that determines the appropriate means of knowing it. This is to say that ultimately it determines the access itself, dictates what this access ought to be, which procedures and methodologies must be put in place in order to be able to grasp this object and to attain it in itself such as it is. Ontology’s subordinate relationship to phenomenology is thus reversed now, since the thing constitutes the only goal in virtue of which the means of access were put in place and, moreover, since the nature of these means depend on the nature of the thing.

This reversal of the relationship between phenomenology and ontology brings us to an aporia. How can we know the nature of the thing and how it determines our access to it unless this thing and what we call its nature has already been revealed to us—in and through its appearing? To the claim that the nature of the thing decides the means of access, one has to respond as follows: it is the means of access to the thing that found and establish its nature; it is the act of seeing that determines the visual character of what is seen, hearing its auditory character, space its spatial character, time its temporal character, etc. Once we reject the naive idea that

⁵ Descartes (1983: IX-1, pp. 21–22; 1985: II, p. 18). Henry’s quote from Descartes, or its exact wording, cannot be located in the French citation he gives. (Translators’ note).

phenomenology is determined by ontology, once we reject that knowledge is determined by the thing known, a problem nonetheless remains: that of the duality presupposed by traditional thought and by contemporary phenomenology—although, to the contrary, this duality is abolished by a radical reduction of being to appearing.

The connection between being and appearing is established in the phenomenon. The concept of the phenomenon designates *something that shows itself* and thus unites the two significations of the thing, which are that of being, on the one hand, and the fact of showing itself, or appearing, on the other. The fact that something *is* only to the extent that it shows itself and that being inevitably refers to appearing, does not avoid the question of knowing whether “something” that shows itself by becoming a “phenomenon” is different in itself from appearing itself, even completely heterogeneous to it. What justifies this line of questioning is the fact that what is given in the phenomenon (at least, for example, in the mundane phenomenon) is given precisely as already there before the “discovery” of it that is offered by the phenomenon—before appearing establishes it in this condition of what appears and of what counts as a “phenomenon” for us.

A new contradiction now presents itself to us. The radical reduction of being to appearance finds itself supplanted by the inevitable dissociation of the two. Being is indeed independent of appearing, if it “is” in a certain manner, however obscure it may be to us, *before* being shown to us in and by the phenomenon.

The concept of phenomenon is itself affected by this contradiction and falls, at the very least, into ambiguity. In its positive signification, it expresses the primitive embrace between being and appearing, that unshakeable foundation recognized by the first principle (“so much appearing, so much being”) on which phenomenology sought to establish itself. Why? As long as something appears, no critique can be made of its existence. One may well say, “This phenomenon is an illusion,” but nothing has changed. Nothing has been done to this phenomenon itself insofar as its appearing has not ceased to occur and one limits oneself to it.

Shielded from criticism, the phenomenon is not protected from analysis. What analysis calls into question, in the first place, is not the connection of appearing and being but rather the reduction of being to appearing, that is, the idea that there cannot be any being other than appearing itself as such. To examine the issue more closely, in effect, the phenomenon does not at all imply the radicality of this reduction of the being of being to the appearing of appearing. Rather, quite to the contrary, it seems to presuppose their connection, however meager this may be, as well as their distinctness at least as an ideal possibility. If this distinction is inscribed in some way in what is phenomenologically the phenomenon, does it not make analysis necessary?

This distinction in the phenomenon separates what appears and the fact of appearing. The concept of phenomenon, in other words, is twofold: it is both ontic and phenomenological. From the ontic point of view, the phenomenon designates what appears, for example: this table, this proposition, this memory. But the ontic content of the phenomenon, or what common sense understands by that name, does not exhaust this concept. For it also implies, beyond this specific content, its

phenomenality, that is, the fact of showing itself (i.e. phenomenality) and that there can only be a phenomenon in this way.

Now it is necessary to think through how far this duplicity of the concept of the phenomenon goes, what results from the devastating rupture that it creates, and the primal unity of appearing and being. For it is no longer only about a simple notional distinction between the contents of the phenomenon and its pure appearing, if the former can vary indefinitely while the latter remains unchanged. This permanence of appearing, while that which appears constantly changes, implies a difference between the nature of the two. Traditional thought understands phenomenality as light—whether it is natural light, the light of reason, of the world, or of this world itself—the difference between appearing and what appears is a matter of absolute indifference, in this case the indifference of light to all that it illuminates, as Descartes says in the first *Regula*.⁶

But, if in the phenomenon its contents and its appearing differ to the point of one standing with absolute indifference toward the other, if they revert each to its own side without anything in common with the other, how can their unity still be preserved in the phenomenon as that which establishes the phenomenon? The aporia of the phenomenon, however, only illustrates the aporia which now affects the relationship of appearing and being, upon which phenomenology thought it could establish itself. How would the content, the thing, and beings, be able to come into being by appearing and by its own act of appearing, if they are in principle indifferent to it? How, in other words, can being take its being from appearing if, in itself and in its nature, as the content of the phenomenon, it is irreducible to the phenomenality of appearing? It is the principle of phenomenology, the internal bond of appearing and being that is affected; and it is because phenomenology as a whole neglects or fails to clarify this principle that it has lost its bearings and finds itself adrift.

And how would it be otherwise as long as appearing and, at the same time, being itself reduced to its appearing are both presented as purely formal concepts? And as long as the fundamental principles of phenomenology remain in a state of complete phenomenological indeterminacy?

What indeed can the first principle (“so much appearing, so much being”) mean if one does not know what appearing means and, as a result, what being means, a being whose being is appearing? How should one make sense of the proportional relation that unites them and which becomes a forever enigmatic proportion between two equally unknown terms?

Along similar lines, how can we understand the third principle (“to the things themselves”) if the access to the things, which the *zu* expresses and which represent nothing other than appearing itself, still remains completely unelucidated? How can we understand this principle if we do not know *how things appear* or how to go to them in order to apprehend and know them? The very question of knowing if these things differ from the pure possibility that offers access to them and if, as a result, this possibility can and ought to be thought of apart; or if, on the contrary, things and access have only and are only the same essence; this question, which decides

⁶ Cf., Descartes (1983, X: p. 360; 1985: I, p. 9).

the ultimate claim of phenomenology to define being through phenomenality, even to reduce it to phenomenality, remains without an answer.

The same uncertainty, in turn, applies to the fourth principle: “so much reduction, so much givenness.” This recent statement of a rigorous proportionality between reduction and givenness leads us back to the sources of phenomenology and to the first principle itself, at least as we have formulated it. For, as we shall demonstrate, the reduction understood in its phenomenological signification is nothing other than a reduction to appearing. That this reduction can be taken to a greater or lesser extent, according to a greater or lesser radicality—as the proposition “so much reduction, so much givenness” implies—does not only mean that it is important to define this concept of appearing in a rigorous manner by distinguishing it from that with which thought has always conflated it, namely, with what appears in it. If the radicality of the reduction ought to concern appearing itself, must not one think that appearing is not as simple as it seems in each of these statements that refer to it as a unique and monotone manner of a thing showing itself? To the contrary, it implies and puts into play fundamental differences and, beyond them, an *absolute difference between two heterogeneous modes of manifestation*. Everything that is ever able to manifest itself is manifested and revealed according to these modes. Thus irreducible to a formal univocal signification, appearing differs as such, according to the pure phenomenological material out of which it is made. Only an account of it—of the how of appearing—can lend a sense to the propositions that are based on it, notably the principles of phenomenology. Only this attention to the phenomenological substantiality of pure phenomenality can indicate whether or not pure phenomenality is homogenous with being and whether or not it is able to define and determine it.

Let us then adopt the perspective of a material phenomenology for the purpose of scrutinizing the founding principles of phenomenology more closely. What now stands before us is not only the ruinous phenomenological indeterminacy whereby phenomenology, as it is traditionally conceived, left vague the interior nature of its true object. The suspicion to the contrary is raised that thanks specifically to this indeterminacy and to the fact that effective and concrete phenomenological modalities of appearing are not fixed, a certain conception of phenomenality arises. This conception of phenomenality is presented immediately and usually to ordinary thought and at the same time constitutes the oldest and least critical presupposition of traditional philosophy. This conception of phenomenality is borrowed from the everyday perception of objects in the world and has become firmly established not as what it actually is, namely, a particular form of experience, but as the general structure of appearing and thus of all phenomena as such. This catastrophic confusion of the appearing of the world with the universal essence of appearing corrupts almost all philosophies in Western thought, to the point that critiques of them most often trace this confusion back to the beginning of their postulates and analyses. In Husserlian phenomenology, it is the second principle—“that every originary presentive intuition is a legitimizing source of cognition”—that exposes this confusion in its full magnitude.

This famous principle, the principle of principles, is given as the most fundamental, but beneath its apparent simplicity it conceals a double thesis that

renders it contradictory. On the one hand, it explicitly aims at universality. That about which it pretends to speak, under the title of intuition, is that which makes possible every phenomenon and every experience in any domain whatsoever, and whatever might be the specificity of this phenomenon or this intuition. It thus concerns appearing in general. It is the universal condition of phenomena. It is phenomenality in its first and omnipresent structure, in its essence, which is designated under the title of “originary presentive intuition.”

On the other hand, however, under the very same term “intuition,” there is a particular mode of appearing that is intended and that is no longer a still undefined, simple concept. For Husserl, intuition signifies the structure of consciousness as “consciousness of something”, as intentional. To be sure, it is fulfilled intentionality that, *stricto sensu*, the concept of intuition qualifies, but it is to intentionality as such that intuition owes its power of constituting phenomenality, of instituting the condition for the phenomenon. Intentionality gives rise to phenomenality. Intentionality thus proceeds by surpassing itself toward that which is cast in front of it as its intentional correlate, as a transcendent object. It is the transcendence of this object, its setting at a distance that constitutes phenomenality as such.

This unilateral definition of the pure concept of phenomenality, however given as universal, results in a limitation whose significance is not only gnoseological but vital. It is not only knowledge that, according to the most constant thesis of Western philosophy, sees itself confronted with an insurmountable finitude instead of being justified. It is our life itself that is put to the side, forgotten, and lost, if the essence of life is nothing other than that of original phenomenality, and if the phenomenality that draws its substance from the ek-static light of the world and from its transcendence excludes in principle this Archi-Revelation. But “intuition” is only a name for this transcendence; it implies in itself this unconscious but radical elimination of life.

The ultimate claim of phenomenology, of relating to phenomena in such a manner that it attains being itself within them, does not only run up against the difficulties and contradictions that have already been revealed but against an absolute impasse. By positing intuition as the basis for all experience and of all knowledge, of all that can exist for us, phenomenology displays the sort of appearing in which being never “exists” in its most original essence: it bursts forth in us as an infinite life that does not cease to give us to ourselves and to engender us to the extent that it engenders itself in its eternal self-affection. Far from being established in intuition, the connection between appearing and being is completely undone there to the point that, in the phenomenon issued from intuition and notably in evidence, being is neither presented nor given to us but rather is removed or, better said, abolished. To require being to offer itself in intuition and, if possible, under its completed form as evidence is to deny, in effect, that any other being than that which is intuited or intuitable is possible. It is to deny, finally, the mere “existence” of the original essence of appearing and being that are drawn from life. This second principle—which is in truth the first principle—is an act of murder.

This elimination by the principle of principles of that which, as the auto-affection of life, constitutes the Archi-Revelation of appearing itself, explains in first place the destiny of historical phenomenology. This tradition has never been able to break

truly with the fundamental presupposition of Husserlian phenomenology. This is what renders Heidegger's criticisms of Husserlian phenomenology ineffectual. What makes being be is precisely not appearing understood in terms of the concept of intuition but what escapes irreducibly from intuition. As a result, one embarks, in effect, upon an unending quest, as they say, and becomes involved in a hermeneutic that is confined to the task of never finding what is in question. Besides, this is not the "meaning of being" but rather the force that makes being be. What is contrasted with intuition or intentionality under various titles—"Dasein," "transcendence," "ek-static truth"—does nothing other than to announce the condition of this intuition or of this intentionality. No other phenomenality in its pure phenomenological materiality is conceived or envisioned here than the phenomenality of the *Ek-stasis* wherein all intuition is deployed. Truly, the simple question of the possibility of an impressional phenomenological matter, such as that of an auto-affectation in its pathos, never even comes to mind.

In the case of Husserl, the central lacuna of his phenomenology is the fact that it misses in principle, and notably in the principle of principles, the transcendental life that nonetheless constituted its primary preoccupation. This lacuna remains masked by the systematic character of the problem and the investigation that it arouses. Once intuition has been placed at the foundation of every form of possible being, a philosophy that seeks a universal phenomenological ontology can only be carried out through an exhaustive elucidation of the various possible forms of intuition to which different kinds of evidence correspond. In each case, evidence is the most perfect mode of intuition to which one could aspire for each form of intuition, and hence, for every domain of being. The meticulous and persistent pursuit of this grandiose project resulted, with the laying bare of new forms of intuition, in the discovery of new regions of being. And yet, this extraordinary broadening of human experience and of the domains of objects comes with a tragic limitation. All these means of access, skilfully recognized and described, are precisely forms of intuition from which life by its nature has withdrawn. Hence phenomenology produces in a purely negative sense a "reduction" of what it sought to expand and liberate: our relationship to being as a relationship founded in our own life.

It is the merit of the fourth principle, which designates without compromise the two key concepts of phenomenology and establishes a relationship of proportionality between them, to restore to the reduction a truly positive significance. Far from limiting, restricting, omitting, and thus from "reducing," the reduction opens and gives. And what does it give? Givenness. The former leads to the latter in such a way that the expansion and deepening of the one is the expansion and deepening of the other: "so much reduction, so much givenness." This is what needs to be demonstrated.

The first discussion of the reduction in the *Lectures* of 1905 and 1907 remains weighed down with the ontico-phenomenological ambiguity that we have denounced. In his effort to reach the "pure phenomenon," the "phenomenon in the sense of phenomenology," Husserl does not distinguish clearly between what appears and appearing itself. This ambiguity corrupts the concept of "absolute givenness," of "self givenness" [*absolute Gegebenheit, Selbstgegebenheit*]⁷ which

⁷ Edmund Husserl (1970, p. 60; 1999, p. 64).

designates at the same time the thing given and the way in which it is given. The obtaining of things given in this way is now the goal of the inquiry. Hence, in the *Lectures* of 1905 the sense data constituted the absolute givens to which this first reduction led, whereas everything that surpasses these subjective and incontestable appearances, namely, the “transcendent” object constituted on the basis of them, is affected by a degree of uncertainty and thus is put out of play by the reduction. Auditory and visual impressions, for example, are certain, although the object intended through them but not actually given in them could indeed not exist. Or rather, what is directly grasped, the pure phenomena, are the conscious phenomena that intend the object, not what is intended by them.

However, one cannot forget that it is in the *Lectures* of 1905 that, with the explicit designation of the objects of phenomenology as “objects in their How,”⁸ the decisive distinction is introduced between the given and the mode of its givenness, between the “object” and its how, which is nothing other than the How of its givenness, that is, givenness itself. The distinction between the contents that are certain and those that are tentative is only the means for going back to the way in which they are given. This and only this renders them certain or not. From the reduction to givenness, even though phenomenology remains caught up in ontic ambiguity, is the path traveled since 1905 when the reduction was introduced.

As a consequence, the true sense of the reduction is never ontic. It does not have to do with establishing a division between the certain contents upon which, for example, knowledge might be established and other reputedly dubious contents. In principle, the reduction is phenomenological for the reason that it relates to the object itself of phenomenology, namely, to the How of givenness. How then are the contents given that can claim certitude and how are those that cannot? In and through the evidence for certain contents; and outside of and independent of evidence for uncertain contents. *It is never the certain contents, what is evident, which are able to offer a foundation for knowledge, but only that which renders them evident and hence certain, namely, evidence itself.* That is the sense of saying that evidence, and the evidence alone, is a principle; that is the sense of the principle of principles.

Under the purview of this principle, the analysis has already objected to the fact that all that matters, namely, the object of phenomenology—and with it every ontological determination receiving its substance from the original appearing and taking from this its ability to be—is lost. For the Archi-Revelation of Life never surrenders itself to the guise of evidence or merges with it. Our being, as generated in this Archi-Revelation and as living beings, is concealed as well. It is not a coincidence that, subordinating all ontology to the transcendental Ego, Husserlian phenomenology showed itself to be totally destitute when it was a matter of defining the “being” of this “Ego”, or what could serve as it.

The disappearance of the original appearing and, hence, of the proper object of phenomenology under the purview of the principle of principles requires us to return to the reduction for the purpose of conferring on it a truly radical and new

⁸ Edmund Husserl (1964, p. 157; 1991, p. 121). The phrase may also be rendered in English as “objects in their ways of appearing” [*Gegenstände im Wie*] (Translators’ note).

significance. What the principles of phenomenology presuppose is a pure reduction. By setting into operation the opposition between the ontic content and the appearing that makes it manifest, the reduction finally thematizes appearing in order to recognize it for what it is. For we have just discovered that this pure reduction directed toward pure phenomenality, instead of liberating it in its fullness, obscures in it its most primitive power. Extending the work of the pure reduction and pushing it to its fullest extent, the *radical reduction reduces appearing itself*. Within appearing, it sets aside this range of light that we call the world in order to reveal that without which this visible horizon would never become visible, namely, the auto-affection of its transcendental exteriority which actualizes itself in the pathos of Life that is never outside. Only a reduction that goes all the way to the end of its capacity of reducing, that suspends the ek-static Dimension of visibility in which every conceivable giving intuition and evidence itself flow, and that suspends all possible showing, can discover the original givenness, the givenness that by giving life to itself, gives to it to be life. And, at the same time, it gives everything in the world and every possible world, inasmuch as the givenness of such things never happens except in the self-givenness of life. Hence it is necessary to extend the reduction to its term, according to the “more” which radicalizes it so that givenness gives itself according to its own excess, an excess that belongs to it as its own possibility and without which nothing, not even the most trivial being, could ever be given. The trait that unites the method and the object of phenomenology, according to a yet unprecedented proportionality, is revealed to us now in the fourth principle: “so much reduction, so much givenness.”

Three remarks are necessary here. The first is that the “more” which characterizes the original givenness is not limited to signifying the other domain of appearing that classical phenomenology had constantly lacked, this other face that is no longer the one that the world turns toward us. This other domain of appearing has no face at all, no conceivable visage, but is the non-visage of the invisible essence of life. Now that the duplicity of appearing has finally been recognized, it is not a matter of adding to the How of ek-static or intentional givenness from which the evidence benefits, this other unrecognized How by which life embraces itself according to the tonalities of its own pathos. The “more” of this new givenness signifies that in this wholly other way of giving, the finitude that strikes every ek-static horizon of visibility loses its power. In the horizon, all that is seen refers to the unseen, all that is real to the unreal, all that is given to the ungiven, such that all givenness is punctual, conditional, surrounded by unfilled horizons, by unaccomplished potentialities that are inevitably thus, submitted to the flow and disappearance as well as the vanity of hope. In Life, to the contrary, Life touches every point of its being and lacks nothing; everything is there in its entirety at every moment. But this is only possible because in this ultimate givenness of life there are neither adumbrations, nor aspects, nor horizons of fulfilment, nor contents coming to fulfil them: nothing that is beyond or below an irremissible experience, whose phenomenological material is a pathos and whose modalities belong to it in their plenitude each unsurpassable time.

With the reduction, Husserl wanted nothing to be lost but everything to be found again to a higher degree of consistency and legitimacy. Hence he believed the

cogitatum in the reduction to be that of the world itself. Within pure appearing itself, is the radical reduction which recognizes its duplicity for the sake of preserving the most original givenness of life, able to take advantage of a comparable result? By letting go of the reign of the visible and of every conceivable world, is it not affected by a lack of evidence? At the end of this unprecedented reduction which rejects all transcendence and all that is given by it, can one still say “so much reduction, so much givenness?”

Never, however, would affection by the world nor consequently by a being *happen* if this ek-static affection did not first affect itself in Life, which is nothing other than this primitive auto-affection. And because the world only has its being in life, because it “is” nothing other than a living cosmos, only the radical reduction which finds in appearing the ultimate dividing line between immanence and transcendence, only this reduction preserves what escapes transcendence in principle even while acting within transcendence as its condition.

All seeing, for example, carries within itself a non-seeing without which the eye would see nothing: the immanent experience that it constantly has of itself. This is, moreover, why there is a pathos in seeing, a seeing in desire, in boredom, in passion, and why it is submitted to such things. Concerning the radical reduction to pure immanence, it must be said that it neither forgets nor subtracts anything, but that it is by the reduction alone that what the reduction puts in parentheses receives its particular properties, while seeing, intuition, and evidence left to themselves do not explain what is in parentheses at all.

Not only the desirable, horrible, or odious character of what is seen but also seeing as such derives its own power from life. Our second remark is that only the radical reduction to pure immanence unperceived by Husserl and by contemporary phenomenology accomplishes the promise of losing nothing, whereas the reduction to evidence simply misses life and hence givenness itself in its original tenor.

The third remark concerns the relationship of a radical reduction to a pure reduction. A pure reduction was presented as coming at the outset onto a path that can lead to a radical reduction. It is necessary to put being out of play and to consider appearing in itself, if one wants to recognize its duplicity, the division in it between the two realms, and to understand their relationship, the foundation of finite givenness in the givenness which excludes every horizon and hence every limitation.

But here is what is important: although it comes first, a pure reduction cannot truly be accomplished if it is limited to itself. This is because, however pure it may be, the appearing that it isolates does not subsist by itself. Such is the primary and most powerful illusion of contemporary phenomenology: to believe that being phenomenologically defined as an ek-static dimension thus has a phenomenologically sufficient condition—ultimately, that transcendence is phenomenologically and ontologically an autonomous essence. Because the reduction has not led all the way to a reduction to pure immanence, the givenness that results does not remain only affected by an essential finitude: in fact, it gives nothing—and it gives itself less than any other thing. Because it has not accomplished vis-à-vis itself the original work of self-givenness, and because appearing was not produced as a self-appearing and hence does not appear, nothing else is able to appear in it. The other

dimension of appearing, notably being, can only appear inasmuch as appearing appears in itself and as such.

Its self-appearing [*auto-apparaître*] is what the abstract appearing to which historical phenomenology was limited and which is unable to produce itself by itself. It is because the ownmost and innermost possibility of appearing that it has always been understood as the appearing of something other than itself. But it is in itself foreign to phenomenality of beings, as an appearing of *what appears*. *What appears in appearing is first and necessarily appearing itself*. This is what classical phenomenology never clearly perceived. It is limited to the theme of the phenomenon as it shows itself, and it only implies an abstract appearance which is unable to subsist by itself and which as such constantly refers to its opposite, to the opaque and dead element of ontic determination. But why did classical phenomenology limit itself to the appearing of beings, to the point of ignoring everything in appearing that would belong to a radically different order, if not because it took beings as its guide?

In the final assessment, and in spite of the illusory significations conferred upon an alleged subjectivity exhausted in its relation to things, the phenomenon of phenomenology was nothing other than Greek appearance. The critiques of subjectivity that have proliferated in our era are false critiques: they can at most find fault in the idea of subjectivity for faulty thinking—for example, ontic thinking—about the appearing to which they refer, which is the appearing of mundane things. Hence they remain unknowingly locked up in that which they critique.⁹ It is here, by demanding the radicality of a reduction that suspends the phenomenality proper to being, that the fourth principle provides the path toward a more original givenness.

The fourth principle emerges at the end of the problematic raised by Jean-Luc Marion, but he clarifies it retrospectively and gives to it a novel meaning. The subordination of ontology to phenomenology that has guided our entire analysis is explicit in the brief but decisive explanation of Husserl in the fifth chapter of Marion's *Reduction and Givenness*.¹⁰ The criticism too frequently and too quickly accepted by Heidegger against his master appears debatable. Fascinated by the new field of objects to which intentional analysis gave rise and set before the ego's gaze, it is true that Husserl too often restricted his attention to those objectivities rather than to the problem of being as perceived in the universality of its meaning. But one cannot forget that all of these fields of objects, and especially the field of the objects in formal ontology, is subordinated in the principle to a higher instance of another order. And this instance is phenomenological: the fact that it is designated under the improper title of the transcendental Ego does not truly impede us from signifying pure phenomenality as such. This is what appears clearly in the text of the *Ideen* of 1912¹¹ in which, freed from the ontic reference that did not cease from overwhelming Heidegger,¹² "the wonder of all wonders" is here "pure

⁹ See here the author's other essay, Henry (1988).

¹⁰ Marion (2004, pp. 211–247; pp. 141–166).

¹¹ Cited by Marion (2004, p. 243; p. 163).

¹² "The wonder of all wonders: *that that being is*," says the postscript of the 1943 *What is Metaphysics?*; cited and commented on in Marion (2004, p. 243; p. 163). See Heidegger (1975, p. 261).

consciousness,” “the phenomenon *par excellence*.” It will no longer suffice to object that the “being” of this subject remains undefined, just as the difference between the “thing” and the “thing-for-consciousness” of the Husserlian reduction or even the objectivity of the objects of formal ontology remain undefined. For Jean-Luc Marion this means asking the question of knowing whether this Ego does not “except itself” from being, whether it does not situate itself “beyond being,”¹³—a hypothesis that would suffice to disqualify the entire Heideggerian problematic of being, at least with respect to its claim to ultimate reality.

It is in Marion’s direct confrontation with Heidegger throughout his work, which culminates in chapter six of *Reduction and Givenness*, that he completely disqualifies ontology in favor of a new mode of phenomenological thinking and perhaps a new phenomenology. The necessary overtaking of the existential analytic carried out in *Sein und Zeit* has for its principle motif the ontic preliminary of which the thought of being remains a constant prisoner. *Dasein* may be the only being [étant] in being itself [être] for whom its own being is an issue, but it remains nevertheless a being—from whence the critique that “indeed the meaning of Being (the second divergence of the *Seinsfrage*) cannot be read directly on any being whatsoever; a being, even *Dasein*, only ever allows one to read the Being of beings.”¹⁴

By deliberately putting being out of play, insofar as it is in itself foreign to pure phenomenality, the phenomenological question of being passes through detailed phases of analysis and surmounts them all (the analytic of anxiety, the hermeneutics of the phenomenon of Nothingness) and arrives at the “irruption of Being itself, the ‘voice’ summons man directly,”¹⁵ which alone can define the ultimate enigma of the “phenomenon of being.” Here, it seems to us, the subordination of ontology to phenomenology appears inescapable and, more importantly, this subordination implies the renewal of phenomenology itself in the depths of reduction with the unveiling of the givenness that exceeds all conceivable being.

Two decisive traits mark Marion’s problematic insofar as it obeys the fourth principle. In the first place, it concerns the regression from Being to the claim or call of Being, a regression constantly required and completed in these closing analyses. Marion writes, “The *Anspruch* precedes and solely renders possible *Sein*.”¹⁶ “[...] the claim [*la revendication*—more than being...”¹⁷ “*Dasein* exposed itself to Being so as to become its site only inasmuch as it renders itself to the call that convokes it.”¹⁸ According to Marion, it is necessary “to think about *Dasein* in its totality starting from the instance that claims it and therefore it to itself as a *there*.”¹⁹ “The *there*... remains thoroughly determined by the call, since it serves

¹³ Marion (2004, p. 240; p. 161).

¹⁴ Marion (2004, p. 208; p. 139). See also the author’s critique directed against the ontic preliminary of Heideggerian phenomenology in Henry (1973, §§ 11–13).

¹⁵ Marion (2004, p. 278; p. 185).

¹⁶ Marion (2004, p. 297; p. 198).

¹⁷ Marion (2004, p. 298; p. 199).

¹⁸ Marion (2004, p. 299; p. 200).

¹⁹ Marion (2004, p. 299; p. 200).

only to respond thereto.”²⁰ Hence the reduction, whose work follows the course and diverse formulations in historical phenomenology—the reduction of objects to the consciousness to an Ego, of “beings” to *Dasein*, of all beings to being—only leads to it in order to subordinate itself to something more essential and more originary, that is, to the claim and to the call.

Thus, what does the claim add to Being that is more fundamental and more primitive? What is the interpellation that it addresses to us apart from the fact that it comes, that *it appears to us* with neither mask nor detour, with neither intermediary nor delay, such that it is impossible for us to escape from its grasp or from what its immediacy contains? The call of being is simply its emergence in us; it is the embrace in which it gives itself to us at the same time that it gives being to us. Hence there would be nothing without this triumphal irruption of a revelation, which is that of the Absolute.

And it is here that we find the singular and surprising, if not stupefying, turn of this problematic of the call. After having established patiently that in accordance with the genuine sense of thematized being, it is the call, the way in which it embraces and takes hold of us, it is the *Er-eignis*, that matters. The problematic then reverses abruptly. According to its statement, what is introduced and essentialized in the end as in the beginning is not being but it is not the call either: it is another call that has nothing to do with the call of being but rather one which renounces it in order to establish itself and reign in its place. Before we grasp the meaning of this rejection of the call of Being, let us see how it operates, how it is possible, and what instance higher than being and higher than its call may intervene here and dismiss being and its call.

This instance, which is the concept of boredom that Marion proposes in an entirely original problematic, is an instance of treating boredom as a “counter-existential”: instead of providing our access to being, as a structure of *Dasein*, the power of boredom rather is to divert us from all that is. And this is so because it first diverts us from that which permits all beings to be: being itself. More radically still, the silent call that being ceaselessly addresses to the bored Ego is no longer of interest; the call “no longer says anything to it.”²¹ Boredom creates an extraordinary situation, one of the greatest danger and the greatest disgust, a situation in which the “Ego” is in some fashion no longer there for anything or for anyone.

From a Heideggerian perspective, one could take issue with this possibility of the Ego-*Dasein* detaching itself, in boredom, from being and its call. If, according to the existential analytic, *Dasein* is constituted essentially by its relation to being, if it is the being [*l'étant*] in being [*l'être*] whose own being itself is an issue, then how could one abolish the relation of *Dasein* to being without abolishing *Dasein* itself? Let us remember, it is through its most particular essence that *Dasein* “stands ekstasically in the truth of being”²²—the truth of being which is nothing other than its fulguration, the illumination by which *Dasein* discovers itself from the beginning to

²⁰ Marion (2004, p. 299; p. 200).

²¹ Marion (2004, p. 284; p. 188).

²² Marion (2004, p. 289; p. 193). This is a quote drawn from Heidegger (1977, p. 205).

be clarified in itself and in its innermost depths. But this illuminating fulguration is the call and the means by which *Dasein* is illuminated in its entirety, and from this moment, it is placed in the light of being, in the *there* of *Sein*. How could *Dasein* suddenly and miraculously cease to be? Would it not be necessary, in order for this to occur, that it cease to be what it is: *Da-Sein*? Now such a possibility is specifically discarded by Heidegger; as Marion writes, “doesn’t that possibility simply contradict the very definition of *Dasein* as being-there, which it cannot not be?”²³

The immense merit of Marion’s work is that it seeks to establish in the analytic itself the possibility whereby *Dasein* may abandon the call which supposedly constitutes its essence. On the one hand, the surprise that provokes being and which carries out the same function of the call, “to grant *Dasein* to that which is destined to it and which, without amazement, could not manifest itself”²⁴—this surprise implies at least the attention that *Dasein* lends to the call but that it can also no longer grant to it. The fact that the call is rooted in the eidetic necessity of the ekstastic fulguration, in the truth of being, does not prevent but rather supposes the contingency of a response that can also not happen—in spite of the call, due to a boredom without limit whose radical refusal of every call can give rise to this idea. What one can also be expressed, on the other hand, by saying that, if in its most intimate being, *Dasein* is the opening to the truth and thus to the call of Being, there at least remains for it—according to what counts without a doubt as another limit placed on the expression of boredom—“the possibility of [*Dasein*] not being oneself,” which in effect amounts to “revoking the call of Being itself.”²⁵

In addition to its originality, the interpretation proposed here also manifests an incontestable critical power. This power consists of turning Heidegger’s major themes against his thought, or if one prefers, of proposing a new appraisal of them. This is the case with the sudden and singular vindication of inauthenticity; and it is true that *the possibility of inauthenticity is nothing other than the possibility of revoking the call of being, denying in this way that “the reference to Being itself constitutes the final possibility of what I am.”*²⁶ Thus the famous analysis of everydayness is overturned. For, if in everyday existence *Dasein* conceals itself from its destiny as *Dasein*, as the Being which is destined for *Dasein* in its *there*, is it not the case that this destiny is not necessarily its own—is it not the case that another destiny offers itself to *Dasein*?

Now the simple possibility for the *Ego-Dasein* to have another destiny than that of hearing and responding to the call of being fundamentally disturbs its ontological definition in *Sein und Zeit*. For this possibility precludes *Dasein*’s ekstastic relation to Being from being understood as the essence of every conceivable *Da*, as a possibility which is an essence, so that it is no longer seen as one simple possibility among others. The analytic of *Dasein* has ceased to construct the philosophy of the *humanitas* of the human; it is confined to indicating one of the virtualities of its nature.

²³ Marion (2004, p. 292; p. 194).

²⁴ Marion (2004, p. 292; p. 194).

²⁵ Marion (2004, p. 292; p. 195).

²⁶ Marion (2004, p. 293; p. 195).

As paradoxical as this final reduction may be—the putting out of play of being in its claim to define our being by its call—its meaning in every case is explicit and the last analyses attest to it: the disqualification of the call of being in boredom operates as a counter-existential; it has no goal other than opening us to another call, or rather to “[the wind of] every other possible call;”²⁷ or better, not to any other call but to “the call as such.”²⁸ It is here that the call of being is replaced by a kind of “model of the call,”²⁹ or again a “pure form of the call”³⁰—the call as such. The motive for this substitution is this: every concrete call whatsoever, including the call that being addresses to *Dasein*, presupposes as its own possibility a pure structure of the call, its “model” or its “pure form.” Marion writes, “Before Being has claimed, the call as pure call claims.”³¹ And again: “The claim of Being itself can call only in putting on this pure form.”³²

By subsuming of the call of being under the pure form of the call, this problem of limits derives a double advantage: on the one hand, it does not contradict an immense heritage of thought from which it was nourished but instead integrates it into a broader vision—and this especially concerns the existential analytic itself—that is opened to other modes of experience than those that are inscribed in the “phenomenon of being.” On the other hand, thanks to this reference precisely and also to every other possible reference, to every other call, this problem of limits keeps the refusal of the call of being, interpreted as the condition of opening of the call as such, from appearing too formal, to say nothing of appearing undefined and empty.

By contrast, consider the fourth principle. The fourth principle does not simply push the reduction to the limit, incrementally reduce the being [*l'étant*] to being itself [*être*] and then to the call of being only in order to lead us to some indeterminate X, to a model, to a pure form, to an Absolute, or to a Transcendent that would be defined in a purely formal way. Instead, it leads to givenness and its height, to the most original appearing. In the fourth principle everything is phenomenological. The reduction is phenomenological, first as pure reduction and then as radical reduction, because it explicitly takes phenomenality itself as its theme and in it the most original mode of its phenomenization. And likewise, the givenness to which it leads cannot be thought as a form or as a model but only on the basis of the how of this first phenomenization.

Marion's thought proceeds down this path. For why would one substitute for being its call or its claim, except to identify what comes first within it, the fulguration of an appearing which submerges us and which, to the extent that it fulgurates, gives us being at the same time as itself? Now if this call of being itself should be rejected, so that the possibility of another call might open itself, so that a more essential call may emerge, what then does this ultimate substitution mean?

²⁷ Marion (2004, p. 294; p. 196).

²⁸ Marion (2004, p. 295; p. 197).

²⁹ Marion (2004, p. 295; p. 197).

³⁰ Marion (2004, p. 296, p. 197).

³¹ Marion (2004, p. 296; p. 197).

³² Marion (2004, p. 296; p. 198).

There is only one response to this question—to which we shall now turn. If the call of being is only its appearing, and if it is suitable for this call to prefer another phenomenality, such an opposition can only signify the opposition of two phenomenologies and thus of two phenomenologies. It implies the duality of appearing at the same time as indicating a hierarchy of appearing.

The call of being is the name for the phenomenality of ek-static truth. It is precisely because it finds its phenomenological foundation in ek-static truth that Heideggerian being can and must be subject to critique. There is a sense of “excepting” from being. The “à-Dieu,” the “Otherwise than Being” of Emmanuel Levinas, and the “outside of Being” of Marion can only signify the dismissal of being for any other reason, because it has usurped even its name, and because it represents, notably in Heidegger, only a regional instance. This unthought but decisive limitation of the problematic, the thought that subordinates ontology to phenomenology, can be perceived as soon as this subordination is carried out. The essence of this Being whose call may be suspended, is the phenomenality of the world; the finitude of this Being is the finitude of every ek-static horizon.

The dismissal of being so understood—which “is” only in the comprehension of *Dasein* and relates to it as to what it “understands,” as to a “sense”—is possible only on one condition, namely, that ek-static unfolding of appearing in the horizon of the world stands in strict contrast with its non-ek-static auto-appearing which is the essence of the pathos of Life. The dismissal of being is only possible phenomenologically. It is only possible if, in the absence of all ek-static phenomenality and in spite of this absence, something is still possible rather than nothing—that something is the Archi-Revelation of Life. “Otherwise than being” means “appearing otherwise.” Only Life in its Archi-Revelation still “calls” and can “call” when being has become silent.

It is only because the “call” of Life is defined phenomenologically, because in its affective flesh and in the brutality of emotion or of love, that it never resembles anything other than itself [*à rien d'autre*]; and, in any case, it does not resemble the unveiling of a being [*étant*] in the world any more than it resembles the Ek-stasis of being in the world—it is thus possible to speak of another call than that of being. And beyond the pathetic irruption of life in us, beyond its proclamation, whose words consist of our desire, our passion, our love, there is no pure form of the call, a structure of the call, that would be higher than or different from this pathos.

For the call is always defined. The definition of the call is phenomenological and is exhausted each time in its actual phenomenality. But phenomenality is never exhausted. Appearing rises again ever anew but in a way that is perennially its own. To recognize this “way” for what it is, in the How of its concrete phenomenological materiality, is not to limit oneself to a less elevated degree of generality than that of a pure form or structure of the call. On the contrary, to the extent that the structure of the call is usually described according to the bipolarity of the call and the response, the structure of the call borrows this disposition from an established mode of appearing, a mode in which opposition is constitutive of phenomenality—and this established mode is precisely that of the world. It does not matter that the pair Call/Response is substituted for the classic dichotomy of Subject/Object and, by virtue of this substitution, claims to renew our relation to being. How can one fail to see that

it only reverses a relation conceived in both cases as constitutive of phenomenality, as preserving it. Far from escaping from the call of Being and from its implicit phenomenology, the structure of the call [in Marion] refers to Being and receives its own “structure” from it: the opposition of Ek-stasis.

This opposition is understood as the basis of a kind of freedom. What characterizes the call, in effect, is that it waits for and solicits a response that may or may not be received. It is precisely with respect to this freedom of the response, its welcome or rejection, that Marion lays to rest the final possibility for the Ego-*Dasein* to “no longer assume the destiny of Being as that of its own being.”³³

But what characterizes the scope of life is that it precedes every response and does not wait for one. For in the irruption of life and in its flowing which passes through us and intoxicates us with it and ourselves, there is no gap, no recoil that would open the possibility of a response, of a yes or of a no. And this impossibility of every hidden recess and of every reply, this way of being riveted to oneself, oriented in every aspect toward all that one is, this impossibility is the eternal and irremissible, relentless and serene experience that Life has of itself at each instant; it is the wound that Life hollows out in us, that is our subjectivity itself, and that makes us into living beings.

And if there is no place here for a response that would give us the leisure of assuming or refusing the destiny of being, it is because, strictly speaking, we can no longer properly speak of the call. The other call, the call of life, stands beyond every call, for it does not put forth the proposition of whether to live or not live. The call of life has already thrown us into life itself, crushing us against it and against ourselves, in the suffering and joy of an invincible pathos. The call has already made us alive at the moment we hear it. Its sound is nothing other than the noise of life, its rustling in us, the embrace in which it gives itself to itself and gives us to ourselves in one and the same givenness.

And this means that in every living being there is only Life—a life that is not its own in the sense that one did not create, posit, or want it—but that which is one’s own irreducibly and forever for the same reason: namely that there is nothing in oneself, not the slightest experience of the most basic impression, that is not the experience that life has of itself. There is not the least parcel of one’s Self that is not the Self of Life. This is why we say that we are born of Life and that this birth never ceases. In the auto-affection that makes us feel ourselves at every instant, there is nothing other than the auto-affection of Life itself, its *Archi-Revelation*.

And this is also why the self engendered in life—this “me” according to Marion—is also an “I,” an “ego.” According to the admirable words of the mystics, life “cannot give only a little,” because it can give nothing other than itself and thus the *Ipseity* that it engenders eternally in its self-givenness is equally in all that is living.

Outside of being, otherwise than being, to be the being that relates to being and that only exists in this relation, which is only *There* for being, is only possible by way of a fundamental phenomenology and the radical reduction that it puts into play. What authority does the radical reduction exercise to set aside the call of

³³ Marion (2004, p. 293; p. 195, tr. mod.).

being, along with that which is defined in its being by this call? Boredom, according to the sense that Marion confers upon it. But should we not also ask boredom the question that the author of *Reduction and Givenness* himself asked of the Husserlian Ego, which detached itself from all ontologies in the very act by which it constitutes them—the question about the place where this Ego can still reside, about the domain in which it dwells, and, finally, about its “being.”

Or still more precisely, does the reductive power of boredom reside in the fact that it is bored with everything and with being itself, or from the fact that, in being bored with everything and with being, it has not yet finished with itself? *For no boredom whatsoever could deliver boredom from itself.* Where then does this boredom now reside if not in Life, there where the connection between life and itself cannot become severed? It is the self-givenness of life that holds everything, which gives everything, which gives even boredom to itself when the call of being is silent, so that being is undone and so that being in relating to being is nothing.

“So much reduction”: this final and radical dismissal, issued to being and all that is, to all that comes from it or goes with it, speaks and calls in its name—in the name of the world. “So much givenness”: that which, in the absence of this being and its call, in the absence of ek-static appearing, gives nonetheless, gives everything—self-givenness, Life, and in it all those who live [*tous les vivants*], and the cosmos itself.

The fourth principle, as announced by Marion, does not merely provide phenomenology with a simple enrichment of developments already included in its historic presuppositions. By assigning to phenomenology previously unnoticed objectives, and greater ambitions, it leads phenomenology down new paths.

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