

Giovanni Jan Giubilato, *Freiheit und Reduktion. Grundzüge einer phänomenologischen Meontik bei Eugen Fink (1927-1947)*, Traugott Bautz, Nordhausen 2017, pp. 262.

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One of the most controversial questions of the history of philosophy is that of freedom. If freedom is strictly connected to ethical questions more than to transcendental reasoning, the author of this book, Giovanni Jan Giubilato, faces this topic in the context of the phenomenological discussion. It is very interesting how his approach considers from Husserl on the very complex development of phenomenology, regarding Eugen Fink's interaction with his master but also with Heidegger's ontology, always trying to outline Eugen Fink's specificity.

Giubilato's insight in the phenomenological method makes clear the fundamental role of

freedom for the transcendental philosophy in its all. As a matter of fact Husserl thinks the “rational self-determination” and the “Autonomie der Vernunft” (p. 15) as results of freedom. Freedom makes possible the phenomenological reduction process which passes from the natural to the transcendental position.

The book is divided into two sections: the first is entitled with a Schelling’s quote *Anfang und Ende der Philosophie ist – Freiheit!* (pp. 69-168), while the title of the second is *Reduktion und Befreiung* (pp.169-259). The two sections are introduced by a long pre-considering chapter, *Von der Transzendentalphänomenologie zur Meontik* (pp. 30-68), in which the Author traces the passage from Husserl’s phenomenology to Fink’s meontic philosophy. Giubilato aims at showing how, more and differently from Husserl, Eugen Fink develops this connection in his phenomenology of freedom in an explicit way. The so called “third solution” or the “meontic interpretation” (p. 19), is developed in the first long phase of Fink’s thought. The question of freedom is for Fink strictly connected to the question of the beginning of philosophy in as far as the latter means phenomenologically to understand the question of the liberation from the natural position towards the world. Philosophy consists from the beginning in a “gewaltsame Emanzipation” (p. 87) from the bounds of tradition, which is suspended through the phenomenological reduction. The philosophical self-foundation is led by the idea of freedom, which is also the ground for any self-reflection about the world as givenness. Freedom represents the ground where the “motivation” for changing the natural position grows and it is, at the same time, the condition of its possibility. The related question of motivation in the phenomenological reduction leads Fink to go beyond Husserl’s conception: he agrees with Husserl’s position believing in human freedom as base for philosophising, but he goes further in asking beyond his phenomenological argumentation.

In the second chapter of the first part Giubilato shows how Fink’s step forward comparing to Husserl is in fact to understand freedom as the “vereinsamende Aufgabe” (p, 112), which cuts off the single from the collective dimension of the tradition and makes him/her responsible for him/herself in his/her transcendental loneliness. In other words, the ideal place of freedom is not in the collective use thereof but in the conscience of each as realisation of the phenomenological reduction. In this way Fink founds phenomenology in human freedom.

In the third chapter the transcendental foundation of the free Epoché is discussed in the same terms as Husserl’s concept of ability (Vermöglichung) of the “I can”. The author analyses

Husserl's and Fink's position towards the concept of freedom outlining that for Fink an existential interpretation of the neutralisation phenomenon, which is a fundamental modification of the attitude towards the "in the world happening experiences" and the attitude towards them. Giubilato is able to reconstruct the difficult development of Fink's own thought between his encounters with Husserl's phenomenology, on the one hand, and Heidegger's ontology and existential analysis, on the other. Fink's originality is based on his own elaboration of the main concepts of two of the most complex and influential philosophers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Fink's publications and not published notes show his dissatisfaction with the conscious-analytic and fundamental-ontological argumentations of the question of motivation. In this regard, Fink's work is focused on the problem of philosophy as fundamental question which makes itself constantly more radical. This is the reason why Fink never stop to ask beyond the results of a phenomenological reduction and "before" their legacy: he aims at radicalising the aspect showed by Husserl in his phenomenology trying to motivate the reduction outside the reduction itself, for it cannot be enough to motivate the process of reduction. As he says: "Die natürliche Einstellung kann

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keine bewegende Motivation zur Selbstüberwindung enthalten" (p. 147). In other words, motivation must be understood in a meontic way, that is as "vom Absoluten her interpretiert [...]" (p. 148). In this contest science cannot be the reference point for Fink, as it was for Husserl, in as far as philosophy "has no external motivation" (p. 167), but it is totally without any motivation possible ("motivlos"). On this point Fink can finally clarify what he means saying that philosophy *is* freedom.

In the second part of the book the Author thematises more radically the development of the concept of reduction as core and fundamental task of the phenomenological research. The author's insightful interpretation outlines Fink's deep analysis of the meontic character of philosophy as liberation. For this reason the following remaining chapters of the book investigate two main aspects of the reduction as liberation, that is:

1. The medial character of the image conscience (Bildbewusstsein) and the medial character of reduction.
2. Fink's idea of fundamental liberation departing from the idea of human being as essentially not free.