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THE EMERGENCE OF REALITY: ZUBIRI BEFORE MEETING HEIDEGGER

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It is common to assume of an “objectivist” stage of Zubiri, prior to his meeting with Heidegger in Freiburg. However, if we analyze Zubiri’s philosophy before his stay in Freiburg, we already find a “metaphysical” orientation, and not merely an objectivist one. This orientation is intrinsically related to the early appearance of the notion of “reality” in his courses. The appearance of his concept of reality is at least partially motivated by Zubiri’s early reading of Heidegger’s habilitation thesis on Duns Scotus. Zubiri discovered in Heidegger the possibility of trying to carry out a phenomenological characterization of reality, which took him beyond the conception, basically idealistic, of being as a “position” or as a “belief.” With Heidegger, Zubiri was able to sustain that reality is not something *extra animam*. However, Zubiri could not follow Heidegger in his conceptualization of reality based on human existence, and with this he began his own path in philosophy. A path that, in a certain sense, breaks with all phenomenology, because reality is located at a moment prior to the meaning of things for a subject or for a human existent. And yet, a path that continues the phenomenological claim of a descriptive fidelity to *the things themselves*.

Keywords: Zubiri, Heidegger, Husserl, Phenomenology, epoché, Scotus, unum, haecceitas, reality, metaphysics.

ВОЗНИКНОВЕНИЕ РЕАЛЬНОСТИ: СУБИРИ ДО ВСТРЕЧИ С ХАЙДЕГГЕРОМ

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Стало общим местом говорить об «объективистском» периоде Субири, предшествовавшем его встрече с Хайдеггером во Фрайбурге. Тем не менее, если мы обратимся к философии Субири до его стажировки во Фрайбурге, то уже там обнаружится не столько объективистская, сколь-

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ко «метафизическая» направленность. В действительности эта направленность связана с тем, что в его курсах довольно рано появляется понятие «реальность». Возникновение собственной концепции реальности у Субири было по меньшей мере частично вдохновлено ранним прочтением габилитационной диссертации Хайдеггера о Дунсе Скоте. У Хайдеггера Субири обнаружил возможность вывести феноменологическую характеристику реальности, которая позволила ему преодолеть концепцию реальности как «позиции» или «убеждения», в сущности, идеалистическую. Благодаря Хайдеггеру Субири смог показать, что реальность не может быть понята как *extra animam*. Тем не менее, ему не удалось следовать хайдеггерианской концептуализации реальности, основанной на человеческом существовании: здесь открылся его собственный философский путь. Путь, который был в некотором смысле ознаменован разрывом со всякой феноменологией, поскольку реальность теперь предшествовала моменту, в котором для субъекта, или экзистирующего человека, открывался смысл вещей. Тем не менее, на этом пути Субири всё же соблюдал феноменологическое требование дескриптивной верности *самим вещам*.

Ключевые слова: Субири, Хайдеггер, Гуссерль, феноменология, эпохе, Скот, *unum, haecceitas*, реальность, метафизика.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is usual to distinguish three main stages or phases (*etapas*) in the development of Zubiri's philosophy: a "phenomenological" or "objectivist" period, an "ontological" one, and finally his intellectual maturity. It is possible to distinguish a further development in this "maturity" period, specially after 1973 (Gracia, 2017, 603–629). The first period is supposed to have started very early, with Zubiri's studies on Husserl, especially during his time in Louvain (Leuven, Belgium). Here Zubiri adhered to an "objectivist" interpretation of phenomenology, expressed in his doctoral dissertation. The second period would have started later, with Zubiri's reading of Martin Heidegger's book, *Being and Time*, in 1927, and his time with Heidegger in Freiburg im Breisgau, from 1928 until 1930. Zubiri himself sets the year 1932 as the beginning of this period, and year 1944 as the end (Zubiri, 1999, 9–17). In summary, it is possible to establish a first period up until 1932, a second stage from 1932 to 1944, and a definitive stage of maturity from 1944 until Zubiri's death in 1983.

It is important to observe that Zubiri himself did not characterize the period of 1932–1944 as "ontological," but as "ontological or metaphysical" (Zubiri, 1999, 14). If "ontology" refers to "being," "metaphysics" is the way Zubiri usually referred to the philosophical investigation of "reality." For Zubiri, metaphysics does not refer to the things "beyond" (*metá*) the physical world, but to their reality. And it is very clear that in Zubiri's work between 1932 and 1944, "reality" (and not only "being") was already present as a main philosophical concern. It is also quite clear that in this period there was not a definitive articulation between reality and being. Nowadays is easy

to understand why Zubiri mentioned 1944 as the beginning of his philosophical maturity. In those years Zubiri began to sustain that “being” should be understood as a determination of reality itself (Zubiri, 2020, 808–815). Therefore, Zubiri’s philosophy developed to be strictly “metaphysical,” only concerned with reality. Ontology was engulfed, since then, in metaphysics.

Therefore, “metaphysics or ontology,” and not only “ontology,” is a convenient characterization of Zubiri’s philosophy before the beginning of his intellectual maturity in the forties. Now we can ask ourselves when this concern for reality began. Zubiri himself mentions the year 1932 as the beginning of his “ontological or metaphysical” period, but this year could just demarcate the intellectual unity of the texts published in his book on *Nature, History, God* (Zubiri, 1999, 11–13). We will show here that Zubiri’s philosophical interest for reality started earlier, during a period of his intellectual life that the Spanish philosopher considered as still determined by Husserl’s phenomenology (Zubiri, 1999, 13). In other words, Zubiri’s interest in reality started in a moment when his philosophical reflections were still situated under the influence of phenomenology. There was, so to say, a phenomenological emergence of reality in Zubiri’s thinking. We could even say: a phenomenological emergence of metaphysics. This emergence deserves to be analyzed.

2. THE YOUNG ZUBIRI

We are of course using the term “phenomenology” in a very broad sense, to the point that Zubiri himself considers all philosophy, before 1932, to be under the influence of Husserl’s phenomenology (Zubiri, 1999, 13). But this broader sense allows us to admit, alongside with Husserl, other powerful influences on Zubiri. Let’s mention some of these influences. Zubiri grew up in the context of a “progressive” Catholicism, and he was even processed by his bishop on the accusation of “modernism”¹. At the same time, Zubiri was very familiar with the philosophical project of the Neo-scholastic, represented by some of his early teachers, like Juan Zaragüeta (Madrid) and Léon Noël (Louvain). Very decisive for Zubiri was also his meeting with José Ortega y Gasset in 1919. At that time Ortega was introducing Husserl’s phenomenology in Spain². Shortly after this meeting, Zubiri traveled to study phenomenology in Louvain

¹ The story of Zubiri’s brief excommunication and subsequent recantation is reported by J. Corominas and J. A. Vicens (Corominas & Vicens, 2006, 133–155).

² This presence of phenomenology can be detected in Ortega’s courses of that time, like his “Sistema de psicología” (Ortega y Gasset, 2017, VII, 427–534). También puede verse el estudio de J. Conill sobre la influencia de Ortega en Zubiri (Conill, 2004).

with León Noël, focusing on Husserl's *Logical Investigations*. At that time, Zubiri was convinced that Husserl's phenomenological "objectivism" was the new step forward in the history of philosophy, a step beyond the subjectivism of modernity. Therefore, Husserl's philosophy was the subject of Zubiri's doctoral thesis, written under Ortega's supervision (Zubiri, 1995, 68–333).

Also important for Zubiri's formation was the Jewish-French philosopher Henri Bergson, whom Zubiri met in Paris in the year 1922. Bergson was able to integrate the recent developments of sciences in his own philosophical proposal, and surely such integration was very attractive to Zubiri (Marquínez, 2004, 419–435). Nevertheless, after Zubiri's initiation in the phenomenological methods, he probably begun to consider Bergson's proposals as a form of "pragmatism," and therefore as belonging to the past³. But Zubiri remained conscious about the decisive importance of the sciences for philosophy. As a matter of fact, in 1922 Zubiri began to study intensively natural sciences at the Central University of Madrid, and from that point on, science was a constitutive ingredient of his own philosophical project.

We can have a glimpse of the way Zubiri understood science in his early presentation of Einstein's theory of relativity, especially in contrast with his teacher Ortega. Einstein visited Madrid during the year 1923, and Ortega attempted to understand relativity as a scientific confirmation of his own "perspectivism": measures are relative to the state of movement of the observer's coordinate system (Ortega y Gasset, 2017, III, 642–652). When Zubiri did his own presentation of Einstein's theory, he did not focus on an epistemological interpretation of the "special" theory of relativity, but on the "general" theory of relativity. In Einstein's theory, gravity is the curvature of the spacetime, due to the presence of mass (Zubiri, 1923). Zubiri's interest was not directed to the plural human perspectives, but to the impact of masses on the space-time continuum.

We could say that, at this very moment, Zubiri's tendency to some sort of "realism" was already manifest. "Realism" was probably already present in Zubiri's reception of Husserl's phenomenology at that time, as it was in many of Husserl's disciples. However, it would be inaccurate to speak about Zubiri's "realism" if we do not pin down the exact meaning of "reality" for him. Phenomenology claims a radical ques-

³ The young Zubiri wrote a text on pragmatism, which he used in 1926 in the examinations for accessing his chair at the Central University of Madrid. According to a note on the text, it could have been written some years before (in 1918–1919), at least in an early version. In that text, Zubiri considered Bergson as belonging to "pragmatism" (in a general sense), and therefore somehow distant to Zubiri's own philosophical interests (Zubiri, 2009). About the date of Zubiri's text, see the study of A. Pintor-Ramos (Pintor-Ramos, 2006, 53–39). In his doctoral dissertation, published in 1921, Zubiri considered Bergson's "intuitionism" as a form of pragmatism (Zubiri, 1995, 218).

tioning of all received theories, and the overcoming of all presuppositions. And “reality” itself could be subjected to such questioning.

To understand the emergence of Zubiri’s new idea of reality it is important to attend to a next step in the development of Zubiri’s thought. It was in the year 1924 when Zubiri perchance acquired and read a book authored by Heidegger. It was Heidegger’s habilitation thesis (*Habilitationsschrift*) about Duns Scotus, written by Heidegger in the year 1915, and published in 1916 (Heidegger, 1978, 189–354). According to Zubiri himself, in 1924, when he read this text, Bergson already belonged to his philosophical past. But, at the same time, Bergson helped Zubiri to grasp something completely new for him, something that Zubiri was able to discover reading Heidegger’s text “between the lines” (*entre las líneas*)⁴. And the question is then: what could Zubiri read “between the lines” in Heidegger’s work?

3. THE YOUNG HEIDEGGER

To understand the impact of Heidegger’s text on Zubiri, it is important to recall the philosophical interests of the young Heidegger. Most Heidegger scholars have not paid much attention to his early writings, in which we can find a student that still understands himself in the context of the Aristotelian-Scholastic philosophy⁵. At the same time, Heidegger also thinks that Husserl’s phenomenology could be a decisive help for a radical revision of the very meaning of “reality” and “realism” (Heidegger, 1978, 8). Although in Heidegger we can detect other influences, like that of Neo-Kantianism, which were not present in Zubiri, it is important to realize the great similitude in the context that shaped the philosophical initiation of both thinkers. Even their doctoral dissertations dealt with the same issue: the logical theory of judgment, both philosophers using phenomenology against psychologism (Heidegger, 1978, 55–188; Zubiri, 1995, 68–333).

For the young Heidegger, “reality” was a central problem of modern philosophy, precisely because of the split between philosophy and science. Modern sciences were “realist” while modern philosophy was “idealist” (Heidegger, 1978, 1). For Heidegger (as also for Zubiri), the “critical realism” proposed by the school of Louvain was not

⁴ Zubiri’s report on this first reading of Heidegger’s book on Scotus can be found in his letter to Heidegger, written by Zubiri in 1930, at the end of his stay in Freiburg, when he was about to leave to Berlin. The letter is conserved in Zubiri’s Archive in Madrid.

⁵ As can be observed in M. Heidegger, „Das Realitätsproblem in der modernen Philosophie“, a text from year 1912 (Heidegger, 1978, 1–15). In year 1914, Heidegger still speaks of himself as being “in the Catholic side” (Heidegger, 1978, 53).

a valid solution, because this kind of realism shared the main presupposition of idealism, assuming the immanence of consciousness as the starting point of philosophy (Heidegger, 1978, 6). Heidegger, as many others at the early days of phenomenology, invoked the intentionality of consciousness as an argument leading to realism. Thinking, wrote Heidegger, is essentially characterized by meaning something else, something whose existence is independent of such meaning (Heidegger, 1978, 11).

Therefore, Heidegger understood Husserl's phenomenology as a "theory of meaning" (*Bedeutungslehre*)⁶, and saw it as a part of the different attempts of contemporary philosophers to overcome subjectivism, which was usually manifested in the psychological explanations of logic. Among the alternatives to psychologism, Heidegger very much cherished Emil Lask's doctrine of categories (*Kategorienlehre*), and even mentioned Lask's basic category "for the something in general" (*für das Etwas überhaupt*) (Heidegger, 1978, 25). A different direction in the contemporary explanation of logic was, of course, Meinong's "theory of objects" (*Gegenstandstheorie*), which Heidegger saw as too dependent on grammar (Heidegger, 1978, 26–28). Nonetheless, Heidegger assessed all these different interpretations of logic as converging, because they were dealing with this very problem: the problem of objectivity. And therefore the decisive question, according to Heidegger, was the determination of what should be understood as objectivity. And here, said Heidegger, is where the different ways depart (Heidegger, 1978, 34).

4. THE HABILITATION THESIS

4.1. The first repetition

If the early writings of Heidegger are not esteemed by many Heidegger scholars, his habilitation thesis adds one more problem. In 1915 Heidegger thought he was presenting the ideas of Duns Scotus, while he was using not only Scotus' texts, but also a text from Thomas von Erfurt, another medieval thinker, whose *Grammatica speculativa* was attributed to Scotus until 1922 (Tursi, 2004)⁷. Of course, we are not trying to find out whether Heidegger understood correctly the philosophy of Scotus. Our only interest is to determine what Zubiri could have found in Heidegger's book, and why it was so important for the Spanish thinker. Our interest at this moment is Heidegger,

⁶ See M. Heidegger, „Neuere Forschungen in Logik“, a text from year 1912 (Heidegger, 1978, 17–43).

⁷ In the first part of his habilitation thesis, Heidegger used mainly authentic texts from Scotus. In the second part, on meaning, Heidegger used Erfurt's text. Our study is mostly concerned with the first part.

not Scotus. For Heidegger himself, the study of Scotus was not simply a historical investigation. Heidegger was using the medieval thinker to approach a contemporary question: the problem of categories.

In the post-Hegelian reception of Aristotle, the doctrine of categories had become a central issue, as an attempt to find alternatives to Kant's subjective doctrine of categories. Already Friedrich Adolf Trendelenburg had shown that Aristotle's categories had not only a logical meaning, but also an ontological one (Reale, 1999, 209–231). His student Franz Brentano argued against his teacher's idea of an "Aristotelian deduction" of the categories, interpreting them as the result of a simple description according to the "sound mind" (Brentano, 1862).

It was Brentano's book on Aristotle which became so important for Heidegger's formation. Heidegger began to look for a basic meaning of "being" (*Sein*) beyond the multiplicity presented by Brentano (Heidegger, 2007, 93). And at this point, Husserl came again to his help. According to Heidegger, Husserl's "categorical intuition" (*Kategoriale Anschauung*) shows that categories are somehow given in our perception. For example, the "substance" of a book is already given in its perception, precisely as allowing the manifestation of the book. And this meant, for Heidegger, that also "being" should be found in the primordial level of intuition. Here Heidegger was breaking with the classical philosophical tradition, which had thought that being belongs to the level of judgment, and therefore to "logic." According to Heidegger, liberating being from judgment was Husserl's great contribution to ontology. But Husserl hadn't shown how "being" is given before the judgment. That was what Heidegger understood as his own task (Heidegger, 1986, 375–378).

Therefore, the exploration a medieval doctrine of categories was for Heidegger not just an historical study, but also a contemporary endeavor. For Heidegger, philosophy's history is not like the history of mathematics. The history of philosophy belongs to philosophy, because philosophy always draws its concerns from the same circle of problems (Heidegger, 1978, 195–197). The question, for Heidegger, was to explore how categories are given, following the medieval analysis of categories. We could even say that the first of Heidegger's "repetitions" (*Wiederholungen*) was a repetition of Scotus. Before his well known "phenomenological interpretations" of Aristotle, Heidegger accomplished a "phenomenological interpretation" of a medieval philosopher.

Heidegger's approach to Scotus was decidedly phenomenological. Of course, Heidegger admitted that medieval philosophers, although true philosophers, were too dependent on the object, ignoring the freedom of the subject. Therefore, phenomenological reduction was in principle foreign to them (Heidegger, 1978, 194, 198–199,

202). But, at the same time, according to Heidegger, medieval philosophers did not proceed “genetically,” trying to explain our experience before describing it. For this reason, says Heidegger, it is possible to find in those philosophers true moments of phenomenological meditation (*phänomenologische Betrachtung*)⁸. To “repeat” and appropriate such phenomenological meditations was Heidegger’s main concern in his habilitation thesis. Husserl himself probably saw Heidegger’s habilitation thesis as an important phenomenological contribution, and he made financially possible its publication⁹.

4.2. The relevance of Scotus

According to Heidegger, in Scotus’ case, we have a medieval philosopher whose similarity to phenomenology is paramount. For Heidegger, Scotus’ thinking remained close to real life, as it is shown in his concept of *haeccitas* (“haeccity” or “thisness”). In Heidegger’s interpretation, *haeccitas* means that the individuality of each object is a fundamental determination of true reality (*Urbestimmtheit der realen Wirklichkeit*). According to Heidegger, Scotus saw every reality as a “this-now-here,” namely, as a concrete and determined reality (Heidegger, 1978, 203, 253). The question is then to find out what could be the proper meaning of “reality.”

Heidegger notes that, for Scotus, as for modern philosophy, every object is always understood as an object of knowledge. But knowledge (*Erkenntnis*) must be taken in a very broad sense. In the simple apprehension (*simplex apprehensio*), there is already something given to the mind (*verum in intellectu*). Scotus’ simple apprehension is just “to have an object” of our perception (Heidegger, 1978, 265–268). And, according to Heidegger, this simple apprehension could be described with Husserl’s “bodily selfhood” (*leibhaftige Selbstheit*)¹⁰. In this sense, the simple apprehension is always true, in a basic meaning of truth. The object is simply there. Simple apprehension is not opposed to untruth, but only opposed to the absence of the object (Heidegger, 1978, 268).

The alternative between truth and untruth appears in judgment, when we affirm something about the object. Here truth is the conformity of the sense expressed in judgment with the object. Which object? According to Heidegger, Scotus did not mean *real* objects, but only the objects that we already have in our *simplex apprehen-*

⁸ According to Heidegger, “even at its outmost” (*am stärksten*) (Heidegger, 1978, 202).

⁹ Heidegger acknowledged Husserl’s help (Heidegger, 1978, 191).

¹⁰ In a footnote (Heidegger, 1978, 268), Heidegger mentions Husserl’s first book on *Ideen* (Husserl, 1976).

sio. In Heidegger's interpretation, Scotus did not try to compare the given objects with the "real" ones. Scotus just renounced any "representation-theory" (*Abbildungstheorie*), that would have meant an infinite regress of comparisons, and decided himself for the immanency of consciousness. Judgment affirms only about the given objects. Therefore, Heidegger sees Scotus as completely situated in the radical phenomenological immanence, beyond any representationalism (Heidegger, 1978, 272–273).

And, in the immanency of the given objects, Scotus did not dispute the existence of the "external world." According to Heidegger, Scotus simply maintained the primacy of the effective sense of things, dismissing any kind of physiological or psychological explanations of the experience (Heidegger, 1978, 273). The questions of existence simply transcend the philosophical investigation of the meaning of our judgments (Heidegger, 1978, 301). Therefore, Heidegger thought that it was even possible to say that Scotus practiced the phenomenological reduction. The *prima intentio*, fixed in the immediate real things would be the scholastic equivalent to the "natural attitude," while the *secunda intentio*, directed to the contents of our thoughts, would represent the medieval equivalent to the "phenomenological attitude" (Heidegger, 1978, 279).

4.3. The meaning of reality

Even in this interpretation, it is necessary to remark that Scotus did not forsake the concept of "reality." He continued speaking about the real thing (*res* in Latin). But what is then the meaning of "reality"? According to Heidegger, Scotus speaks about objects as "something" (*Etwas*), before any ulterior distinction between substance and accident. This "something" is an "entity" (*ens*). And *ens*, in Heidegger's interpretation, simply means the whole sphere of objects in general. For this reason, Heidegger can say that *ens* is the "category of all categories," the fundamental and ultimate characterization of all objects (Heidegger, 1978, 214–215)¹¹.

Every entity (*ens*) is for Scotus something concrete, and therefore always "one" (*unum*) (Heidegger, 1978, 218). In Heidegger's perspective, the medieval theory of the *transcendentia entis* can be understood as simply the determination of objects (*Gegenstandbestimmung*) (Heidegger, 1978, 126). The object is always an *unum*. According to Heidegger, oneness is the first determination of the *ens*. The *unum* "grants the object a certain manner of having itself" (*quendam modum se habendi*) (Heidegger, 1978, 224). And this *ens*, this *unum*, is called by Scotus *res*, which is the Latin word for "thing," from which the word "reality" etymologically comes. But Scotus' idea of *res* is

¹¹ Here there is a possible influence of E. Lask's theory of categories, already mentioned above.

very broad. According to Heidegger, it does not only comprehend all natural things, but simply “everything that is not just nothing.” For Scotus, anything that implies a contradiction is nothing, but everything that is not contradictory could be called *res*. And this includes both the “real entity” (*ens realis*) and the “entity of reason” (*ens rationis*) (Heidegger, 1978, 219–220).

This is quite important, because the classic limitation of “real” (*res*) to the *ens realis* is being surpassed. According to Heidegger, both *ens realis* and *ens rationis* are *res* for Scotus. A great part of Heidegger’s investigation in his habilitation thesis is devoted to show that not only the natural things are in this situation, but also numbers, because for Scotus they fall under the category of *unum*. Heidegger also notes that even the sphere of history should be included here, because history always refers to individual realities. In any case, from Heidegger’s point of view, the so-called medieval “realism” was not naturalism, but rather a “spiritualism” (Heidegger, 1978, 262–263).

There is an important consequence to these considerations: the classical definition of “reality” as “entities outside the soul” (*entia extra animam*) becomes useless. Also the *entia rationis* are real, although they were supposed to be “in the soul.” But even the idea of “soul” (*anima*) needs to be clarified more accurately. If *anima* is consciousness, and *extra animam* are realities transcending consciousness, then the phenomena in the psychological sphere would also be “real” and then paradoxically *extra animam* (Heidegger, 1978, 251–252). Likewise, the idea of the logical entities as being “in the soul” (*ens in anima*) becomes useless. A judgment is true or untrue beyond the actual execution of the psychological act, which could no longer be understood as a “content” inside the soul (Heidegger, 1978, 275–278).

In Heidegger’s perspective, the very idea of something *extra animam* has been deprived of any sense. Everything is given to the consciousness. As Heidegger puts it, reality has been introduced into the sphere of knowledge¹². What we could do then is to only distinguish among different “forms of reality” (*Formen der Wirklichkeit*) or “spheres of reality” (*Wirklichkeitsbereiche*). Different “spheres of objects” (*Gegenstandssphären*) have different “characteristics of reality” (*Wirklichkeitscharaktere*) (Heidegger, 1978, 210–214). And every form of reality is given in definite interconnections of sense (*Sinnzusammenhänge*) (Heidegger, 1978, 279). Then the question arises: what is the main determination of what we can now call “real reality” (*reale Wirklichkeit*) or “immediate reality” (*unmittelbare Wirklichkeit*) (Heidegger, 1978, 253, 275, 279), and how can we distinguish it from other forms of “reality,” such as the logical objects?¹³

¹² „... die in die Erkenntnis eingegangene Wirklichkeit“ (Heidegger, 1978, 319).

¹³ Heidegger does not attempt, in this book, to draw a systematic differentiation between *Realität* and *Wirklichkeit*.

Of course, Scotus' explanation of the "real reality" (*reale Wirklichkeit*) as something independent of the soul is not convincing to Heidegger, because it would require consideration beyond the simple description of our experience. Heidegger wants to maintain Scotus in the immanence (Heidegger, 1978, 275). For Heidegger, what we have is just the *modus essendi* ("mode of being") as a general characterization of everything that could be experienced (*das Erlebbare überhaupt*) (Heidegger, 1978, 318). As such, what can be experienced is opposed in absolute sense to the consciousness. Heidegger simply calls it the "solid reality" (*handfeste Wirklichkeit*), and characterizes this *modus essendi* as "the immediate given empirical reality *sub ratione existentiae*" (Heidegger, 1978, 318).

At this point, the question seems to remain open: how can we differentiate between "reality" and a more general sense of "objectivity." What is the meaning of "existence" in this context? It is probably fair to say that Heidegger, in his habilitation thesis, did not follow further the determination of the "solid reality." But this question should be followed. For the young Heidegger, philosophy was not the simple presentation of a worldview, but metaphysics: the task of philosophy is to penetrate into the "true reality" and the "real truth" (Heidegger, 1978, 406).

To accomplish such a task, Heidegger had a previous work to do. For him, ideas such as "soul," or "subject" (as its modern equivalent), lacked precision. To pin down these ideas demanded an investigation on the connection between the *modus essendi* and the "subjective" modes of meaning or understanding. Only in this correspondence both the subjective and the objective could acquire more determination. Heidegger even says that the most poignant expression of the essential connection between the object of knowledge and the knowledge of the object is expressed in the concept of *verum* (Heidegger, 1978, 401–402, 406–407).

Here we can already glimpse the way towards subsequent works of Heidegger. But our investigation follows Zubiri's development, and the emergence of his idea of reality. Therefore, we must ask ourselves how Heidegger's habilitation thesis could impact the young Zubiri when he read it in 1924.

4.4. Reading between the lines

In Zubiri's own copy of Heidegger's habilitation thesis, which is conserved in his private library in Madrid, there is only one pencil mark left from his reading: it is in the place where Heidegger announced a coming investigation on metaphysics¹⁴.

¹⁴ It would be an investigation on being, value and negation, as announced in a footnote (Heidegger, 1978, 407).

Zubiri's reading of the habilitation thesis left him with an expectation directed towards Heidegger's future developments. Of course, this expectation was based in the deep impression Zubiri received from what he had already found "between the lines" in the book.

Knowing Zubiri's later philosophical writings, it is not difficult to guess that several topics in Heidegger's habilitation thesis were illuminating for the young Spanish philosopher. In the future, Zubiri would never consider the difference between substance and accident as the first characterization of the given things. Most of all, Zubiri will always sustain, as Heidegger did in his habilitation thesis, that reality can not be defined as *extra animam* (Zubiri, 2008, 384, 389–393, 402). For Zubiri, reality is not an area of things, that of things "outside" us (Zubiri, 1980, 152, 172–174). And this is a decisive point. The phenomenological reduction overcomes any "representation-theory" (*Abbildungstheorie*), and consequently it makes no sense to propose a "real" thing "outside," whose image would be in our experience. What we have is our experience, and then the very idea of reality should be determined in the analysis of that of which is already given.

The question is, therefore, to find out what is there in "real reality," or in "true reality," that makes it different from objectivity in general. And Heidegger's work probably gave Zubiri several clues. It is not just the idea that reality should be searched in the *simple apprehension*, before judgment. Zubiri's phenomenological training would already suggest that perspective. Heidegger's interpretation of Scotus points to the *unum* as granting the object with a "certain manner of having itself" (*modus se habendi*) (Heidegger, 1978, 224). And Heidegger labels "true" reality as "solid" reality (*handfeste Wirklichkeit*). Of course, these qualifications open many further questions. What is this "manner of having itself"? How can it be found in real things? What makes a reality to be "solid"? What is this solidity?

No doubt that Zubiri kept waiting for Heidegger's subsequent investigations. But something was probably very clear now for Zubiri: the integration of the natural sciences in philosophy can be done in a new way, different from the one proposed by Bergson. As Zubiri noted, Bergson pleaded for a direct access to reality through intuition (Zubiri, 2009, 503). After Zubiri's immersion in the phenomenology, he no longer considered Bergson's intuition could accomplish this task. But now, after reading Heidegger's book on Scotus, Zubiri had found another way to understand reality, and therefore another way to understand the apprehension of it. We can even say: a "phenomenological" way. Heidegger's work pointed to the possibility of a phenomenological assessment of reality. Not reality *extra animam*, but reality already found in the simple apprehensions. In this reality, which can be philosophically investigated, is

where the sciences begin their work. A new integration of science and philosophy was beginning to be possible for Zubiri.

5. BEFORE “BEING AND TIME”

In the year 1925, Zubiri wrote an essay about the “Crisis of Modern Consciousness” (Zubiri, 1995, 335–358). The text should be understood in its context. Zubiri had been through a very difficult period in his relationship with the Catholic authorities, and, after taking part in a scholastic conference, he was probably trying to deliver a conciliatory text, in which he, up to a certain point, praised the Neo-Scholastic philosophy. But in the text, it is also very clear that Zubiri was using a very open and eclectic understanding of what Neo-Scholastic means. He relates this movement not only to Brentano, but also to Meinong, and even to Husserl himself (Zubiri, 1995, 340).

A closer reading of Zubiri’s shows that, on one side, Zubiri considers modern philosophy as incapable of integrating the recent results of modern sciences. The theory of relativity, quantum mechanics, the new biology, mathematics and psychology asked for a new philosophical proposal beyond classic subjectivism (Zubiri, 1995, 340–347). On the other side, Zubiri observed that a sort of opportunity was opening for Catholic thought, not to repeat the contents of medieval philosophy, but to recover its “spirit.” For Zubiri, a new era of philosophy was emerging, after modernity. And Zubiri sees the new philosophical era appearing already in Brentano’s works, whom Zubiri mentions as Husserl’s teacher (Zubiri, 1995, 349).

At this point, Zubiri seems to prefer Augustine over Aquinas. As Heidegger had done in his habilitation thesis, also Zubiri proposes a combination of the “subjective” and the “objective.” Consequently, Zubiri also mentions the “Greek soul” of Augustine (Zubiri, 1995, 357), and Aristotle as the very foundation of Brentano’s philosophical advancements. According to Zubiri, Brentano’s idea of intentionality, derived from the “secret fecundity” of Aristotle (Zubiri, 1995, 354), had determined the beginning of a new kind of philosophy (Zubiri, 1995, 387–390)¹⁵. We know, from Zubiri’s archive, that in these years he was studying Brentano’s book on the several senses of being by Aristotle, and he wrote detailed summaries and outlines of it¹⁶.

Of course, Zubiri was not interested in the “Latin Aristotle,” as presented by the scholastic tradition, but in the “Greek Aristotle.” A revival of Aristotelian studies was made possible by the publication of his original works, in Greek, by Immanuel Bekker

¹⁵ As Zubiri observes in a text on Brentano from year 1926 (Zubiri, 1995, 383–391).

¹⁶ The Zubiri Archive in the Xavier Zubiri Foundation of Madrid.

at the end of the 19th century. As we mentioned, for some scholars, Aristotle was offering decisive clues for overcoming the dead-ends of modern philosophy. And Zubiri took part in this renewed interest on Aristotle.

In year 1926 Zubiri awarded a chair of philosophy at the Central University of Madrid. For the examination, he wrote a “memorandum” (*Memoria*) on his perspective about philosophy’s history. There he mentioned some important authors related to the Aristotelian revival of those years: Eduard Zeller, Paul Natorp, and Werner Jaeger. It is also interesting to observe the view of philosophy’s history exposed by Zubiri in the pages of that memorandum. As Heidegger in his habilitation thesis, Zubiri also affirms that the history of philosophy is a philosophical problem by itself, an idea that Zubiri will maintain during his whole life¹⁷.

We do not know how much Zubiri was informed of Heidegger’s activity in those years. Heidegger taught several times during the 1920s on Aristotle and tried to accomplish several “phenomenological interpretations” of his philosophy (Heidegger, 1994; Heidegger, 2002; Heidegger, 2005). We cannot rule out that Zubiri, who was decisively interested in Heidegger’s work, could have received some indirect knowledge of those courses.

Where we can see Heidegger’s influence on Zubiri is in an article that the Spanish philosopher wrote also in 1926, where he philosophically reflected on pedagogics and its methods. As in other texts, Zubiri sustains that contemporary philosophy, trying to attend to “the things themselves,” is overcoming the subjectivism of the past centuries. And these things, says Zubiri, are not only the objective laws of logic, but also the concrete things, with all their material determinations. Things are perceived with all their material and “intellectual” determinations. What Zubiri in this article called “intellectual intuition” was probably his version of Husserl’s *kategoriale Anschauung*, which had become so important for Heidegger’s own development¹⁸.

We also know for sure is that in year 1927 Zubiri was able to read Heidegger’s new book on *Being and Time*, which had been published earlier that year in Germany. And in that book, the question of reality was addressed again by Heidegger.

6. REALITY IN “BEING AND TIME”

As it is well known, in 1927 Heidegger still considered himself inside “phenomenology,” not as an already accomplished task, but as a new possibility for philosophy (Heidegger, 1977, 34–39). In his “phenomenology,” Heidegger does not invoke

¹⁷ This *Memoria* can be found in Zubiri’s Archive in Madrid.

¹⁸ Zubiri’s article is titled “Filosofía del ejemplo” (Zubiri, 1995, 359–369).

modern subjectivity, but the human condition as *Dasein*, namely, as the “there” (*Da*) of “being” (*Sein*). This formula tries to overcome the modern idea of a subjective consciousness closed in itself, and somehow pretending to contain the world. The concept of *Dasein* attempts to seize the essential interconnection between humans and being. The *Dasein* is open; his existence (*Ek-sistenz*) is an openness (*ex-*) to being. But being is not “inside” the human being. It is rather the human being who is essentially referred to the world. The *Dasein* can be understood as “being-in-the-world” (*In-der-Welt-Sein*) (Heidegger, 1977, 52–88).

Since “world” is a structural moment of the fundamental constitution of the *Dasein* (Heidegger, 1977, 209), the modern question about the existence of the external world has no sense (*ohne Sinn*) (Heidegger, 1977, 202). According to Heidegger, the scandal of philosophy is not that it is not able to give a proof of the existence of the world, but the fact that this proof is required again and again. The *Dasein* is always in the world, and then the question is rather why human beings try to reduce this world to nothing. In Heidegger’s perspective, when things are reduced to its mere “presence at hand” (*Vorhandenheit*), the original comprehension of being is forsaken. Modern “theory of knowledge” neglected an analysis of the *Dasein*, thus forgetting its essential entailment to the world (Heidegger, 1977, 205–207).

For this reason, Heidegger affirms the necessity to overcome both realism and idealism. Realism is right when it does not deny the world, but is wrong when it thinks that a proof of the world is needed. Idealism is right when it does not try to understand being from the entities (*Seienden*). In this sense, for Heidegger, Aristotle was an idealist rather than a realist. Idealism knows that reality needs to be understood from the comprehension of being, and this means: from the *Dasein*. But idealism did not accomplish an analysis of the *Dasein*. Therefore, idealism is naive, trying to refer all entities to a subject, without analyzing its distinctive being (Heidegger, 1977, 207–209).

Beyond realism and idealism, Heidegger’s proposal is to perform a “phenomenological characterization of the reality of the real” (*phänomenologische Charakteristik der Realität des Realen*) (Heidegger, 1977, 209). Reality can no longer be considered as a “position” (*Setzung*) of the human subject, as Kant wanted. Neither can it be described as the mere condition of being a “thing” (*Sachheit*)¹⁹. Heidegger mentions two authors that he considers as having attempted a sort of phenomenological characterization of reality: Wilhelm Dilthey’s understanding of reality as “resistance” (*Wid-*

¹⁹ As Heidegger writes in a hand note to his exemplar of the book (Heidegger, 1977, 443). Could this note be a later reaction of Heidegger against Zubiri?

erstand), and its continuation by Max Scheler. Heidegger appreciates this perspective, because it shows that reality is not primarily related to thought, but also to desires and to the will. But Heidegger also notes that the experience of resistance is only possible in the context of the *Dasein*'s openness to the world. And that is precisely what Dilthey and Scheler had not analyzed (Heidegger, 1977, 209–210).

For Heidegger, a “phenomenological characterization of reality” could be done from the perspective of the “care” or “concern” (*Sorge*). In our care for things, they present a moment of reality. From this perspective, the consciousness of reality is a way of “being in the world,” caring for things. Both being “ready to hand” (*zuhanden*) and “present at hand” (*vorhanden*) are modes of reality. But the *Dasein* itself cannot be understood from the idea of “reality.” Reality is only a mode of being (*Seinsmodus*) among others, and does not have primacy among them. As a matter of fact, for Heidegger, “reality” is founded on the being of the *Dasein*. This does mean that real things only exist if there is a *Dasein*. What depends on the “care” are not the real things, but only their “reality,” their “independence” (*Unabhängigkeit*) from the *Dasein*. In this sense, Heidegger can also say that only insofar as the *Dasein* is, there is being (*es gibt Sein*) (Heidegger, 1977, 211–212).

Heidegger's “existential” comprehension of reality from the “care” was probably not completely convincing for the young Zubiri. There could be even some apparent contradictions²⁰. We have conserved some of the cards that Zubiri used later, in Freiburg, in the context of his conversations with Heidegger. There Zubiri was asking himself, and probably asking Heidegger too, if the philosophical considerations in *Being and Time* did not tend towards some kind of anthropology, pragmatism or even to subjectivism²¹.

On the other hand, Zubiri could find in Heidegger's book some other interesting observations that he could use for his own idea of “reality.” For example, when Heidegger describes Descartes idea of “substance,” he says that in the substance there is something like a “being by itself” (*An-ihm-selbst-sein*) (Heidegger, 1977, 90). This “by itself” (*an sich*), as used by Heidegger (Heidegger, 1977, 209), notwithstanding its Hegelian origins, could have some relationship with Zubiri's expression “de suyo”²². Not only this. Heidegger also observes that things exhibit a moment of “endurance”

²⁰ Heidegger in one occasion includes both *Zuhandenheit* and *Vorhandenheit* in the domain of reality (Heidegger, 1977, 211), while in other place “reality” was more linked to *Vorhandenheit* (Heidegger, 1977, 206). More than a contradiction, we could speak of two different stages of the discussion.

²¹ This notes are conserved in Zubiri's personal archive in the Xavier Zubiri Foundation of Madrid.

²² When many years later Zubiri's book *Sobre la esencia* was translated into German, he suggested to translate “*de suyo*” with *an sich*.

(*Beharrlichkeit*) and, of course, a moment of “independence” (*Unabhängigkeit*) (Heidegger, 1977, 203–204, 212). Also the expression “there is being” (*es gibt Sein*) opens the very question whether there is something more radical than being, as Heidegger himself will later acknowledge and work out in his mature works²³.

But those elements, which could have been helpful for Zubiri’s idea of reality, were not further developed by Heidegger in *Being and Time*. Nevertheless, they can enlighten the alternative that the young Zubiri was beginning to sketch in Madrid, in his classes on Aristotle.

7. ZUBIRI’S COURSE ON ARISTOTLE

During the “winter semester” of 1927–1928, Zubiri taught a course on Aristotle’s metaphysics at Madrid Central University. The course is accessible to us through a long manuscript containing the notes taken by one of Zubiri’s students²⁴. It is an important text, because in it we can glimpse Zubiri’s reaction to Heidegger’s book, just before Zubiri’s study visit to Freiburg in the following years (1928–1930).

7.1. Hermeneutics of reality

In his course, Zubiri mentions Werner Jaeger and Paul Natorp’s theories about Aristotle’s evolution. According to Zubiri, there is not a fundamental contradiction between “theology” and philosophy in Aristotle’s thought, but rather an “extension” (*ampliación*). This extension begins with a more logic-deductive concept of philosophy, inherited from Plato, and evolves towards an understanding of philosophy as “hermeneutics of reality” (*hermenéutica de la realidad*). Of course, Zubiri is here using a concept dear to Heidegger, who understood the phenomenology of the *Dasein* as hermeneutics (Heidegger, 1977, 37). What is new now in Zubiri’s proposal is to practice a hermeneutics of reality, instead of a hermeneutics of the *Dasein*²⁵.

²³ As it is well known, paragraph 44 of *Sein und Zeit* already offers a glimpse on “truth” as more radical than “being” (Heidegger, 1977, 212–230, especially page 230). A possible interpretation is that both Heidegger and Zubiri during the thirties became conscious of the necessity of transcending “being,” but in two different directions. Heidegger towards “truth” and *Ereignis*, and Zubiri towards “reality.” But at the beginning both thinkers used the expression “there is” (*es gibt, haber*) for this radical realm beyond being.

²⁴ The text was conserved in the City Library of Barcelona, now called National Library of Catalonia. There is also a copy in the Xavier Zubiri Foundation of Madrid. As the text has not yet been published, I will omit references to the pages of the manuscript.

²⁵ Later, Zubiri will rarely use the expression “hermeneutics” for his own philosophical project. In a certain sense, he will maintain a more phenomenological-descriptive approach to problems. In later works Zubiri will speak of “noology.”

Why did Aristotle develop a “hermeneutics of reality”? According to Zubiri, the problem of movement and change (*kínesis*) was decisive for Aristotle’s own philosophy. In his course, Zubiri stresses that Aristotle could not see movement as a simple logical composition of being and not being, but as a real change in the concrete individual thing. No doubt that both Aristotle and Bergson are present when Zubiri points out that movement is much more than the mathematical description of its trajectory. Movement is something in the moving thing, or in the connection between the moving thing and the moved one. That is why philosophy, to describe movement and change, needs not only formal causes, but also efficient and final ones.

If movement and change are something in the concrete thing, then the capacity to change is a character of things themselves. This capacity or potence (*dýnamis*) was not for Aristotle a mere logical possibility, but a positive determination in the concrete thing. According to Zubiri, Aristotle was interested in things themselves. That is why, in his course, Zubiri considers Aristotle in agreement with the phenomenological motto: *to the things themselves!* In Aristotle’s “first philosophy,” the problem of being was not a logical problem, but a concrete determination in the concrete thing. Therefore, the great philosophical question, for Aristotle, was to understand how the concrete thing is able, on its own account, to subsist beyond all changes.

7.2. The “substantivity” of things

From this perspective, metaphysics’ task, for Aristotle, was not the definition of the essence of things, but the study of being as “substantivity” (*sustantividad*). The word *sustantividad* is the Spanish translation of the Aristotelian *ousía*, which was traditionally translated as *sustancia* (“substance,” from Latin *substantia*). Of course, both expressions, substance and “substantivity” have the same etymological origins. But, in Spanish, the expression *sustantividad* does not convey the image of a substratum “below” the accidents, as the word “substance” does. Furthermore, in Spanish, *sustantividad* is able to stress the “substantial” autonomy of something. To be “substantial” prompts the idea of self-sufficiency and independence. As a matter of fact, the word *ousía* was used in classical and koine Greek to refer to the property, the inheritance, or the homestead, denoting all things that were necessary for a free person to subsist with autonomy and independence.

Here Zubiri is making a point, decisive in departing from Heidegger. Aristotle’s metaphysics was not an attempt to think on the “beingness” (*Seinsheit*) of things, as Heidegger sometimes interpreted the *ousía* (Heidegger, 2002, 21, 25, 31, 344, 347–250, 403). According to Zubiri’s interpretation, Aristotle’s *ousía* is neither a general concept of being, obtained by abstraction, as it was understood by the Neo-scholastic

of Louvain²⁶. The *ousía* is simply the “substantivity,” the thing itself, in its own autonomy. For Zubiri, the science Aristotle was looking for, the science of “being as being” (*ón he ón*) was not the science of an abstract entity. In fact, the Greek *ón* is a participle which does not refer to “being in general,” but to the concrete thing, as something which is “being.” Therefore, the Aristotelian metaphysics is simply “the science of the thing as a thing” (*la ciencia de la cosa en tanto que cosa*). The Latin word for “thing” is *res*, and metaphysics therefore is the science of “reality.”

As Zubiri puts it in his course on Aristotle, “thing” (*cosa*) is what manifests an autonomy to be “substantive,” to subsist by itself. And this autonomy means unity. Not the unity of a number, but the unity of a thing. In this interpretation of Aristotle, although departing from Heidegger, we can perceive some elements that Zubiri could have found in his previous readings of the German philosopher: first of all, the *unum* of Scotus, which grants the thing a certain mode of having itself (*modus se habendi*). Zubiri also understands the “substantivity” of things as directly given to us, previous to any distinction between substance and accident. The idea of “substantivity” also captures Heidegger’s notion of “solid reality” (*handfeste Wirklichkeit*), as exposed in his habilitation thesis, or his concept of “endurance,” at it appears in *Being and Time*. Also what Heidegger said about substance, as a “being by itself” (*An-ihm-selbst-sein*), can also be said of Zubiri’s “substantivity.”

7.3. The characterization of reality

Here it is important to realize that Zubiri is not just following Heidegger. What he is trying to practice, is Heidegger’s proposal of a “phenomenological characterization of reality.” But he is doing it in his own way. There is no mention of a “resistance” of things, like in Dilthey or in Scheler. And, although Zubiri might connect with some of Heidegger’s occasional descriptions of reality, he does not characterize reality on the basis of the “care” (*Sorge*), which was Heidegger’s systematic proposal. Zubiri is paying attention to the thing itself, not to the *Dasein*. In a certain way, Zubiri is closer to some of Husserl’s descriptions than to Heidegger’s existential meditations. In his *Logical Investigations*, Husserl had described things in perception as “real” (*wirklich*), “given by themselves” (*selbst gegeben*), and “in person” (*in persona*). We already mentioned the expression “bodily selfhood” (*leibhaftige Selbstheit*), also used by Husserl²⁷.

²⁶ Some critics have pointed out to Heidegger’s nearness to the scholastic idea of being (Berti, 2008, 44–111).

²⁷ Many years after this course on Aristotle, in 1980, Zubiri will recall phenomenology as “a philosophy of things” (*una filosofía de las cosas*) (Zubiri, 1999, 13).

This phenomenological approach enables Zubiri to perform an important distinction, which was not clear enough in Heidegger's writings. It is the distinction between things and objects. According to Zubiri, "things" are referred to time, while "objects" are not. A mathematical object, or a logical one, are beyond time. But things are not everlasting, and their "autonomy" is not eternity. Time belongs to the description of things, of their movements and changes. Zubiri does not mean the time of the consciousness, like Bergson's "duration" (*durée*). Neither does Zubiri mean Heidegger's "temporality" (*Zeitlichkeit*) as in the ontological sense of the "concern" (*Sorge*), and therefore as a characteristic of the *Dasein*. Zubiri, in his own "phenomenological interpretation" of Aristotle, means time as a moment of changing things. In this sense, Zubiri is establishing the relationship between being and time *in things themselves*, and not primarily in human existence.

And, of course, in his course Zubiri often speaks about "reality" rather than "being." At that time there was not in Zubiri's philosophy a systematic distinction between both. But it is clear that, for Zubiri, reality did not mean *extra animam*, as it was the case in medieval and modern philosophy. Like Heidegger's Scotus, Zubiri has abandoned any kind of representationalism, limiting his description to given things themselves. As a matter of fact, Zubiri's reality refers primarily to the concrete "thing," which is precisely what the Latin meant with the word *res*. In this sense, what is primarily given is "reality," not its "being." As Heidegger, but in a different direction than Heidegger, Zubiri was already pointing beyond being.

Things, in their temporal condition, are not objects. But things, according to Zubiri's reading of Aristotle, have an "essence." In Zubiri's perspective, Aristotle's essence (*tò tí ên êinai*) is precisely what accounts for the endurance of things in time. As a student of Plato, Aristotle continues to see the true being of things in their essence. But the essence is not split away from things, because the essence is their moment of stability and permanence. Therefore, Aristotle's "law of non-contradiction" is not just a logical principle. The principle of non-contradiction expresses the main aim of Aristotle's investigations: the persistency of things in themselves, in spite of their dilatation in time. That was, according to Zubiri, the reason why Aristotle included time in his law of non-contradiction.

Modern science, according to Zubiri, had forsaken this connection between concrete things and their theoretical consideration. For classical physics, the description of a movement was simply the description of its trajectory in a geometrical space, as Bergson had shown. However, the newest physics would be closer to the Aristotelian perspective. Here Zubiri mentions again his former presentation of Einstein's general theory of relativity. Gravity is now understood as the curvature of space-time,

produced by material masses. In a new way, theoretical considerations, even in the most elaborated scientific consideration, remain linked to concrete things.

7.4. Hermeneutics of factuality

This interpretation of Aristotle shows that his “first philosophy” was never founded on a general concept of being. It was founded on the concrete thing. And therefore metaphysics is grounded on intuition (*intuición*). Zubiri does not mean Bergson’s intuition as an “internal” view of things. Probably he is closer, as we have seen, to Husserl’s “categorical intuition” and its reception by Heidegger. As we have seen, in 1926 Zubiri had spoken of the “intellectual intuition,” as a kind of sensible intuition which does not reject concepts, but includes them. But now, in his course on Aristotle, Zubiri adds a new stress. The intuition foundational to Aristotle’s metaphysics includes also the “duration” of given things. The original “temporality” is to be found in things themselves, as they are given in the intuition. Only such intuition is able to perceive things not merely as objects, but as things. And in this way a science “of thing as thing” is possible.

Now we can also understand that the “hermeneutics of reality” is also, for Zubiri, a “hermeneutics of factuality.” For Zubiri, the expression the “hermeneutics of factuality” is the best description of Aristotle’s metaphysics, because Aristotle was able to see the ideal contents in factual things. Obviously, Zubiri was translating an expression (*Hermeneutik der Faktizität*) that Heidegger had used in his university courses of 1919–1920, as Heidegger himself recalls in a footnote in *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1988; Heidegger, 1977, 72). But, again, the expression has for Zubiri its own stress, already far away from Heidegger’s analysis of the *Dasein*. Zubiri’s “factuality” does not refer to the factuality of a “fallen” human existence, but to the factuality of the given things. Before any consideration about their essential contents, things are just factually given²⁸.

Of course, Zubiri remains conscious that he is doing an interpretation of Aristotle, from a contemporary point of view, beyond the medieval readings of his metaphysics. But Zubiri also knows that this interpretation is able to bring into the spotlight unknown possibilities of Aristotle’s philosophy. That does not make Zubiri an Aristotelian. Zubiri does not try to incorporate the whole of Aristotle into his own perspective, but remains critical. For example, against the opinion of Brentano, Zubiri

²⁸ Zubiri soon left the expression “hermeneutics,” but continued to speak about “factuality” until his maturity (Zubiri, 2016, 198–200, 270). For Zubiri, the factuality of things defines the “horizon” of contemporary metaphysics (Zubiri, 2016, 292–294).

doesn't think it possible to find a doctrine of creation in Aristotle. For Aristotle, God is not the creator, but only the needed requirement for the movement of the universe. And therefore Aristotle's God is bound to the matter of the universe. According to Zubiri, one could even doubt that this "first mover" could deserve the name of "God." To be a god, the first mover should be in relation, not only to the universe, but also to the religious life of human beings. It is of course a place where we can hear some possible resonances with Heidegger, but also glimpse some prefiguration of Zubiri's own philosophy of religion, way beyond Aristotle (Zubiri, 2017).

8. CONCLUSIONS

We can conclude that, in the case of Zubiri, is it really difficult to speak about a pure "objectivist" period of his evolution, previous to his meeting with Heidegger in Freiburg in 1928. Before 1928, Zubiri was already in some kind of "metaphysical" stance, if we define "metaphysics" in relation to "reality," as Zubiri always did. On the other hand, it is also possible to say that the "phenomenological" inspiration never disappears completely from Zubiri's philosophy.

The reason to say that is not some kind of Zubiri's allegiance to Husserl's thinking in a narrow sense. Very early, other influences, like Bergson and Heidegger, were also present. We speak of a "phenomenological inspiration" because of the manner in which Zubiri acquired his central notion of "reality." With the help of Heidegger's habilitation thesis, where the German philosopher still invoked the phenomenological reduction, Zubiri began to glimpse a redefinition of reality. Reality is no longer something "outside of the mind" (*extra animam*), but a characteristic of things in our intuition. We can even say, with Scotus's terminology: a characteristic of things in the *simplex apprehensio*, even before judgment.

For late medieval and modern philosophy, the existence of things "outside the consciousness" was somehow reached by an act of "positioning" them (*Setzung*), or was just the result of a "naive" belief in the "external world." Now the situation is different. Consciousness is not a "container" of things. And reality is no longer some region of things *extra animam*. Reality is found in our phenomenological description of things, just as they are given to us. In this perspective, which is the sense of the phenomenological reduction? If reality is not a position, nor a belief, there is no reason to "bracket" something that never was there. Without such position and such belief, no representationalism is possible. In some sense, the radical exercise of reduction, with a phenomenological characterization of reality, renders unnecessary the standard understanding of the reduction.

Zubiri's texts during the twenties do not depict the definitive and mature idea of reality, which Zubiri will begin to expose several years later. Up to a certain point, Zubiri followed Heidegger in his interest for the "categorical intuition" as an instrument of metaphysics. That was the way in which Heidegger expected to reach being, not as an abstraction, but as a "given." But Heidegger's insistence on the importance of categorical intuition, even into his last years, contrasts with Husserl's growing awareness of its impossibility (García-Baró, 1997, 32–33). In Zubiri, the situation is quite different because, after the mentioned texts in the twenties, the "categorical" or "intellectual intuition" is no longer invoked. The reason is probably that, for Zubiri, reality is neither given as a concept, nor as a category. His phenomenological characterization of reality not only situates it before judgment, but also at a level that is not conceptual or categorical. The "autonomy" of given things, their "mode of having themselves" (*modus se habendi*), their "substantivity," points to something that is prior to concepts, meanings and categories. It is what Zubiri, years later, will call "formality" (*formalidad de realidad*) (Zubiri, 1980, 50–60)²⁹.

At this point is where Zubiri, probably years later, saw his own separation from phenomenology, not only from Husserl's phenomenology, but as a separation from *both* Husserl *and* Heidegger. Reality, for Zubiri, will not be a "sense" or a meaning of things, not the sense of being outside the consciousness, nor the sense given in the "cure," nor any other sense attained in the comprehension of being. In Zubiri's perspective, reality will be something situated at the very level of the sensible "contents," not at the level of their meaning. Even in the hypothetical case of a sensation deprived of meaning, the contents of that sensation would be sensed as "real," according to this new notion of reality.

On the other hand, we can also say, in a certain sense, that Zubiri's philosophical way remained very "phenomenological," even more phenomenological than that of Heidegger's. Zubiri had arrived to a characterization of reality where no consideration of the "cure" or any other determination of the *Dasein* was needed. Therefore, at least in a first approximation, Zubiri's method remained much more "descriptive" of the "things themselves," and much less "anthropological" than Heidegger's proposals in *Being and Time*. As we have seen, even some descriptive observations of Husserl could be connected with Zubiri's idea of reality.

In Zubiri's perspective, "reality" is a universal character of all human experience, previous to any "speculative" approach to it. Therefore "realism" (in a new sense of the word) does not demand a rupture with the analysis of human access to the

²⁹ The expression, with other meaning, is already in Scotus.

world. Zubiri's was "realist" when this was not a philosophical "trend," and his realism was phenomenological, rather than ontological, in any sense of the world. "Reality," in Zubiri's sense, does not belong to the eidetic considerations about the structure of all possible worlds, nor to the speculative considerations about a world beyond human experience. Being "reality" a character of all human experience, it embraces the individuality of particular things, but also the structural multiplicity of its elements. In the same way, "reality" means the unity of the world, as it is given in our experience, and the multiplicity of all things, and even of all possible universes.

We can also say that, when Zubiri departed from Madrid to Freiburg, he already had very concrete expectations and questions in relation to Heidegger's project. For Zubiri, Heidegger's work on Scotus had been very decisive, perhaps even more decisive than *Being and Time* itself. Probably Zubiri was expecting that the second part of *Being and Time*, not yet written, could answer some of his philosophical concerns. But these concerns were already very defined. Zubiri expected a phenomenological characterization of reality, and his own interpretation of Aristotle had already given himself some ideas of how this characterization of reality could be achieved. In a certain sense, Zubiri went to Freiburg to be disappointed by Heidegger. But that is another story.

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