



THE RELATIONSHIP OF ORTEGA Y GASSET WITH PHENOMENOLOGY

A Relação de Ortega y Gasset com a Fenomenologia

La Relación de Ortega y Gasset Con La Fenomenología

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Abstract: Ortega y Gasset's relationship with phenomenology encompasses an antagonism of perspectives regarding the repercussion of Spanish philosophy of the twentieth century. Among these forms of conceiving this relation are the conception that Ortega formulated an original philosophy abandoning the phenomenology in the moment of proving it. His most beloved disciple, Julián Marías, passes on that vision. On the other hand, some thinkers, like Javier San Martín Sala, argues that Ortega remained a phenomenologist until the end, despite his own opinion. It occurs when Ortega confronted with Husserl's work entitled *The Crisis of the European Sciences and the Transcendental Phenomenology*. Ortega believes that Husserl reformulated phenomenology due to a meeting between them both in 1934. Ortega believes that until that moment phenomenology was a radicalized form of Kantianism for believing that historical reason was lacking in its epistemological context and finally found it in the writings of the so-called last Husserl.

Keywords: Ortega y Gasset; Philosophy; Phenomenology; Historical Reason; Kantianism.

Resumen: La relación de Ortega y Gasset con la fenomenología engloba un antagonismo de perspectivas en lo que se refiere a la repercusión de la filosofía española del siglo XX. De entre estas formas de concebir esta relación, se evidencia la concepción de que Ortega ha formulado una filosofía original, abandonando la fenomenología en el momento en que la había probado, visión esta repercutida por su discípulo más dileto, Julián Marías. Por otro lado, algunos pensadores como Javier San Martín Sala defienden que Ortega permaneció fenomenólogo hasta el final, a pesar de su propia opinión. En el caso de que se trate de una obra de Husserl titulada *La Crisis de las Ciencias Europeas y la Fenomenología Trascendental*, Ortega cree que Husserl reformuló la fenomenología debido a un encuentro trabado entre ambos en 1934. Ortega cree que hasta ese momento la fenomenología era una forma radicalizada del kantismo por creer que le faltaba la razón histórica en su contexto epistemológico y, por fin la encuentra en los escritos del llamado último Husserl.

Palabras clave: Ortega y Gasset; Filosofía; la fenomenología; Razón Histórica; Kantismo.

Resumo: A relação de Ortega y Gasset com a fenomenologia engloba um antagonismo de perspectivas no que tange a repercussão da filosofia espanhola do século XX. Dentre estas formas de conceber esta relação, evidencia-se a concepção de que Ortega tenha formulado uma filosofia original, abandonando a fenomenologia no momento em que a provava, visão esta repercutida por seu discípulo mais dileto, Julián Marías. Por outro lado, alguns pensadores, como Javier San Martín Sala, defendem que Ortega permaneceu fenomenólogo até o final, apesar de sua própria opinião. Ocorre que, ao deparar-se com a obra de Husserl intitulada *A Crise das Ciências Europeias e a Fenomenologia Trascendental*, Ortega acredita que Husserl reformulou a fenomenologia devido a um encontro travado entre ambos em 1934. Ortega acredita que até aquele momento a fenomenologia era uma forma radicalizada do kantismo por acreditar que faltava-lhe a razão histórica em seu contexto epistemológico e, por fim a encontra nos escritos do chamado último Husserl.

Palavras-Chave: Ortega y Gasset; Filosofia; Fenomenologia; Razão Histórica; Kantismo.

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Introduction

Ortega y Gasset (1833-1955) was a Spanish philosopher of great influence in the 20th century. His vast work covers a variety of themes, and one of the great questions that echoes in his philosophy is his relationship with Husserlian phenomenology. But, why would it be important to relate Ortega y Gasset to phenomenology? This is what Javier San Martín (2013) asks, having devoted much of his studies to this issue. It seems simpler to agree with the theory expounded by Julián Marías, Ortega's main disciple, who claims that Orteguian thought was in fact original, unique, alluding that Ortega would have distanced himself from Husserlian phenomenology at the same moment that he had proved it. Therefore, for San Martín (2012), there are two main ways of approaching Orteguian philosophy: The first is that described by Julián Marías, that is, understanding Ortega as the original philosopher; and the second would be linking the Spanish thinker to one of the three great movements that shaped the 20th century, namely, Marxist thought, phenomenological philosophy and analytical philosophy. To have Ortega in the phenomenological movement permeates the possibility of adding his name to the bibliography that lives up to this movement, legitimizing the repercussion of a Latin thought, the Spanish one, in the select range of thinkers of that movement. San Martín (2013) points out that excluding Ortega from the phenomenological movement ends up associating him with the philosophy of life, classifying him as a thinker of the 19th century, and not of the 20th, alongside Dilthey and Nietzsche. This in itself is no dishonor, on the contrary, but it ignores elements of Husserlian phenomenology in Ortega. In turn, if Ortega is included as a thinker in the phenomenological school, he will be placed between Husserl and Heidegger and thus his texts will be able to be used to introduce phenomenological studies (San Martín, 2013).

Phenomenology: A Good Luck

Ortega y Gasset (1965) had stated that, “[...] phenomenology was not a philosophy for us: it was... a good luck” (p.42). This is due to the fact that through it Ortega was able to find a way out of neo-Kantianism. In this sense, he is emphatic in his criticism of Kantian idealism, “For ten years I lived within Kantian thought: I have breathed it like an atmosphere that had been my home and my prison [...] With great effort I managed to escape from the kantian prison and escaped its atmospheric influence” (Ortega y Gasset, 1966, p. 25). Consequently, Ortega will understand that phenomenology seeks to save rationality, without ignoring the immediate experience. That is, the object is no longer decoupled from personal life, as it takes place in life itself, in the individual life (San Martín, 1994, p. 28). The ratio starts to be inserted in life, and therefore life is understood as a living subjectivity made up of lived-experiences. The term lived-experience (*vivencia* in Spanish) had been coined by Ortega himself in order to translate the German concept of *Erlebnis* used by Husserl, in his text *About the Concept of Sensation*, recently translated into Portuguese (Ortega y Gasset, 2011). Ortega (2011) describes this phenomenon as: “Everything that arrives with such immediacy to myself, which becomes a part of it, is a lived-experience. As the physical body is a unit of atoms, so the self or conscious body is also a unit of lived-experiences” (p.222). Phenomenology emerges as the descriptive science of these lived-experiences, and so Ortega will glimpse in phenomenology the “Archimedean point of everything” (San Martín, 1994, p. 29), because everything happens in each individual's life. However, from the start Ortega realizes that this individual is not something isolated, but that it is formed in the relation with the world, the circumstance. In 1914, in *Meditations of the Quixote*, he would say “I am I and my circumstance; and, if I do not save it, I do not save myself.” (Ortega y Gasset, 1967, p. 322). This relation of the self with the environment incorporates the notion of subject in the notion of object, being the Husserl equivalent idea of the a priori of correlation (San Martín, 1994).

Ortega formulates three metaphors to express the main thoughts of each era of the philosophical history. The first would be the *Wax Age* in which the Aristotelian concept of knowledge prevails, interpreting that consciousness is formed by the reality that stamps it like a wax seal, leaving its mark on it. Greek thought and empiricism stand out at this stage; the second metaphor is called *Continent and Content*, widely spread at the Modernity Age, in which consciousness is comprehended as a container in which representations exist, these representations are contents of consciousness and the reality lies beyond. Kant's Copernican inversion is based on this thought; finally, phenomenology emerges as a third way. Ortega names this way of *Dii consentes*, in reference to the Roman gods, of whom it was said that they could only be born and die together. This thought refers to the mutual relationship of conscience and reality, “I am I and my circumstance” Ortega would say, that is, conscience and reality (San Martín, 1994).



Renouncing Phenomenology?

As it seems, the Spanish philosopher urges to identify himself with Husserlian phenomenology, showing signs of enthusiasm for it. However, even after identify Husserl as his “master” (Olmo García, 1983) Ortega starts to conceive the idea that in reality phenomenology would have given a rigorous foundation to rationalism, but in the end remained idealist in the neo-kantian fashion. Ortega goes so far as to claim that phenomenology was based on “pure magic” and that he had abandoned phenomenology at the same moment that he had proved it (San Martín, 1994).

Something unusual occurs with Ortega y Gasset, because, if at first he declared himself a follower of Husserl, the impossibility of understanding some of the fundamental concepts of phenomenology as Husserl had exposed them, led him to confess that at the same moment that he had known phenomenology he moved away from her (San Martín, 1994, p. 18).

This statement becomes the guiding thread of the interpretation perpetrated by Ortega's disciples, as well as by historians of phenomenology, affirming that he was not a phenomenologist (Spiegelberg, 1971; Marías, 2000, 2004). Regarding the repercussion of phenomenology in Spain, Spiegelberg (1971) reports: “But, very differently from France, the medium for this transmission was one single philosopher, Jose Ortega y Gasset, in the final analysis is not even a phenomenologist himself.” (p. 611). This passage denotes that Marías' view of Ortega's relationship with phenomenology has gained strength, crossed borders and consolidated Ortega's non-phenomenological view. It should be noted that this idealistic view of phenomenology has spread to other contexts, which are not necessarily linked to the figure of Ortega. Dan Zahavi (2012), commentator on the contemporary Husserlian work states that his reinterpretation of Husserl consists in demystifying the widespread caricature of understanding phenomenology as an idealistic, intellectualist and immanentist subjectivism. Therefore it is necessary to analyze the strangeness that occurs between Ortega and phenomenology and which San Martín refers to in the quote above.

Says Cervantes (2015) in his *Don Quixote*, “[...] it seems to me that translating from one language to another, as long as it is not from the queens of languages, Greek and Latin, is like looking at Flemish carpets inside out: although you can see the figures, they are full of threads that obscure them, you cannot see them with the clarity and color on the right side [...]” (pp. 549-550). This quixotic alert refers to the problems involved in the work of translating writings. Interestingly, Ortega's relationship with phenomenology is involved in this drama, and plot, of translations and interpretations.

As seen, Ortega's understanding of phenomenology referred to a radicalized idealism. From the Ortegian perspective, Husserl tried to “jump over the shadow” (Marías, 2000) because of the *epoché* and the phenomenological reduction, since this context generated the attempt to reach an absolute consciousness, cut off from human life, endowed with full access to things without personal imbrications, comprising the reflexive conscience as the absolute compared to the natural conscience (San Martín, 1994, p. 208). In this sense, it is strange to analyze the comments about Husserl's phenomenology in the course given by Julián Marías about the styles of philosophy. In Marías point of view it is possible to highlight the problem rooted in the Spanish interpretation of the 20th century about phenomenology. Although extensive, follows a relevant part of the text due to the set of questions it highlights.

The object is placed in parentheses by the phenomenological reduction. However, how is the parenthesis of *epoché* placed? The parenthesis is placed outside, so that it encompasses the subject, the act with its quality and the intentional object. It is placed outside and therefore any position relative to reality is eliminated. Yes, but this parenthesis was placed on the outside, not on the inside, and you can, of course, put another parenthesis: now I can reduce the previous act already reduced, the act reduced phenomenologically, but I can only do it outside this parenthesis placing another parenthesis, which encloses it. Therefore, the act of placing parentheses, the act of abstention, is done outside the parenthesis (Marías, 2000).

There is a very peculiar interpretation of Husserl's work. There is a growing understanding that Husserl ignores natural consciousness in favor of an idealized absolute consciousness. Ortega denies the reduction because he believes that it ignores the executive acts of conscience, or, to put it another way, “(...) the primary relationship with the world is the pragmatic relationship of being in the world *counting on things* and, therefore, thinking or being aware of things is not the primary act” (San Martín, 1994, p. 50). This fact leads Ortega to affirm that he refused phenomenology at the same moment he conceived it, maintaining only Husserl's descriptive method in his analysis. For Ortega, through this understanding, phenomenology lacked a historical reason and was based on a merely ideal reason. Ortega goes so far as to claim that phenomenology was in fact the most sophisticated form of idealism (Olmo García, 1983). This perspective comes from reading Husserl's *Ideas* through an erroneous interpretation (San Martín, 2012, p. 175).

San Martín (2012) clarifies that Ortega received this idealistic bias from phenomenology through the reading of *Ideas*. According to reports, Ortega inferred that the reduction would be the means of access to



an absolute conscience, generating the impression of an ideal conscience, that is, a conscience that would not have relations with the world, that would conceive the world and articulate it. However, an analysis of the original German text, still according to San Martín (2012, p. 175), indicates that Husserl refers to natural consciousness as absolute and not the other way around. To Husserl, to return to the things itself would be a natural access to reality without preconceptions. In other words, the intentional relationship is continuous, distancing itself from a merely ideal conscience. Ziri6n (2001) in his text *Ideas I en Espa6ol, o de C6mo Armaba Rompecabezas Jose Gaos*¹, sets out in detail all the inconsistencies in the translation of *Ideas* from Jose Gaos, a student of Ortega and who inherited his interpretation of phenomenology. It even states that Gaos (Ziri6n, 2001) confesses some confusion in some passages by Husserl stating that, "It is not yet clear whether the absolute experience is one that is the object of reflection as an object of it, or this one of reflection" (p. 331). In other words, is the reflective consciousness which analyzes the lived-experience, the absolute lived-experience? San Mart6n (1994) clarifies, "the absolute being is not the acts of reflection but the experiences discovered by reflection" (p. 206). These confusions of Gaos leads to the problems evidenced in the translation of *Ideas I* into Spanish. San Mart6n (1994), in his *Essays on Ortega*, makes a detailed analysis of paragraph 50 of *Ideas* in the Castilian version. For a better understanding of this analysis, three versions of the text were scrutinized in this study, the one in Castilian in the work of San Mart6n, a version in Portuguese translated by M6rcio Suzuki and the original in German, as shown below:

In the phenomenological orientation, we generally *prevent*, in principle, the *execution* of all these cognitive theses, that is, "we put in parenthesis" the theses made, and "we do not share these theses" to make new investigations; instead of living in them, of perform *them*, we perform acts of *reflection* directed at them, and we apprehend them as the absolute being that they are. We now live entirely in these second-level acts, whose data is the infinite field of absolute knowledge - the fundamental field of phenomenology (Husserl, 2014, pp. 117, 118).

The same excerpt in Spanish transcribed by San Mart6n (1994):

En la actitud fenomenol6gica *sofrenamos* [*unterbinden*: interrumpimos] con universalidad de principio, la *ejecuci6n* [Vollzug] de todas estas tesis cogitativas, es decir, "ponemos entre par6ntesis" las ejecutadas (*), a los fines de las nuevas investigaciones "no participamos [*mitmachen*: participar] en esas tesis"; en lugar de vivir *en* ellas, de ejecutarlas (**), ejecutamos actos de *reflexi6n* dirigidos a ellas y las (***) aprehendemos incluso como el ser *absoluto* que son. Ahora vivimos totalmente en tales actos de segundo grado, en lo que se da el campo infinito de las vivencias absolutas – el campo fundamental de la fenomenolog6a (p. 206).

The original German text follows:

In der phanomenologischen Einstellung unterbinden wir in prinzipieller Allgemeinheit den Vollzug aller solcher kogitativen Thesen, d.h. die vollzogenen "klammern wir ein", fiir die neuen Forschungen "machen wir diese Thesen nicht mit"; statt in ihnen zu leben, sie I zu vollziehen, vollziehen wir auf sie gerichtete Akte der Reflexion, und wir erfassen sie selbst als das absolute Sein, das sie sind. Wir leben jetzt durchaus in solchen Akten zweiter Stufe, deren Gegebenes das unendliche Feld absoluter Erlebnisse ist - das Grundfeld der Phanomenologie (Husserl, 1976, p. 107).

There is as noted a typographic distinction (*apud* San Mart6n, 1994, p. 206), in the terms *ejecutar* or *perform*, being a normal one, taken when "we perform the phenomenological reduction" (Husserl, 2014, p. 117) and another in italics, when it is said: "instead of naively performing the acts of competence of the constituent consciousness of nature, with their transcendent theses" (Husserl, 2014, p. 117). Orringer creates an interpretation to read this text inspired on those typographic distinction. But, notes San Mart6n (1994, p. 207) that this duplicity is not fully employed in the paragraph mentioned above, since the first *ejecutar* (perform) marked with a (*) in the quote in Spanish should be in italics, the same goes for the second, in which only the pronoun goes in cursive and not the verb. Note that the same seems to occur with the Portuguese translation, leaving Orringer's theory weakened. However, the difficulty of understanding §50 seems to evoke major problems. In addition, the plasticity of the German language and the diversity of use of the term *Vollzug* are perceived. Then,

Here ends one of the main misunderstandings regarding Husserl's phenomenology, and I believe that Ortega himself also committed it, at least from 1929 on, to think that the original and absolute founder of phenomenology is reflexive consciousness, the reflection, self-awareness, what Orringer calls the transcendental self (San Mart6n, 1994, p. 206).

¹ Translation: *Ideas I* in Spanish, or how Jos6 Gaos makes his puzzle.



When speaking “and we apprehend them as the absolute being that they are”, Husserl refers to the discovered experiences and not to the acts of reflection that are directed towards them. In short, this was Gaos's crucial doubt, cited by Ziri6n, which generated a summarily idealistic understanding of Husserl. It is not by chance that the following warning appears in the preface of *Ideias I* in Portuguese:

That doctrine that had made its debut on the German philosophical scene in 1900, with the austere and “realistic” Logical Investigations, had become not only “transcendental” but also abusive and deliriously “idealistic”. From now on it will be affirmed, with the greatest lack of ceremony and without any composure, that objects are “constituted” thanks to the acts of conscience, that this conscience does not need reality to exist and that reality, on the contrary, “depends” on conscience (§§ 49/50). In short, a theoretical scandal that would undermine Husserl's old and comfortable reputation (Moura, 2014, p. 15).

This representation is in line with the misinterpretations mentioned by San Mart6n (1994), Zahavi (2012), among others. The notion that phenomenology was based on a Kantian idealism, ignoring his old writings and his debate with Nartop's neo-Kantians. At first, §50 of *Ideas I* seems to be crucial to foment an idealistic understanding of phenomenology, creating a perspective that had been promulgated in several contexts, including the Orteguian one, spread in Spain.

The Reunion With Husserl

This Spanish perspective on phenomenology generates a curious case. Jul6an Mar6as (2000) claims that in a visit made by Ortega to Husserl in 1934, the Spanish would have explicit his criticisms of Husserlian idealism and because of that Husserl had elaborated the *Lebenswelt* concept, which is close to the Orteguian interpretation of vital reason. In other words, Mar6as states that through Ortega Husserl was able to conceive a historical reason, reformulating his phenomenology as described in the work *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, or as some call it, the phase of the last Husserl. This interpretation is controversial and somewhat extravagant. It appears that the term *Lebenswelt* already borders Husserl's works prior to the *Crisis*², and that the notion of historical reason, although not explicit, implicitly permeates his writings. In the words of Olmo Garc6a (1983) “We do not believe, however, that Husserl's studies on *Lebenswelt* can be considered as a break with his trajectory (...)” (p. 109). As for Ortega's visit to Husserl, there is a record of a letter from Husserl to Ingarden describing the event.

Last week we had a very interesting philosophical visit: Ortega y Gasset, which caused us a great surprise. He is deeply familiar with my writings. Every day he had, with Fink and me, long and serious conversations, asking questions to the most difficult depths. He really is not only, as advertised, the pedagogue of the new Spain, but he is also an avant-garde teacher of a phenomenological school. He will now do a translation of the *Meditations* and after the other works (the *Logical Investigations*, in the Spanish edition, are in everyone's hands). And besides, he is a wonderful man³.

This visit is also described by Spiegelberg (1971, p. 614), signaling that Ortega would have gone to Fribourg in 1934 to meet Husserl. San Mart6n (2012) reports that Ortega was really perplexed by the writings of the *Crisis*, to the point of crediting the authorship of the works to Fink, a student and adviser to Husserl. San Mart6n, however, explains that this matter had already been properly explored and that Ortega had made a huge mistake in reporting this. Apparently, after reading the *Crisis*, Ortega came to know Husserl's idea more clearly, realizing that what the German spoke and did was very similar to what he was developing. A true Spanish drama unfolds here in which Ortega, even understanding phenomenology at that time as a refined idealism, ends up developing his theory of vital reason with a focus on historical reason and paradoxically comes to an interpretation very similar to Husserl's when this systematizes the *Lebenswelt* concept. The interpretation is so similar that Ortega and Mar6as believe that the *Lebenswelt* concept was the result of Orteguian inspiration.

What is curious today is that if you read recent writings on phenomenology, especially at France

² Here we refer to Husserl's two late texts, to his 1935 Vienna Conference, entitled “Philosophy in the Crisis of European Humanity”, published posthumously in 1954, in volume VI of *Husserliana*, which has two Brazilian editions, the first of which 1996 (with translation and introduction by Urbano Zilles), and the second of 2012, composing a volume, together with the second text, the Prague Conference, entitled “The Crisis of Philosophical Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy”, originally published in 1936, in Belgrade's *Philosophy* magazine. This second text, brings the edition of Walter Biemel, with translation by Diogo Falc6o Ferrer.

³ Translated from the Spanish version of Francisco Javier Olmo Garc6a (1983, p. 108).



who had cultivated a phenomenological school, you will notice that you are constantly using Husserl's capital concept as what you call *Lebenswelt*, the world of life. Now you see, the concept of the world of life is not Husserlian, it is the opposite of Husserl, it is precisely what he had never admitted in his entire life, except in his last years of life (Marías, 2000).

Husserlian idealism, as it turned out, was nothing more than a perspective of the reading done by Ortega and his disciples based on a wrong understanding. Nevertheless, Ortega had more similarities with Husserl than he supposed. Husserl himself seems to agree with this, since in the letter to Ingarden he highlights Ortega as a professor at a phenomenological school. Robert O'Connor (1979) already perceives the correlation of Ortega's writings with phenomenology in his article *Ortega's Reformulation of Husserlian Phenomenology*, surpassing the vision of Marías (2000) and Spiegelberg (1971), but he still understands that Ortega would have reformulated the phenomenology, moving towards an existential philosophy.

Although Husserlian phenomenology has influenced Ortega's thinking, neither Ortega nor his commentators have sufficiently clarified their relationship with Husserl – or to the phenomenological movement in general. This task, however, is indispensable. For I am convinced that phenomenology underlies several fundamental parts of Ortega's philosophy: his metaphysics of human life (What is Philosophy?) His philosophy of history (History as a System); its philosophy of society (Man and People) (O'Connor, 1979, p. 53).

O'Connor (1979) uses early texts (1913) by Ortega to justify this position, namely: *On the Concept of Sensation* and *Construction and Intuition*, both from 1913. It infers that these youthful writings by Ortega contain the Orteguian interpretation of phenomenology, ignoring the continuity of his work. "It is known that these texts do not infer the immense problem that exists in the understanding of the words pure and transcendental, which we can now understand from the confrontation with the interpretations of Gaos." (San Martín, 2012, p. 27). O'Connor will allude, based on these texts of 1913, that Ortega was the first thinker with Husserlian influence to make the existential turn. San Martín alleges that O'Connor did not have at that time the data necessary to understand the Orteguian conception of phenomenology, mainly due to the problem of the translation and interpretation of *Ideas* on Spanish soil.

However, Nelson Orringer's criticism is registered, who does not believe that the conception that Ortega would have misunderstood Husserl's notion of pure conscience due to an erroneous translation by José Gaos of the work *Ideas*. Orringer (2001) finds it difficult to believe this hypothesis, since Ortega would not rely on the translation of his disciple since he had mastered the German language. In addition, Orringer alleges that San Martín ignores Dilthey's⁴ influence on the Orteguian work. Orringer points out that Ortega remakes the entire understanding of his contemporaries' philosophy from the perspective of Dilthey. In this sense, in the work *What is Philosophy?* Ortega lists the categories of human life, in a similar way to Dilthey's *Kategorien des Lebens*. Now, the lack of a system for a historical reason exposed in *Ideas* is one of Ortega's criticisms and which, it seems, has a great Diltheyian influence. The issue of transcendental consciousness is addressed by Ortega, as well as by Dilthey's beloved disciple, George Misch⁵. In both versions of this criticism (both Spanish and German) the problem seems to lie in a misinterpretation of the Husserlian concept of pure conscience, which corroborates to San Martín's thesis. The curious thing is to point out that Misch reads the work in German and not the Gaos' translation. It is essential to reiterate that Husserl (1970) himself had alluded that, the way he expressed himself in *Ideas*, could induce a certain misinterpretation of his writings. If this interpretative difficulty is perceived by a native German, why not by a Spanish one? This analysis, however, seems to safeguard Gaos' merits in his translation work. In any case, both points, the lack of clarity of historical reason and the possible idealism of transcendental consciousness were clarified in the *Crisis* by Husserl himself, reconnecting Ortega's thought to that of the German thinker.

Orteguian Phenomenology

Given the above, it is possible to glimpse a possibility of an Orteguian phenomenology despite the widespread view that Ortega was not a phenomenologist. Highlight the relationship of his work to the

⁴ As for the relationship between Ortega and Dilthey, the former claims that he had lost ten years of his professional life because he had not read the works of the latter previously. In order to exempt himself from a certain professional obligation for having met Dilthey at a late stage, Ortega explains that "he thinks that if a man like [Max] Scheler, with a refined sense for everything important, frantically curious, passes by Dilthey without suspecting, [and this] excuses me from providing bad data" (1964, p. 173). However, Orringer contextualizes this implication to Scheler, since the German thinker did not pass by Dilthey without suspecting that he did, since in 1913 he published an article entitled "Versuch einer Philosophie des Lebens. Nietzsche-Dilthey-Bergson". It should be noted that this article is present in Ortega's personal library, but it is not possible to specify whether Ortega has read it or not. What is known, however, is that Ortega cannot avoid reading the extensive reference made to this article by Georg Misch (1878-1965), disciple and son-in-law of Wilhelm Dilthey, in the work "Lebensphilosophie und Phänomenologie. Eine Auseinandersetzung der Diltheyschen Richtung mit Heidegger und Husserl". Ortega qualifies this work as one of the best works about Dilthey that had been done. He further identifies Misch as Dilthey's closest disciple (Orringer, 2001).

⁵ Misch uses arguments similar to those of Ortega to criticize Husserl against excessive Cartesianism.



writings of the Husserl's *Crisis*. Ortega himself indicates that these final Husserl writings are close to his theory. The excerpt below by Fink is noted in Annex XXIX of the *Crisis*,

The psychologist cannot, however, universally put in parentheses the validity of the horizon of the world's consciousness in an arbitrary way, in the people that psychologically interest him, but there is an order here that resides in the coherence of the epoch, of the world. He can only start from himself, from the life of his conscience (submitted to the epoch of his validity in the world); only from himself does he have others in a genuine psychological attitude (Husserl, 2012, p. 430).

This passage is in line with the Ortega and Marías interpretation of epoché, while trying to “jump over the shadow”. The words of Husserl himself (2012) are also mentioned,

The awareness of the insufficiency of this philosophy arouses a reaction, without considering the sensualist and finally skeptical reaction (Hume), the Kantian reaction and the subsequent transcendental philosophy, in which, however, the original motive, born from the demand for apodicticity, was not awakened. [...] thus begins the discovery of absolute intersubjectivity (objectified, in the world, as the whole of humanity) [...] in a transcendental life of permanent “constitution of the world” and, thus, correlatively, the new discovery of the “world that is” (pp. 218, 219).

In general, soon, Ortega realizes that there is a reconnection of his thinking to the phenomenological epistemological process and, although suspecting that Husserl had changed his way of thinking because the conversations between both, he admits that the writings of the *Crisis* are in accordance with his thought. In other words, if Ortega claims that A (written from the *Crisis*) is B (his own work), and A is phenomenology, then B is phenomenology. In summary, Ortega is a phenomenologist.

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