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PHENOMENOLOGY BETWEEN INTERNALISM AND EXTERNALISM. PROBLEM STATEMENT*

Abstract. The article is an attempt at establishing a theoretical basis for a dialogue between phenomenology and contemporary philosophy, with regard to the problem of internalism-externalism. It is argued, according to Roman Ingarden, that one has to first of all put forward an adequate question about the problem, to be able to understand it appropriately. Moreover, the analysis is limited to the two forms of the internalism-externalism debate, namely semantics and the philosophy of the mind. Within Husserl's phenomenology one can easily point to basic intuitions that justify thesis that this philosophy refers to the internalism-externalism problem. Ultimately, by using phenomenological terminology, the article arrives at questions about possible internalism-or-externalism within Husserl's phenomenological project. The questions, however, suggest that phenomenology can be neither clearly nor completely classified either as internalism or as externalism.

Keywords: phenomenology; internalism; externalism; mental content; reduction; solipsism; idealism; Putnam; Husserl

1. Introduction. 2. Different fields of the debate concerning internalism and externalism. 3. Basic intuitions: phenomenology is internalism. 4. Formulating the problems. 5. Conclusions.

1. INTRODUCTION

In philosophy, the value of questions cannot be overestimated for it is hard to deny that, since philosophical reflection springs from surprise, it cannot be expressed more fully than by a question that addresses the problem itself. The question, as already stated by Plato and Aristotle, is, therefore, the beginning of philosophizing. However, one should not

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forget about the double nature of the question as being a measure of reliable philosophizing, it is also the cornerstone of many mistakes. There is no doubt that the answer to an unclear, inaccurate or simply wrongly formulated question only pretends to be a correct solution to the problem while in reality, a philosopher may not refer to the right subject matter of the question, thus entering a wasteland of idle discussions. Such a prematurely formulated questions seems to be the problem of the possible involvement of phenomenology in the argumentation in favour of one of the parties in the debate concerning internalism and externalism. One can point out three kinds of dangers.

The first trap is the ambiguity and heterogeneity of internalist and externalist theses. Both trends, as the researchers of the subject matter in question clearly emphasize, not only occur in many, sometimes theoretically distant philosophical fields, but also formulate theses of different scope and authority in individual fields¹. Another threat is posed by the widespread interpretations of phenomenology, namely as a mere repetition of the Cartesianism and as a form of subjective or even relativistic introspectionism². Even if the theses of internalism and externalism are successfully clarified, and if the questioner re-

1 In this context, one cannot omit the study of R. Ziemińska, see also, *Eksternalizm we współczesnej epistemologii*, Szczecin 2002.

2 M. Miłkowski commenting on the theory of D. Dennet notes that one of the fundamental disadvantages of the introspectionism was the interpretation of introspection data directly by the person performing the introspection, which made it impossible to separate the theory from the facts that this history was supposed to explain, and also that such monosubjectivity is shared by traditional Husserlian phenomenology. M. Miłkowski, *Heterofenomenologia i introspekcja. O możliwości poznania przeżyć świadomych*, *Przegląd Filozoficzno-Literacki* 4(2003)6, 119. For discussion with Dennet's theory on identifying introspectionism, see: D. Zahavi, *Killing the straw man: Dennett and phenomenology*, *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 6(2007), 21–43. While for the question of possible interpretation of phenomenology as a form of Cartesianism, see: M. Pielak, *Idea podmiotowości poznawczej w filozofii transcendentnej*, in: *Między logiką a etyką. Studia z logiki, ontologii, epistemologii, metodologii, semiotyki i etyki. Studia z logiki, ontologii, epistemologii, metodologii, semiotyki i etyki. Prace ofiarowane Profesorowi Leonowi Kojowi*, ed. J. Paśniczak et al., Lublin 1995, 254–255, 262–263 and L. Landgrebe, *Husserls Abschied vom Cartesianismus*, in: Idem, *Der Weg der Phänomenologie. Das Problem einer ursprünglichen Erfahrung*, Gütersloh 1978, 163–206.

frains oneself from assuming popular statements on phenomenological philosophy, the problem concerning methodology remains. One can correctly doubt the possibility of providing a simple answer to the question, e.g. whether Edmund Husserl's philosophy represents a form of internalism, while phenomenology, for obvious reasons, used different terminology and refers to a different theoretical context than contemporary internalism which is relevant for analytical philosophy.

In response to pointed out problems, one can make use of valuable, in this context, observations of Roman Ingarden contained in his habilitation thesis written in 1924³. The work *Essentiale Fragen*, as the author notes, stems from the conviction that the essential factor for avoiding misunderstandings is to make the main questions of the dissertation clear and explicit⁴. This postulate seems necessary as, according to Ingarden, a question can distort the very problem to which it relates and misplace it in context⁵. However, since the question refers to a specific object, which is a specific state of affairs, one can assume that nothing stands in the way of a clear formulation of the question due to the *problem* itself⁶. Ingarden's observations are particularly important in the context of the issue of interest; for if the question of possible internalism or externalism in phenomenology imposes certain limitations in the understanding of both the concerned philosophy and the very concepts from the investigated perspective, a way to overcome this situation might be exploring the *problem* itself. One must ask a question whether a *problem* of internalism or externalism is present in Husserl's philosophy? And how it should be formulated in the philosophical language proper for this theory?

On the one hand, bearing in mind Ingarden's observations, and, on the other hand, noting that a comprehensive answer to the question of the actual place of phenomenological philosophy in the contemporary debate concerning internalism and externalism would require

3 See: R. Ingarden, *O pytaniach esencjalnych*, in: Idem, *Z teorii języka i filozoficznych podstaw logiki*, Warszawa 1972, 327–482.

4 Ibid, 327.

5 See: ibid.

6 See: ibid, 328–329.

an in-depth study, one should point out that the purpose of this study is *to formulate the problem* within of which one can ask about the internalistic or externalistic character of Husserl's theory. At the same time, the aim is to formulate a hypothesis in which, for systemic reasons concerning the concept in question, it is impossible to develop a general and unequivocal conclusion proving that the whole theory leans exclusively towards one of the parties of the present debate. In other words, the thesis of internalism or externalism with regard to phenomenology cannot be a global thesis.

2. DIFFERENT FIELDS OF THE DEBATE CONCERNING INTERNALISM AND EXTERNALISM

According to analyses carried out by Renata Ziemińska, the concepts of internalism and externalism are used by philosophers who represent various fields, from ethics and action theory through the philosophy of religion to theory of truth and epistemology⁷. Remaining a problem inherent in contemporary philosophy, the debate of both positions, generally speaking, concerns the ways of determining, defining, establishing or individuating the properties of a given system, be it motivational, cognitive or semantic. While an externalist believes, to put it simply, that the determination of properties of a system is at least partly, if not entirely, determined by the relationship to its environment, an internalist asserts that this relationship is not necessary because the analyzed property is determined solely or partly by the system's internal factors. Naturally, due to the definition of the scale and type of determination of properties of a system, individual positions can be divided into extreme and moderate. For this reason, various disproportionate internalist or externalist theories can also be pointed out within one field⁸. However,

7 R. Ziemińska, *Eksternalizm we współczesnej epistemologii*, op. cit., 15–16.

8 T. Szubka claims that "externalism or anti-individualism in the philosophy of mind is not the only view, but rather a family of views with different degrees of kinship" (T. Szubka, *Eksternalizm w filozofii umysłu i jego konsekwencje*, *Ruch Filozoficzny* 50(1998)3, 473).

given that the problem concerns a wide dispute and the question is about phenomenology, nothing prevents narrowing the further reconstruction only to these two concepts, given the interpretative tendencies of Husserl's philosophy of language and mind.

Concerning semantics, internalism and externalism stand different positions on the determination of the intension of expression. An internalist, in this context, claims that, on the one hand, the decisive moment determining the extension of a given expression is its intention, while on the other, the intention is not determined by environmental factors. Moreover, when asked about the way in which an internal language user interprets intention, an internalist can answer that extension is determined on the basis of a (narrow) mental state. An externalist, in turn, asserts that extension is determined by factors external to the language user, e.g. by a causal relationship with the external world.

The well-known thought experiment from "Twin Earth" and formulated by Hilary Putnam can shed some light on the understanding of externalism and its argumentation⁹. According to the American philosopher, an internalistic assumption on the relationship between intention and extension is commonly accepted, i.e. that a given mental state (associated with intention) determines extension. Suppose, however, as Putnam notes, that an inhabitant of the Earth who utters the phrase, e.g. "water", will relocate to the Twin Earth where the liquid to which the word "water" should refer is, in fact, a similar-looking liquid, albeit with different, complex microstructure, which can be marked as XYZ. In such a situation, for a certain mental state of the earthling who utters the word "water" on the Twin Earth, the reference, extension, actually changes. Putnam further points out, that if one notices that the person speaking "water" refers to XYZ, one can conclude that "... the 'meanings' just ain't in the *head!*"¹⁰. In other

9 See H. Putnam, *Znaczenie wyrazu "znaczenie"*, in: Idem, *Wiele twarzy realizmu i inne eseje*, transl. A. Grobler, Warszawa 1998, 93–184. The example of "Twin Earth" and the polemic with its externalistic consequences, which J. Searle has addressed from internalist perspective, is discussed by K. Gajewski, *W obronie internalizmu. Searle versus Putnam*, *Filozofia Nauki* (2008)3–4, 178–185.

10 H. Putnam, *Znaczenie wyrazu "znaczenie"*, op. cit., 111.

words, it is the extension, so *mutatis mutandis* the external world determines what the words “mean”. Therefore, the content of an expression is not dependent on the expression itself.

Putnam’s deliberations focused on semantics provided the basis for formulating internalistic and externalistic approaches to mental content¹¹. The former, derived from methodological solipsism¹², leads to a thesis of “narrow” individualisation of content, which is tantamount to accepting the thesis that mental content is not individualized in relation to, e.g. the external world¹³. Using popular in philosophy language of supervenience, one might see that the narrow content is the one that supervenes on the individual internal psychology of the body¹⁴. Contrary to this, externalism of mental content states that content does not supervene on this psychology, as Jerry Fodor expresses briefly “... semantics isn’t part of psychology” and adds “The content of your thoughts ..., unlike, for example, the syntax of your thoughts, does not supervene on your mental processes”¹⁵. Expressing the issue in another way, externalism of mental content will claim that the individualisation of a given content takes place through the relationship with the world¹⁶.

11 Semantic externalism has very quickly experienced its theoretical reflection contents of theory of mind, according to which, mental content *A* cannot be interpreted without reference to the environment *A*. A. Rykowska, *Eksternalizm a samowiedza: Jak to ze sobą pogodzić*, in: *Epistemologia współcześnie*, ed. M. Hetmański, Kraków 2007, 416. Authors treating the possible relationship between semantic externalism and externalism about mental content are B. Świątczak, *Treść umysłu*, Toruń 2008, 88–93 and R. Poczobut, *Między redukcją a emergencją. Spór o miejsce umysłu w świecie fizycznym*, Wrocław 2009, 380–381.

12 For Putnam, the methodological solipsism means that no mental state in the proper sense of the word implies the existence of individuals other than the subject to whom the state is attributed. H. Putnam, *Znaczenie wyrazu “znaczenie”*, op. cit., 101.

13 See: G. Segal, *Narrow Content*, in: *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Mind*, ed. B. P. McLaughlin, A. Beckermann, S. Walter, Oxford 2011, 369.

14 See: S. L. White, *Narrow Content*, in: *The MIT Encyclopedia of the Cognitive Sciences*, ed. R. A. Wilson, F. C. Keil, Cambridge (MA), London 1999, 582.

15 J. A. Fodor, *Eksperci od więzów. Język myśleński i jego semantyka. Wykłady im. Jeana Nicod z roku 1993*, transl. M. Gokieli, Warszawa 2001, 60. See also Idem, *A Modal Argument for Narrow Content*, *The Journal of Philosophy* 88(1991)1, 5–26.

16 See: R. van Gulick, *Outing the Mind – A Teleopragmatic Perspective*, in: *The Externalism Challenge*, ed. R. Schantz, Berlin – New York 2004, 270–271.

In conclusion, one might see that semantic internalism–externalism revolves around the problem of determination of “meaning” and its relationship with the mental states of a language user, and to the external world. In the philosophy of mind, however, the dispute concerns the individualization of mental content. At this point, after providing a brief definition of the two, perhaps currently the most widely discussed areas where disagreement between internalism with externalism and related problems occur, one might ask the question how, if at all, a phenomenologist would be able to express these *problems*? Most important seem, however, the question: why should phenomenology at all address these *problems*? To put it another way, what makes one believe that, for example, in his philosophy, Husserl referred to similar issues? First, the second group of questions should be examined.

3. BASIC INTUITIONS: PHENOMENOLOGY EQUALS INTERNALISM

It was noticed that the problem of internalism and externalism in the strict sense is a problem of contemporary philosophy and for this reason, e.g., the question of whether Husserl should be an advocate of one of these two positions cannot be answered directly. However, while fulfilling postulates of Ingarden, namely, asking about the *problem* of internalism–externalism itself, one can see four basic intuitions according to which Husserl could indeed refer to the contemporary dispute, even *malgré lui*. The first intuition is of historical and systematic character and is consistent with the common problem context of phenomenology and contemporary dispute. The other three are of methodological character and refer to, successively, the subject of solipsistic implications of phenomenology, the reduction and the mental experiment of the “annihilation of the world”. All these intuitions, as will be seen, seem to lead to the conclusion that phenomenology equals internalism. *Prima facie* the first intuitions seem to raise the least doubt. At the first encounter with phenomenology, e.g. with *Logical Investigations*, it is hard to resist the impression that the subject of Husserl’s research is coinciding with both the semantics, based on which Putnam formulated

the “Twin Earth” thought experiment and the modern philosophy of mind. The creator of phenomenology establishes intentionality and consciousness as the focal point of his analyses. As Christian Beyers notes, Husserl, when asking about the essential properties and structures of consciousness, undertakes problems consistent with the modern philosophy of mind, and more precisely, the problems of the individuation of mental states¹⁷. Referring, in turn, to the notion of ideal meanings, the author of *Investigations* follows the Frege’s tradition of interpretation of the relation of expressions to their meanings. Assuming the above, one might also imply that Husserl is also a creator of theses on computational, functional and representationalist character of acts of consciousness and worth noting is the fact that it was, in fact, acknowledged by Hubert L. Dreyfus, David Woodruff Smith and Ronald McIntyre¹⁸. But is this first intuition sufficient for such far-reaching interpretations? A great deal of caution must be exercised in this regard, but beyond any doubt, the historical and problematic background of phenomenology leads to the problem of internalism–externalism.

Let us move on to further intuitions by still examining *Logical Investigations*. In this work, the author postulates to conduct phenomenological inquiries in the so-called “speech” in which Husserl writes that a thinker understands their words and this understanding is simply the act of meaning (*Bedeuten*)¹⁹. A speech, in this context, functions as a guarantee of uninterrupted access to the ideal meanings for the researcher. Although the concept of a speech stems

17 C. Beyer, *Husserl’s Bewusstseinskonzeption im Lichte der neueren Diskussion*, in: *Husserl und die Philosophie des Geistes*, ed. M. Frank, N. Weidtmann, Berlin 2010, 18.

18 See: D. W. Smith, R. McIntyre, *Husserl and Intentionality. A Study of Mind, Meaning, and Language*, Dordrecht 1982, xv. In the *Introduction* to published in 1984 work entitled *Husserl, Intentionality and Cognitive Science*, Dreyfus identifies Husserl’s theory of intentionality as a representative theory of mind (as defined by Fodor). See H. L. Dreyfus, *Introduction*, in: *Husserl, Intentionality and Cognitive Science*, ed. H. L. Dreyfus, Cambridge (MA), London 1984, 3. I engaged in polemics with Dreyfus’ thesis in the work *O intencjonalności i reprezentacji*, *Przegląd Filozoficzny. Nowa Seria* (2011)2, 181–194.

19 E. Husserl, *Badania logiczne. T. II. Badania dotyczące fenomenologii i teorii poznania. Część I*, transl. J. Sidorek, Warszawa 2000, 92.

from the need to omit the methodological threats posed by communicative speech, i.e. the untruthfulness and incompatibility of words with thoughts, it ultimately seems to connect phenomenology and semantic internalism²⁰. How else would the meaning be determined in a speech if not by internal factors? To be more precise, in a speech, the meanings are determined solely internally, and for this reason, the understanding is defined by Husserl as the act of meaning. In the next part of the work, one will see that this second intuition also poses serious problems for interpretation.

Next intuition on the involvement of phenomenology in the contemporary dispute between internalism and externalism concerns the reduction. Husserl introduces the reduction for at least two reasons. Firstly, the German philosopher declares *expressis verbis* that by suspending the uncritically accepted theses about cognition, he can omit the methodological threat of a meta-basis mistake²¹. Secondly, and more importantly, the reduction determines the limits of effective immanence, and thus, as Husserl claims, only the apodictic obviousness must be considered as the beginning²². With all the complexity of the phenomenological concept of obviousness, the direction of reduction analyses remains clear: it aims to close the phenomenologist within what is immanent, i.e. internal²³. In turn, any external moments could raise doubt on the reduction. Therefore, one can only agree with Steven Crowell stating that externalism, as the thesis of the determination of mental content by the external world, contradicts the achievements of the reduction²⁴. However,

20 I carry out the analysis of Husserl's concept of speech in the article *Od monologu do wspólnoty. Rozważania metafenomenologiczne*, *Ruch Filozoficzny* 57(2010)4, 714–719.

21 See: E. Husserl, *Idea fenomenologii. Pięć wykładów*, transl. J. Sidorek, Warszawa 1990, 51–52.

22 Idem, *Erste Philosophie (1923/24). Zweiter Teil. Theorie der phänomenologischen Reduktion*, ed. R. Boehm, Den Haag 1958, 76.

23 See: P. Łaciak, *Pojęcie "oczywistości" w fenomenologii Edmunda Husserla*, *Fenomenologia* (2007)5, 27–50.

24 See: S. Crowell, *Phenomenological immanence, normativity, and semantic externalism*, *Synthese* (2008)160, 336.

further exploring Crowell's works, one might find this statement to be unsubstantiated.

The last intuition that needs to be closely examined concerns the experiment of the "annihilation of the world" formulated by Husserl in § 49 *Idea I*. As the author notes, let one imagine that the world ceases to exist. Its existence is not necessary, and the experiment itself is supposed to show that annihilation of the world of things may and would modify consciousness, but it would not affect its existence. Husserl deduces that consciousness as an immanent being is an absolute being and concludes: *nulla "re" indiget existendum*²⁵. One cannot deny that this experiment corresponds to at least some of the theses of internalism of mental content and thus supports the conviction of individualizing the content of mind without external (concerning the subject) determination from the world. It expresses the assumption that mental content is radically independent of external relations, that is, the external. In sum, this thought experiment seems to support internalism of mental content, as well as – *mutatis mutandis* – semantic internalism. However, as one can see, this intuition needs to be critically investigated.

4. FORMULATION OF PROBLEMS

Reconstructing basic intuitions on phenomenology in the context of the internalism–externalism dispute may confirm the belief that Husserl's philosophy not only has important inclinations to be examined from the angle of the dispute in question but also seems to clearly support internalist theses. Nevertheless, contrary to the conclusions that seem to be obvious, a more precise formulation of the internalism–externalism problem, based on phenomenology, allows formulating the hypothesis of opening this philosophy to semantic externalism and mental content. Let us commence with the first form of dispute between internalism and externalism discussed above.

²⁵ E. Husserl, *Idee czystej fenomenologii i fenomenologicznej filozofii. Księga pierwsza*, transl. D. Gierulanka, Warszawa 1967, 158.

The relationship between phenomenology and semantic internalism is evidenced, as it seems, by the similarities of Husserl's and Frege's concepts, the speech theory and, indirectly, the experiment the "annihilation of the world" reconstructed above. However, these intuitions need to be developed and should be confronted with the following four problem groups. First, the relationship between Husserl and Frege is not entirely clear²⁶. The ideal meaning is not constituted within consciousness, but rather is a moment of the intentional structure of consciousness. Moreover, as the "judgment itself", the meaning remains outside consciousness, so in reality, it is external²⁷. So, are the meanings really determined internally, i.e. independently of the relationship with the world? The point is that defining the ideality of meanings as the ideality of species leads directly to the conclusion that meanings do not exist in our thinking. Husserl's approach to this issue is extremely apt in the following passage of the *Logical Investigations*: "Meaning is related to varied acts of meaning ..., – just as redness *in specie* is to the slips of paper which lie here, and which all 'have' the same redness. Each slip has, in addition to other constitutive aspects (extension, form etc.), its own individual redness, i.e. its instance of this colour-*species*, though this neither exists in the slip nor anywhere else in the whole world, and particularly not 'in our thought', in so far as this latter is part of the domain of real being, the sphere of temporality"²⁸. With these words in mind, it is an undisputed fact that the ideality of meanings remains as far from internalism as possible. Interpretative problems are also raised by the understanding of meaning in relation to the noema. Marek Świąch suggests that although the notion of noema deprives the sphere of the meaning of an ideal character, it does not place it in mind, but in the transcendent

26 Currently, there are numerous studies on the relationship between the Husserl's philosophy and Frege's statements. Issues related to this relationship are synthetically discussed by A. Gut, *Husserl – Frege. Zwrot antypsychologiczny*, Przegląd Filozoficzny. Nowa Seria (2009)4, 131–162.

27 E. Husserl, *Untersuchungen zur Urteilstheorie. Texte aus dem Nachlass (1893–1918)*, ed. R. D. Rollinger, Dordrecht 2009, 29.

28 Idem, *Badania logiczne. T. II. Badania dotyczące fenomenologii i teorii poznania. Część I*, op. cit., 123–124.

world of our everyday experience²⁹. For this reason, aporias of semantic internalism are omitted. However, these questions leave unresolved problems concerning the relationship between ideality of meaning with the phenomenological concept of truth as something complementary? Can an “empty” intention alone be synonymous with an understanding of meaning? The problems raised require further investigation.

Secondly, the reduction of the notion of intentionality and intentionality also raises doubts. While the former concept seems to link the semantic level to the non-reducible approach to consciousness in which this level is present, the latter concept relates only to semantic issues.³⁰ So, can the intentional structure of the act of consciousness be reduced to a semantic relationship, which is intentionality? How can this “direction towards” be interpreted in terms of non-extensional contexts?

Thirdly, it should be remembered that the speech theory tacitly assumes that meanings are constituted outside the subject, more precisely – in the process of communication³¹. So, one can ask what role communication plays in establishing the meaning of expressions? Is the meaning of expression determined by communication? The affirmative answers to these questions would bring phenomenology closer to linguistic pragmatism³².

29 M. Świąch, *Drzewa “po prostu” i drzewa jako “sensy”. Abstrakcja a redukcja fenomenologiczna*, *Kwartalnik Filozoficzny* 34(2006)1, 131.

30 N. Nelkin argues that in the case of analyses of intentionality, so propositional attitudes, it is possible to ignore the fact that these attitudes have phenomenological properties, i.e., related to consciousness; see N. Nelkin, *Propositional attitudes and consciousness*, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 49(1989)3, 416. The need to separate intentionality from intentionality is described in more detail by M. Maciejczak, who in his work entitled *Intencjonalność i znaczenie językowe* states that if one considers only a language with a theory of truth built into it as a context, then one can actually reduce intentionality to an aspect of content (*aboutness*) and one loses the aspect of directing to the object, related precisely to the whole system. M. Maciejczak, *Intencjonalność i znaczenie językowe*, Warszawa 2010, 51.

31 See: E. Husserl, *Badania logiczne. T. II. Badania dotyczące fenomenologii i teorii poznania. Część I*, op. cit., 44.

32 On the relationship of phenomenology and linguistic pragmatics, and criticism of the latter, see D. Zahavi, *Husserl und die transzendente Intersubjektivität. Eine Antwort auf die sprachpragmatische Kritik*, Dordrecht 1996.

Fourthly, it should be clearly emphasized that the “annihilation of the world” experiment remains far from being ambiguous. It may seem that “annihilation” is equivalent, in the context in question, to the thesis that the meaning of the world has its source in consciousness, and for this reason consciousness is not dependent in any way on external relations. However, in subsequent texts on reduction, Husserl makes it apparent that the “annihilation” of the world would also mean the “annihilation” of consciousness³³; this means that the “annihilation” of the world would also deprive consciousness of meaning. It is very hard to escape the impression that, in the proposed perspective, the meaning is therefore dependent on external relations. This depiction strengthens Husserl’s conviction that the act of judgement in which a judgment itself is constituted indirectly affects the whole world³⁴. On this basis, one can conclude that the structure of meaning always goes beyond what is given to the subject at a given moment. Phenomenologist in this context may indicate the subject of passive syntheses, which co-create and facilitate grasping the meaning consciously. In view of these doubts, the question of the concept of horizon and its relation to meaning cannot be omitted either.

The relationship between phenomenology and internalism of mental content is evidenced by the reduction and the hypothesis of the “annihilation of the world”. Both intuitions seem to lead to a thesis of narrow individuation of mental content in phenomenology, although, contrary to this presumption, it should be noted that they are based on a specific interpretation of the structure of consciousness in which noema is being interpreted, according to Dagfinn Føllesdal and his students, Smith and McIntyre³⁵, as an element separated from both the act and the subject itself. Bearing

33 See: Idem, *Erste Philosophie (1923/24). Zweiter Teil. Theorie der phänomenologischen Reduktion*, op. cit., 42.

34 See: Idem, *Zur phänomenologischen Reduktion. Texte aus dem Nachlass (1926–1935)*, ed. S. Luft, Dordrecht 2002, 410.

35 See: D. Føllesdal, *Noema and meaning in Husserl*, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* (1990)50, 263–271 and D. W. Smith, R. McIntyre, *Husserl and Intentionality. A Study of Mind, Meaning, and Language*, op. cit., 217.

in mind this interpretation, a noema is a mediator between the intentional relationship between the act and its object, and the reduction is intended to replace the meanings of the world with meanings (noemas) determined by consciousness. In a given act, which the proponents of Føllesdal's approach treat as an internal mental structure, one can see a reference of noema and mental representation to a given object, regardless of the relation of the noema to the world, only internally.

The interpretation initiated by Føllesdal is by no means obvious. At this point, one should call into question a few issues. In the first question already, one might ask whether a noema is really a "mediator" or rather a proper subject of an act? Moreover, does the "internality" of the act contradict the presence of a hyletic moment? As Husserl argued back in *Idea I*, *hyle* is a necessary basis for the action of consciousness, because one finds this kind of concrete mental processes as components in more comprehensive experiences³⁶. Therefore, it seems that the contents of consciousness are defined externally, so "broadly". The analyses of Dan Zahavi, who expresses doubts about the possibility of maintaining the phenomenology in the spirit of representationalism, are heading in a similar direction³⁷. However, this required further in-depth investigation, as does the problematic narrowing of the understanding of reduction in the emerging sense of "limitation", "annihilation" of the world and "withdrawal" to the sphere of immanence. It should be pointed out that such an interpretation, which directly leads to the internalistic approach concerning Husserl's philosophy, ignores the fact that the reduction actually reveals the relationship of consciousness with the world, without "annihilating" it³⁸. Investigating

36 E. Husserl, *Idee czystej fenomenologii i fenomenologicznej filozofii. Księga pierwsza*, op. cit., 286.

37 See: D. Zahavi, *Fenomenologia Husserla*, transl. M. Świąch, Kraków 2012, 82. I undertake discussion with representationalistic interpretation of phenomenology in other work, see: W. Płotka, *O intencjonalności i reprezentacji*, op. cit., 192-194.

38 "Every epistemological internalism must assume a certain characteristic ontology. An internalist has to believe that something like the sphere of privileged access exists at all. They must divide the universe into what is given in a distinguished way and what constitutes the rest. This kind of ontology can be called the Cartesian ontology. Carte-

the relationship between the reduction and the discussed dispute between internalism and externalism, Felix O'Murchadha clearly points out that it is decisive to recognize that addressing philosophy does not mean addressing from the word to the internal, but rather originates from the encounter of the worlds, i.e. of different meaning systems. According to Husserl's understanding of the empirical conditions of such a world, the fact that meaning is externalized, that meaning is not in the head but rather in the world, is hidden³⁹. Therefore, the point is that the reduction reveals meaning relationships and leads the phenomenologist to the opposite conclusion than internalism wants them to; the reduction actually shows the impossibility of internalism, because mental content is determined by what is being reduced. The last statement allows formulating some important conclusions.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study aims to define possible theoretical fields of dialogue between phenomenology and contemporary philosophy concerning the debate between internalism and externalism, at least based on semantics and philosophy of mind. The presented analyses stem from the conviction that for a broader understanding of the relationship between the two traditions, research problems, which are usually taken for granted on the basis of earlier, established interpretations for which critical studies are not being carried out, should be reformulated. If phenomenology, as it has been proved, is traditionally understood only as Cartesianism and idealism with inclinations for solipsism, appears as internalism *tout court*⁴⁰. This approach, at least

sian *Meditations* is *locus classicus* where it was formulated (for reasons of epistemological nature). Husserl naturally is a Cartesian in this broad sense" (A. Chrudzinski, *Husserlowski idealizm transcendentalny*, *Kwartalnik Filozoficzny* 26(1998)1, 36).

39 F. O'Murchadha, *Reduction, externalism and immanence in Husserl and Heidegger*, *Synthese* (2008)160, 379.

40 As B. Smith and D. W. Smith highlight, "As Carnap saw, methodological solipsism is equivalent to Husserl's basic method of 'phenomenological reduction'" (B. Smith, D. W. Smith, *Introduction*, in: *The Cambridge companion to Husserl*, Cambridge 1995, 10). See also S. Crowell, *Phenomenological immanence, normativity, and semantic ex-*

concerning the indicated problems, should be considered as one-sided. Internalism, both semantic and of mental content, is questionable concerning analyses of such phenomena as, e.g., motivations, passive syntheses and horizon, which constitute only a few problem points.

It should be noted that questioning the thesis on internalism of phenomenology is possible due to the radicalization of the reduction, which, as it seemed *prima facie*, guarantees separation from the world. Thus, phenomenologist following Husserl, by deepening their analyses, discovers that immanence is marked by transcendence in its core itself. For this reason, already in *Idea I*, the author defines the transcendent Ego as “transcendence in immanence”⁴¹. This is because, for Husserl, the reduction is not an “exclusion” or radical “shift” of transcendence, but its problematization. Therefore, the radicalized reduction incorporates transcendence into the field of phenomenological studies and opens up to its investigation⁴². Thus, according to the principle of the opposites, can it be clearly stated that phenomenology equals externalism?

One cannot doubt that this thesis finds many supporters today, also with regard to the so-called active externalism, which emphasizes the rooting and embodiment of the subject and the active role of the environment in shaping the extended mind⁴³. Nevertheless, one might doubt whether externalism of phenomenology is a global thesis. This is because the antinaturalistic attitude of transcenden-

ternalism, op. cit., 339 and A. D. Smith, *Husserl and externalism*, *Synthese* (2008)160, 313–314.

41 See: E. Husserl, *Idea czystej fenomenologii i fenomenologicznej filozofii*. Księga pierwsza, op. cit., 187.

42 See: S. Crowell, *Phenomenological immanence, normativity, and semantic externalism*, op. cit., 440.

43 The concept of active externalism in relation to mental content was developed by A. Clark, D. J. Chalmers, *Umysł rozszerzony*, in: *Analityczna metafizyka umysłu. Najnowsze kontrowersje*, eds. M. Miłkowski, R. Poczobut, Warszawa 2008, 342–357. The authors present active externalism “... based on the active role of the environment in driving cognitive processes” (Ibid, 342). On the other hand, S. Gallagher writes on externalism of phenomenology in the context of an expanded, rooted, embodied and enactive mind in *Intersubjectivity in perception*, *Continental Philosophy Review* (2008)41, 163–178.

tal reduction proves otherwise. Moreover, according to the indicated directions of further research, the outlined problems should be addressed in order to gain a better understanding of the possible externalistic inclinations of phenomenology. The question of epistemological internalism also requires further in-depth analysis. Therefore, our point of arrival coincides with Zahavi's observations, who, on the one hand, notes that, with regard to the problem of internalism–externalism in Husserl's and post-Husserl's philosophy, further research is still required, and on the other hand, stresses that “the phenomenological analyses of intentionality (be it Husserl's, Heidegger's or Merleau-Ponty's) all entail such a fundamental rethinking of the very relation between subjectivity and world that it no longer makes sense to designate them as being either internalist or externalist”⁴⁴. Finally, one can be tempted to hypothesize that phenomenology, remaining between internalism and externalism, offers the possibility of both a new view of the problem and a basis for formulating a new position of externalism that would not introduce the philosophy of naturalism in a hidden way. This problem, however, requires separate, in-depth research.

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⁴⁴ D. Zahavi, *Husserl's noema and the internalism–externalism debate*, *Inquiry* (2004)47, 53.

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