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MINDFULNESS AS MOTIVATION FOR PHENOMENOLOGICAL REDUCTION

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The growing interest among philosophers in the relation between phenomenology and mindfulness is mainly driven by the question: how far do the two practices resemble each other? On the one hand, someone argues for their affinities in method or goal, and thereby suggests that training in mindfulness is advisable or even compulsory for phenomenology (Varela, Thompson & Rosch, 2017; Bitbol, 2019; Depraz, 2019). On the other hand, others insist on the fundamental difference between the two, despite accepting the possibility of their cross-fertilization (Stone & Zahavi, 2021). Here, I do not attempt to offer any straightforward solution to the debate, about which there is a good list of references. In this chapter, I aim to lay bare an often-ignored precondition of phenomenology. I introduce a theoretical framework for evaluating the significance of mindfulness to phenomenology, namely, the motivation for carrying out the method of phenomenological reduction, or what phenomenologists alternatively call the “beginning of philosophy” (Fink, 1988, 1995; Husserl, 1989, 2019).

The problem of motivation is crucial to phenomenology in both a practical and a theoretical respect. Practically speaking, it is questionable how the method of phenomenological reduction can be carried out, provided the psychological difficulties in abstaining from habitual belief and sustaining the state of pure contemplation. Theoretically speaking, inquiry into the motivation for the phenomenological reduction is a necessary step to bring the scientific task of self-reflection (*Selbstbesinnung*)¹ to an end, given that phenomenology obliges itself to clarify the conditions of possibility of its own effectuation. In other words, the problem of motivation is paramount to both the factual and the transcendental aspect of phenomenological methodology.

Thanks to those pioneering studies by the few phenomenologists interested in mindfulness, the practical significance of mindfulness to phenomenology has become more visible now. Accordingly, phenomenologists are encouraged to learn from the Eastern traditions of meditation how to cultivate corporeal as well as mental conditions favorable to phenomenological meditation. This chapter aspires to supplement what has already been done, strictly from a theoretical point of view, by explaining why the concrete instructions and descriptions of mindful practice can have a more intimate bearing on the transcendental project as such.

This work is divided into five parts: (1) The first part summarizes a few established views on the convergence between phenomenology and mindfulness, with my focus on the debate over the utility of mindful training to phenomenological philosophy; (2) The second part explains why the practicality of phenomenology is in itself a core theoretical issue, hence the potential methodological relevance of mindful training to phenomenological philosophy; (3) The third part introduces Edmund Husserl's theory of motivation for phenomenological reduction; (4) The fourth part introduces Eugen Fink's theory of motivation for phenomenological reduction; (5) The fifth part indicates how far Husserl and Fink themselves have already foreseen a dialogue between phenomenology and mindfulness.

Juxtaposing Phenomenology and Mindfulness

Broadly speaking, there are two streams of studies juxtaposing phenomenology and mindfulness. The first stream applies phenomenological concepts to the elucidation of mindful experiences. The second stream explores the utility of mindful training to the exercise of phenomenological investigation in general. For sure, these two streams often mingle with each other, hence the prospect of "cross-fertilization" (Varela, Thompson & Rosch, 2017, p. xxxv; Bitbol, 2019, p. 1). For the current purpose, I focus on the second stream as a guiding thread for thematizing the problem of motivation. Authors who debate the comparability between the practice of phenomenology and the practice of mindfulness are of particular relevance here.

Probably *The Embodied Mind* (2017), the book co-authored by Francisco Varela, Eleanor Rosch and Evan Thompson in 1991, blazes the trail of comparing phenomenology to mindfulness, although phenomenology only plays a transitional role in their whole project.² The whole project is animated by the gulf between sciences of mind and lived experiences, or the disconnectedness between first-person and third-person knowledge of oneself (Varela, Thompson & Rosch, 2017, p. xxxv). Unsatisfactory consequences follow. Either we accept what the sciences tell us and deny our lived experiences, or we hold fast to our lived experiences and ignore the sciences. As diagnosed by the authors, this rift is symptomatic of the scientific culture of the West, where people are caught up in the constant oscillation between those two tendencies (Varela, Thompson & Rosch, 2017, p. xix).

In order to fill up the gap, the authors propose that it is necessary to enlarge the domain of cognitive science to include our direct experience. Therefore, a disciplined perspective on human experiences is needed. Phenomenological philosophy and Buddhist mindfulness are two candidates suggested for taking on this role (Varela, Thompson & Rosch, 2017, p. 33). However, at least in the first edition of *The Embodied Mind*, phenomenology was portrayed as a failed or broken-down project, since it got bogged down in abstract reflection typical of the Western scientific culture (Varela, Thompson & Rosch, 2017, p. xx). As specified, Husserl's turn toward experience is still entirely theoretical and thus devoid of the practical dimension (Varela, Thompson & Rosch, 2017, p. 19). In contrast, the mindful approach to experience is open-ended and transformative. It cultivates the practitioner's ability of self-awareness and fosters experimentation of new possibilities. Thereby, the Buddhist tradition of mindfulness is welcomed as a remedy to the West, helping to create an open space for the circulation between cognitive science and human experiences (Varela, Thompson & Rosch, 2017, pp. xx, 235).

Thereafter, there are two important contributors to the "circulation", Natalie Depraz and Michel Bitbol, who engage with mindfulness more for the sake of phenomenology than

for the sake of cognitive science. While *The Embodied Mind* quickly dismisses phenomenology as abstract theory, Depraz (2003, 2019) and Bitbol (2019) to a large extent entrust phenomenology, primarily Husserlian, with the task of exploring a vast variety of lived experiences, despite their sober awareness of its practical drawbacks. Mindfulness is then appreciated as a practical discipline for improving the performance of phenomenology.

In the co-authored book *On Becoming Aware* (2003), Depraz takes on the twofold philosophical challenge of (1) introducing phenomenology as a solid method for describing lived experiences, and (2) exposing the limitations of phenomenology as it was historically presented. In short, given that the success of phenomenological reduction presupposes a radical change from a “habitual *ethos*” to an “anti-natural *ethos*” (Depraz, 2003, p. 185), Husserl’s reflections on the conversion are “astonishingly theoretical and general” (Depraz, 2003, p. 185). He seems to lack interest in working out the corporeal and spiritual techniques required for carrying out the reduction.

To rectify this deficiency, Depraz suggests bringing phenomenology and the oriental traditions of mindfulness into communication. Accordingly, “a truly phenomenological experience has to be trained and cultivated” (Depraz, 2003, p. 179). While Husserl only hints at the structural characteristics of different ways of reduction, Buddhist meditation provides us with a concrete predisposition to their execution, hence the methodological foundation missing in Husserlian phenomenology (Depraz, 2003, pp. 202–203).

The author goes on to compare the classical ways of reduction to the Tibetan *yanas*, a theme further elaborated in the article “*Epoché* in Light of *Samatha-Vipassanā* Meditation” (2019). While demonstrating how phenomenology and mindfulness can converge, the limits of their homology are well kept in sight. Accordingly, their main differences reside in goal as well as level of experience and description. The aim of Husserlian phenomenology is essentially gnoseological, whereas Buddhist meditation gives primacy to a soteriological end (Depraz, 2019, p. 51). Besides, a phenomenologist studies the eidetic structures of lived experiences, whereas a Buddhist meditator attends to singular lived experiences which come and go.

Bitbol shares similar opinions regarding the differences between phenomenology and mindfulness. In the article “Consciousness, Being and Life” (2019), Bitbol contrasts them as an epistemic and a therapeutic project, respectively (Bitbol, 2019, p. 132). While the central motivation of phenomenology is overtly knowledge, the Buddhist path of mindfulness aims at uprooting the existential cause of suffering. Thereby, a practitioner of mindfulness pays exquisite attention to the moment to moment unfolding of experiences, instead of trying to grasp any invariable feature of them (Bitbol, 2019, p. 144).

In terms of method, Bitbol seems to agree on the deficiency in phenomenology. While Buddhist teachings are very rich in methodological prescriptions about how to meditate, he remarks, the phenomenological literature is very discreet about methodological issues (Bitbol, 2019, pp. 137–138). Thus said, he believes that phenomenology is “a renewed strategy of ascesis” (Bitbol, 2019, p. 130) and “consists of a radically participatory stance that bears existential similarities with mindfulness” (Bitbol, 2019, p. 128). It is because, according to Husserl, the radical quest for knowledge implies an outright transformation of life comparable to a religious conversion. Phenomenology can then take advantage of mindful training as “a variant of its own methodological precondition” (Bitbol, 2019, p. 128).

Despite the rough demarcation of goals and means, both authors anticipate practical rewards from the convergence of phenomenology and mindfulness, based on the observation that the two approaches to lived experiences do share some common grounds in terms of

motivation as well as methodology. However, this goodwill faces the recent challenge from Odysseus Stone and Dan Zahavi.

In the article “Phenomenology and Mindfulness” (2021), the two critics claim that “the differences touched upon are far more substantial than the two authors are prepared to acknowledge” (Stone & Zahavi, 2021, p. 21). Although Stone and Zahavi still admit the possibility of cross-fertilization, to a large extent they are not convinced by the outlined strategies to place mindful practice at the core of phenomenological practice, for their commonalities are much thinner than expected. As a result, “being a skilled practitioner of mindfulness is neither necessary nor sufficient for being a good phenomenological philosopher” (Stone & Zahavi, 2021, p. 22). They further argue that Buddhist philosophy is a more legitimate source of inspiration for phenomenology.

Between Theory and Practice

So far, I have summarized the mainstream debate over the value of mindful training to phenomenological investigation. Mindfulness is either more suitable than phenomenology to unravel our lived experiences, or it can become the best complement to phenomenology, or it can barely fit in the phenomenological project at all. No matter which side one takes, the focus is on the missing link between the natural attitude and the phenomenological attitude. Mindfulness is considered a potential partner of phenomenology only because the exact operation of the phenomenological reduction remains enigmatic. We know *what* Husserl and his followers want to achieve, but we are unsure *how* to reach there.

A natural way to tackle this missing link is by equipping the philosopher with practical guidelines. The classical distinction between theory and practice then becomes prominent here. For those interested in promoting mindfulness within the phenomenological domain, Husserl’s scientific ideal remains an empty promise as long as it lacks the proper means to realize itself. Notwithstanding the theoretical strength of phenomenology, the additional quest for practical rigor animates the grand tour of the East. It is hoped that the oriental schools of meditation will help to bring an abstract theory down to a concrete reality.

While it is quite common for any theory to meet the problem of practicality, the distinction involved here is not an ordinary one. The missing link between the natural and the phenomenological does not concern the application of a theory, but the initiation of it.³ In Husserl’s expression, it concerns the very “beginning of philosophy”.⁴ The practicality in demand here matters *before* rather than *after* theory.

But what makes the initiation of phenomenology such a difficult issue? Why is phenomenological theory preceded by practice of an extraordinary kind? “As in the case with all undertakings which are new in principle, for which not even an analogy can serve as guide, this beginning takes place with a certain unavoidable naïveté. In the beginning is the deed”, Husserl has remarked (Husserl, 1970, p. 156). True, phenomenology is first and foremost a theoretical discipline. At least with Husserl’s intention, phenomenology is modeled after the ancient ideal of first philosophy. It sets itself the ambitious goal of laying an absolute foundation for all sciences. Being a foundational science of all sciences, phenomenology calls for a radical suspension of all worldly beliefs. It strives to liberate our thoughts from any inherited or habituated doxa which remain philosophically unexamined. The beginning philosopher leaves behind every mundane interest and thereby opens up a transcendental field of research.

To ensure the purity of transcendental research, Husserl introduces the method of epoché and reduction.⁵ He further indicates different ways of enacting epoché and reduction, among which the Cartesian way, the psychological way, and the ontological way, are the cardinals.⁶ In fact, access to the transcendental has been a problem occupying almost the whole intellectual life of Husserl. He is well aware of the unclarity in his presentations, and constantly revises his methodological ideas under the guise of new introductions. His adherence to transcendentalism even leads to the history of Husserlian heresies (Ricœur, 1967, p. 4).

Controversy lies within the robust conversion from mundanity to transcendentality. Critics doubt if it is possible at all to enact the epoché and the reduction as designed by Husserl, provided the radical abstention demanded.⁷ There can be milder doubt over its practical possibility, or stronger doubt over its theoretical possibility. Even though one accepts the scientific ideal projected by Husserl, one can still doubt if the scientific ideal is realizable or not. One can even doubt if a purely transcendental standpoint is in principle conceivable or not.⁸ In fact, the practical possibility of the epoché and the reduction also affects the theoretical possibility of phenomenology in general, for a theory with no share in reality is likely to be wrong. In other words, an inquiry into the practicality of Husserlian phenomenology is at the same time an inquiry into the “reality” of the transcendental enterprise as such.⁹

For this reason, the problem of practice matters here. If the practice preceding the theory is called into question, then the foundation of the theory is also shaken. Especially in the phenomenological context, the *quomodo* of the access to lived experience ceases to be a mere practical issue. It touches upon the core of transcendental theory as well. The practical a priori becomes itself a transcendental issue to be worked out theoretically.¹⁰ According to Husserl, the “reality” of phenomenology is of necessity a practical idea, which indicates an endless course for meditative works. Along this endless course, the phenomenologists are responsible for clearing up all puzzles of the goal and of the course itself.¹¹ Phenomenology, for the sake of its completion, then needs to thematize itself to explicate its own conditions of possibility. This program falls under the heading of a “phenomenology of phenomenology” (Husserl, 2002, p. 178).

In light of the scientific self-reflection, we can see that the promotion of mindful training to phenomenological philosophy shows a sign of optimism, whereby the practical possibility of transcendental research is presupposed. As I am going to show, strictly from a theoretical perspective, phenomenology is also responsible for recognizing its own lack in methodology to cater for any fruitful cross-fertilization. And I believe a phenomenological study of motivation can make a first move.

Husserl’s Theory of Motivation

Clarification of the practical a priori is indeed an intrinsic demand of phenomenology. As a transcendental philosophy which strives for an absolute foundation of science, it is obliged to legitimize itself by laying bare its own conditions of possibility. Husserl characterizes transcendental philosophy by “the motif of inquiring back into the ultimate source of all the formations of knowledge, the motif of the knower’s reflecting upon himself and his knowing life [...]” (Husserl, 1970, pp. 97–98). Accordingly, transcendental phenomenology as a goal is “a science that contains its own foundation and is absolutely self-sufficient; indeed, it is the only absolutely self-sufficient science” (Husserl, 1989, p. 152).

Husserl adds that “Philosophy can take root only in radical reflections on the sense and possibility of its own enterprise”. Accordingly, these reflections aspire to clarify the proper soil of its own activity, “the absolute soil of pure experience”, and must proceed altogether “by way of an absolutely transparent method”, such that “there cannot be any unclear, problematic concepts or any paradoxes” (Husserl, 1989, p. 160).

This radicalism in an absolutely transparent method will eventually “lead to a whole science, a science of the beginnings, a “first” philosophy [...]” (Husserl, 1989, p. 161). Thus said, the self-critical project of “phenomenology of phenomenology” does not reach its mature form throughout Husserl’s lifelong career of radical reflection. The access from mundanity to transcendentalism remains enigmatic to this day.¹²

Indeed, the debate on the phenomenological relevance of mindfulness is itself a great revelator of the missing link. It seems to indicate that something substantial is lacking at the core of phenomenology. Even Husserl’s methodological delineations of epoché and reduction fall short of the mark. Besides inviting the Eastern traditions to save phenomenology, I wonder if phenomenology has from itself any theoretical insight to offer about its own lack. And I believe that the problem of motivation discloses an *ideal* framework for phenomenology to make sense of its own lack.

Husserl’s own methodological presentations are revealing and concealing at the same time. By introducing different ways to the epoché and the reduction, he leaves us the impression that the entrance to the transcendental field is totally up to our liberty. For example, in *Ideas I* he refers to the “complete freedom” we have for shutting ourselves off from any judgment belonging to the natural attitude (Husserl, 1983, p. 61). As long as we will, we can always follow the step-by-step instructions from the master and stand where he stood. Phenomenology’s claim to scientificity is precisely built on the practical possibility of a community sharing the same theoretical vision. Yet, we can almost suspect that he hides the stumbling blocks which stand in the way of phenomenology.

In the “Epilogue” (1989) to his *Ideas*, originally published as a journal article in 1930, Husserl confesses that there “reside the greatest stumbling blocks on the path to understanding, for one will no doubt feel it is asking much too much that a mere “nuance”, arising out of a simple change in attitude, should have such a great significance and indeed be decisive for all genuine philosophy” (Husserl, 1989, p. 147). Before we meet the practical difficulties in the “simple change in attitude” from the natural to the phenomenological, we meet the theoretical difficulties in making evident the philosophical significance of such a change. In response, phenomenology calls for a radical self-understanding on the part of the philosopher with regard to the “compelling motivation which forces the philosophizing Ego to reflect back on that subjectivity of his own [...]” (Husserl, 1989, p. 147). In this specific context, the problem of motivation becomes the key to the entrance of phenomenology.¹³ Husserl considers the motivation for the “simple change of attitude” decisive for the very being of philosophy as such.¹⁴

Indeed, Husserl has paid extraordinary efforts just to elucidate the motivation for the initiation of phenomenology. According to his self-portrait, in the course of many years of reflections he has “pursued various ways, all equally possible, aimed at exploring, in an absolutely transparent and compelling fashion, such a motivation as presses beyond the natural positivity of life and science and forces upon us, by displaying the necessity of the phenomenological reduction, a conversion to the transcendental attitude” (Husserl, 1989, p. 148). He adds: “These ways are therefore ones that lead to the beginning of a serious philosophy. They need to be thought through in reflective consciousness, and thereby they

themselves belong properly to the beginning, inasmuch as a beginning can in fact arise only in the beginner's self-reflection" (Husserl, 1989, p. 148). In other words, his minute introductions of various ways to the phenomenological reduction are not mere pedagogic means to guide other beginning philosophers, but they fulfill at the same time the intrinsic task of a first philosophy, a science of the beginnings.

As a genuine beginner, Husserl gets his own motivation from his surroundings.¹⁵ In response to the disappointing situation of German philosophy of his time, Husserl feels the urge to "reinstatate the most original idea of philosophy", which has laid at the basis of European sciences since its first solid formulation by Plato. He thinks it belongs to "the great task of our time" to "intentionally explicate the genuine sense of this idea of philosophy" and to "demonstrate the possibility of its realization" (Husserl, 1989, pp. 138–139). In other words, motivated by the scientific situation, he sets himself the target to work on a phenomenology of phenomenology. In my reading, this "great task of our time" gets exemplary condensation in the lecture series of *First Philosophy* (2019) in 1923 and 1924.

The whole lecture course is divided into two parts, corresponding to two large frameworks for explicating the beginning of philosophy. The first part deals with the "critical history of ideas", whereby Husserl traces the origin of the guiding idea of philosophy in European history, as well as its partial realizations in different philosophical systems since Ancient Greece. The second part lays out a "theory of the phenomenological reduction", which focuses on the realizability of the guiding idea in the personal life of a beginning philosopher. Given that both divisions inquire into the motivations for the initiation of phenomenology, they depart from very different perspectives, leading to very different conceptions of motivation.¹⁶

In the first part, Husserl situates phenomenology in the European tradition of philosophy, and reviews how the original idea of philosophy motivates the emergence of phenomenology. When it comes to the second part, his attention turns to the inner motivations of the beginning philosopher, including both the implicit tendency and the explicit decision to take up a philosophical vocation, thanks to which phenomenology can eventually take place in a concrete stream of consciousness. Husserl thereby sheds light on the radical beginning of philosophy in both a social-historical and a personal-psychological framework.¹⁷ In other words, Husserl values both social-historical and personal-psychological motivations as preconditions for establishing the first philosophy.¹⁸

Fink's Theory of Motivation

No doubt Husserl is aware of the problem of motivation as decisive for the methodological self-understanding of phenomenology.¹⁹ But he barely thematizes the "compelling motivation" for securing a programmatic study of it, probably because he has entrusted this project to his last assistant Eugen Fink.

In the *Sixth Cartesian Meditation* (1995) which Fink composed in 1932, we find arguably the most explicit treatment of the problematic access to phenomenology. There, Fink proposes a systematic reflection on phenomenology's own methodological root, under the rubric of transcendental theory of method (*Transzendente Methodenlehre*). Its central task is precisely "to complete phenomenology in ultimate transcendental self-understanding about itself". In other words, it "intends nothing other than a phenomenology of phenomenology" (Fink, 1995, p. 8). He further specifies the fundamental problem of the transcendental theory of method as the "phenomenology of the phenomenological reduction" (Fink, 1995, p. 29).

Next, Fink broadly divides this metatheory into two parts. The first part concerns “the beginning of phenomenology”, whereas the second part deals with “the phenomenological onlooker”.²⁰ For the current purpose, we focus on the part about the beginning of phenomenology.

Regarding the beginning of phenomenology, Fink thematizes the motivation for conducting phenomenological reduction as the chief problem (Fink, 1995, p. 30). Accordingly, the philosopher must first give up the natural attitude in order to perform the phenomenological reduction. The expected shift from the mundane to the transcendental, however, remains enigmatic. Even though phenomenology is in general a theoretical discipline, its coming into effect depends on somebody in the world putting it into practice out of certain motivations. Otherwise, the whole transcendental enterprise would simply float like a castle in the air. Given the radical change of attitude demanded by the phenomenological method, it is unclear how the whole train of transcendental self-reflection can commence at all.

Unlike Husserl, Fink does not admit the slightest continuity between mundane and transcendental self-reflections. He rejects motivations either of psychological or of historical origin,²¹ for they all presuppose the possibility of motivating phenomenology inside a mundane situation. Yet, this is the exact thesis he firmly opposes. He believes that any ascription of phenomenology to a mundane motive compromises the radicality of this transcendental discipline, since no participant in our belief in the world can render our belief in the world questionable. “‘Compelling’ motivation for the phenomenological reduction”, he stresses, “is not there in the natural attitude and for reasons of principle” (Fink, 1995, p. 32). He insists that mundane and transcendental self-reflections do not differ from each other by a matter of degree. They are rather “qualitatively different” from each other.²² In consequence, a transcendental self-reflection can only be motivated by the flash of “transcendental insight” itself.²³

In other words, Fink conceives the practice of phenomenology as strictly self-conditional. “The phenomenological reduction *presupposes* itself” (Fink, 1995, p. 36), he concludes. Then he finds it necessary to identify the transcendental sense of motivation in contradistinction to the mundane sense of motivation.²⁴ Retrospectively speaking, the transcendental theory of method does not care about “the de facto motivation in the phenomenologist at any particular point” (Fink, 1995, p. 30) at all, but only the motivation in a specifically transcendental sense, namely “the phenomenological fore-knowledge” (Fink, 1995, p. 36).

Thus said, despite the unnatural beginning of phenomenology, such a robust conversion of attitude must still take place somewhere de facto. It must still rely on somebody living in the world to let it happen. In a somewhat paradoxical manner, Fink says: “The motivation for the action of reduction is the awakening of a questionableness that indeed enters the scene in the natural attitude, but which in principle ‘transcends’ the horizon of all questions that are possible within the natural attitude” (Fink, 1995, p. 37). So, on the one hand, phenomenology as an event of transcendental self-reflection “enters the scene in the natural attitude”. But it, on the other hand, transcends the horizon opened up by the natural attitude. Even though the beginning of phenomenology is completely unprepared inside any mundane situation, when it happens de facto, the transcendental insight must still “flash out” at a particular point (Fink, 1995, p. 34). Fink calls this unique kind of occasion an “extreme situation” for the natural attitude (Fink, 1995, pp. 33–34).

Fink clarifies such a unique kind of occasion more extensively in an unfinished draft intended to introduce the “system of phenomenological philosophy” (1988), which he composed during 1931 and 1932. There he discloses more explicitly the tension between the

radical and the unique situatedness of philosophy. Such a tension arises because, according to Fink, philosophy begins only by stepping across the threshold of the world.

In his preliminary analyses of our pre-philosophical life, he seems to affirm that philosophy takes place in our life as one of the basic possibilities of human existence.²⁵ In order to clarify the ground of philosophy, we need to investigate the human situation presupposed by every human self-reflection. There rests a widest and deepest situation, a basic situation encompassing all particular situations, which is equal to the world itself.²⁶ Fink then equates the most radical human self-reflection, hence the beginning of philosophy, with the reflection on the world-situation.²⁷

Nevertheless, he reserves his judgments right after he characterizes philosophy as a radical human self-reflection. He doubts if we can ascertain immediately the subjects of philosophizing, as long as we are confined to our naive self-understanding as human beings in the world. Before philosophy really takes place, it seems that the question of who is philosophizing cannot find a definite answer.²⁸ In the end, he suggests that a genuine philosophical self-reflection necessarily transcends the scope of all human self-reflections as well as the world-situation as such.²⁹ The phenomenological reduction, Fink emphasizes, is precisely the basic method of a world-transcending reflection.³⁰

Anyway, Fink conceives the phenomenalization of the world as the inevitable starting point of philosophizing, no matter if its subject lies inside or outside the world. But he also points out that the phenomenalization of the world is an alien event to our ordinary life, such that its significance and its motivation remain in darkness. It seems impossible to prescribe at all the proper situation of the beginning of philosophy.³¹

Indeed, Fink has sketched there an inspiring solution for comprehending the situatedness of the “transcendental insight”. Echoing his view on the double-sidedness of the philosophizing subject, he also adopts a double interpretation of the beginning of philosophy. In his preliminary analyses, he refers to some religious experiences as occasions for revealing the philosophical truth, albeit not immediately.

According to Fink, the world can become completely mysterious and incomprehensible to us, for example, through the suffering of a stroke of fate, the sudden awareness of death and transience, or the outburst of dread (Fink, 1988, p. 30). These are the extreme situations which shake the familiarity of our world and transform it into a “universal questionability” (Fink, 1988, p. 33). Underlying these religious experiences are the religious motivations, which spring up from life itself, direct our attention away from inner-worldly affairs to the absolute ground of the world.³² Fink approves these religious motivations for their immense philosophical significance, since they lead us to a “first preconception of the absolute” (Fink, 1988, pp. 30–31).

Meanwhile, Fink also reminds us not to equate religious truths with philosophical truths immediately. Despite the immense philosophical significance of religious motivations, due to the immense power of our human habit in the belief in the world, at the beginning we are not mature enough to understand the religious motivations which life has imposed on us. Otherwise, our interpretations of the religious experiences risk degenerating into mere “worldviews” (Fink, 1988, p. 31). While it is too easy to think that we can escape imprisonment in the world (Fink, 1988, p. 34), he emphasizes that “the philosophical approach to these religious motivations is by far the most difficult” (Fink, 1988, p. 31).

After all, Fink recognizes the truths revealed by our religious experiences as anticipations of the philosophically founded truths (Fink, 1988, pp. 31–32). After the phenomenalization of the world has brought itself to a full scientific rigor, he sees a prospect of interpreting

the religious motivations for the beginning of philosophy. Before reaching a mature stage of transcendental reflection, they nevertheless permit only a formal characterization (Fink, 1988, p. 32).

In short, Fink attempts to reconcile the situatedness and the radicality of philosophizing by a double interpretation of its motivations.³³ While the factual occasions motivating the universal questioning of the world appear obscure and indeterminable to us human beings, once we convert ourselves into a genuine philosopher as a phenomenological onlooker, then we become capable of spotting the transcendental insight which underlies every awakening moment. And this transcendental insight will finally shed light on the philosophical significance of our extreme situations.³⁴

Concluding Remarks

Husserl's and Fink's theories of motivation are two examples demonstrating how phenomenology can proceed to clarify its own methodological ground.³⁵ They represent two contrastive approaches. While Husserl's focus is more intellectualistic, stressing the significance of philosophical tradition as well as the resolution of a philosopher to carry on its tradition, Fink highlights more the existential mood underlying a radical departure from all worldly affairs.³⁶ Apart from their differences in view, they both miss out detailing the "enigmatic practice that is at the heart of the phenomenological endeavor" (Morley, 2010, p. 231).

Perhaps one can defend Husserl and Fink by arguing that intellectual or existential motivations are already sufficient for founding a transcendental theory. For sure, it is debatable whether a transcendental theory must include any practical prescription in detail. As stated at the beginning, I do not intend to offer a straightforward answer here. My aim in this chapter is to propose a theoretical framework, namely the study of motivation for implementing phenomenological reduction, for evaluating the significance of mindfulness to phenomenology. If mindful training can *really* complement the practice of phenomenology, does it imply any theoretical lacuna which phenomenology must fix for itself? Is mindful training a mere private concern of certain phenomenologists, or does it indicate a necessary requirement to clarify the practicality of phenomenology? These are open questions for further reflections.

Husserl himself would welcome an in-depth dialogue between phenomenology and mindfulness. In "Socrates-Buddha", a manuscript written in 1926, Husserl juxtaposes the Greek and the Indian traditions of thought to compare two noble norms of cultural life. He views their basic difference in their ultimate goals. Accordingly, the Greek tradition strives for the theoretical goal of truth, whereas the Indian tradition aspires to the practical goal of liberation (*Erlösung*). "The Indian is in the universal practical attitude" (Husserl, 2017, p. 411) he concludes.³⁷

Despite the fundamentally ethical-religious orientation of Indian thought, Husserl highly appreciates its "transcendentalism", namely its ultimate vision of the world as a "pure phenomenon in subjectivity" (Husserl, 2017, p. 414). In a review on Buddhism written in 1925, Husserl characterizes "the highest flower of Indian religiosity" as "not transcendent, but transcendental" (Schuhmann, 1992, p. 25). He adds that "Buddhism can be paralleled only with the highest formations of the philosophical and religious spirit of our European culture" (Schuhmann, 1992, p. 26).³⁸

Perhaps Fink is another prophet who has foreseen the cross-fertilization between phenomenology and mindfulness. In a conversation with Dorion Cairns, Fink suggests that

various phases of Buddhist self-discipline essentially coincide with those of phenomenological reduction (Cairns, 1976, p. 50). In a manuscript of 1934, Fink outlines a plan for a structural comparison between phenomenology and Buddhism, both serving “the system of the self-completing spirit” (*Das System des sich vollendenden Geistes*) (Bruzina, 1992, p. 287). There he compares, albeit only suggestively, the philosophical idea of the absolute with the Buddhist teaching on nirvana.³⁹

If phenomenology is really in need of more practical guidelines to save its effectiveness, then at the same time it is theoretically responsible for disclosing this need to itself. I have proposed the transcendental theory of motivation as an *ideal* horizon which allows theory and practice to meet. The classical distinction between theory and practice tends to get blurred at the margin of phenomenological investigation. When we examine the emergence of the whole discipline, theory is itself subsumed under practice, and practical issues become theoretical issues as well. Although we can safely admit the divergence of goals and means between phenomenology and mindfulness, since they both target the cultivation of self-awareness in a broad sense, I believe their dialogue will continue to thrive.

Notes

- 1 The term “self-reflection” is not the only choice for translating the term “Selbstbesinnung”, and may not even be a good choice in certain contexts. For example, as pointed out by the translators of Martin Heidegger’s work *Besinnung*, Heidegger deliberately distinguishes *Besinnung* from reflection, especially *Besinnung* of the self from reflection on the self, since he only regards reflection as a derivative mode of *Besinnung*. Surprisingly, the translators have picked the term “mindfulness” for translating the Heideggerian notion of “Besinnung”. See Emad & Kalary (2006, xxiii–xxv). Following Husserl and Fink, in this chapter I focus on the scientific mode of *Besinnung*, so I prefer to use the term “reflection”.
- 2 There are earlier works comparing phenomenology to the Hindu or the Buddhist tradition (Sinari, 1965; Puligandla, 1970; Hart, 1987). By mindfulness, I refer specifically to their modern adaptations in the Western world, especially since Nyanaponika has identified “mindfulness” as the “heart of Buddhist meditation” in 1954 (Gethin, 2011, p. 266).
- 3 Husserl has elaborated extensively on the application of phenomenology in the factual world under the rubric of ethics. Nevertheless, he has not reflected much on the existential preconditions of its practice. He mostly takes the division between a mundane and a transcendental perspective for granted. As Hans Rainer Sepp highlights in his book-length study on theory and practice in Husserl’s phenomenology, Husserl barely thought about the direct connection between mundanity and transcendentality, especially the putting into effect of the epoché: “Ist bezüglich der Erschließung des Transzendentalen nicht eine direkte Umwandlung des Weltlebens, ohne Vermittlung, denkbar? Dies hätte zur Voraussetzung, daß eine direkte Verbindung zwischen Transzendentalität und Mundanität nachgewiesen werden kann. / Die Grundthese dieser Untersuchung ist, daß Husserl eine solche Verbindung nicht dachte [...] Demgegenüber wird hier die These vertreten, daß es eine direkte Beziehung zwischen Transzendentalität und Mundanität gibt, und zwar im Vollzug der Epoché selbst. [...] Die Epoché selbst beschreibt Husserl nur als Methode, als Grundstück der Theorie, und reflektiert sie nicht in ihrem existenziellen Vollzugsinn” (Sepp, 1997, p. 19).
- 4 It may sound suspicious to equate the initiation of phenomenology with the “beginning of philosophy”, as long as we take the expression at its face value. Husserl, especially in his later thoughts, interprets the history of ideas teleologically, which then culminates in phenomenology as the genuine actualization of the guiding idea of philosophy. Thereby, at least two senses of the “beginning of philosophy” are there in Husserl’s usages: (1) the emergence of the primitive forms of philosophy in our communal history, and (2) the fresh initiation of phenomenology by a solitary thinker. According to the second sense, successful employment of the phenomenological method also marks the beginning of philosophy. As Husserl once said: “Aus Meditationen, aus einsamen Selbstbesinnungen entquillt jeder echte Anfang der Philosophie.” (Husserl, 1989, p. 169) He

- also wrote: “[D]er wirkliche Anfang ist die Tat selbst, nur sie selbst erweist vollkommen in der Wirklichkeit die Möglichkeit. [...] Der eigentliche Anfang ist also die Tat, das Vorgehen selbst, als Anfang der Philosophie selbst, sich als wirklicher Anfang so bezeugend [...]” (Husserl, 1993, p. 399). For the current purpose, only the second sense is relevant here.
- 5 While there are loads of interpretations regarding the relation between epoché and reduction, I think it is safe to ignore their subtle differences for the current purpose. As Husserl affirms: “Der prinzipielle Sinn der transzendentalen Epoché und Reduktion ist immer derselbe [...]” (Husserl, 2002, p. 59) On many occasions, scholars have their own preferences in using either one or both notions interchangeably for designating the method of phenomenology in general.
 - 6 Iso Kern is among the first to frame Husserl’s phenomenological method in three ways. Despite the far-reaching impact of his tripartite division, the accuracy of his interpretation is still debatable. See Kern (1962).
 - 7 For an overview of relevant criticisms from other phenomenologists, see Sepp (2003, pp. 200–206).
 - 8 Relevant here is Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s famous remark on the impossibility of a complete reduction: “The most important lesson of the reduction is the impossibility of a complete reduction. This is why Husserl always wonders anew about the possibility of the reduction” (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, [14]).
 - 9 Husserl affirms that philosophy as an idea is realizable. Also, he emphasizes that this idea is to be realized only in a relative and provisional style, in an infinite process of history (Husserl, 1989, p. 139).
 - 10 Depraz stresses emphatically the concrete dynamic between the practical and the theoretical in the gesture of the phenomenological reduction. Accordingly, (1) the phenomenological reduction is not simply a formal method of theoretical analysis, but first of all embedded in an effective practice; meanwhile, (2) this very practice is less a contingent instrument than an essential approach to a novel kind of scientificity. Phenomenology thereby needs to disclose the unknown practical roots of its own method and recognize this very practice as scientific through and through (Depraz, 1999, p. 98).
 - 11 “If our ‘Cartesian meditations’ are to be, for us nascent philosophers, the genuine ‘introduction’ into a philosophy and the beginning that establishes the actuality of a philosophy as a necessarily practical idea (a beginning to which belongs therefore the evidence of a course – constitutable as an ideal necessity – for an infinity of executing work), then our meditations themselves must carry us so far that, in this respect, they leave no puzzles as to the course and the goal” (Husserl, 1960, p. 88).
 - 12 Sebastian Luft has summarized four sets of basic problems which emerge from Husserl’s methodological reflections but left unresolved, including (1) the motivation for the reduction, (2) the parallelism between phenomenology and psychology, (3) the relation of the worldly and the transcendental Ego, and (4) enworlding (*Verweltlichung*). These themes all fall under the heading of “phenomenology of phenomenology” outlined in Eugen Fink’s *Sixth Cartesian Meditation*. See Chapter 3 of Luft (2011).
 - 13 “In other words, out of this the shift to the phenomenological attitude arises as an absolute requirement in order for philosophy to be able to set its distinctive project on the soil of that experience which is in itself the first and consequently in order for philosophy to begin at all” (Husserl, 1989, [147]).
 - 14 “Only if this motivation, which calls for a very precise and deeply penetrating interpretation, has become a living and compelling insight will it be clear that what at first seems so odd [...] actually is what decides between the being or non-being of a philosophy [...]” (Husserl, 1989, [148]).
 - 15 Since the various ways to the phenomenological reduction can only be thought through in the reflective consciousness of a practicing beginner, who is on the way “to set into motion the radical beginning of a philosophy” (Husserl, 1989, [160]), Husserl in his old age is proud to call himself “a genuine beginner”: “Even if I had to tone down the ideal of my philosophical aspirations practically to that of a rank beginner, at least in my old age I have acquired the perfect certitude that I deserve to be called a genuine beginner” (Husserl, 1989, [161]).
 - 16 The lecture course is separated into two parts mainly because of the Christmas break in 1923. What is astonishing, as commented by Luft, is how “the systematic trajectory of the lecture course breaks off radically after the Christmas break” (Luft, 2019, p. xxii). Luft finds it “not at all clear why there had to be such a strong rupture before and after the break”, since the historical

narrative in the first part does not come to a satisfactory ending (Luft, 2019, p. xxiii). According to my reading, Husserl separates the two parts with “strong rupture” on purpose. In the beginning section of the lecture course, he states clearly that “a historical backward glance will serve as a spiritual preparation”, such that it “will reawaken primal, powerful motivations which can set our interest and our will into motion” (Husserl, 2019, [VII 6/7]). In other words, it is according to his plan to structure his exposition into two parts: one on the “primitive beginnings” of philosophy in history, another one on the “inner motivational sources” of our current spiritual life (Husserl, 2019, [VII 6/7]).

- 17 It is debatable whether Husserl conceives the historical and the psychological motivations here in a mundane or a transcendental sense. I assume a broad sense of psychology and of history here.
- 18 My interpretation of *First Philosophy* gets further support from Dorion Cairns’ records (1976). In his conversations with Husserl during 1931 and 1932, he brought up the question of “how convincing a *motivation* to the performance of the phenomenological epoché can be *before* that epoché itself and the development of phenomenology itself” (Cairns, 1976, p. 39). As their conversations proceeded, they discussed whether “a motivation under the guidance of the ideal of science” or “a motivation under the guidance of the ideal of “*radikal*” ‘radical’ knowledge” is better for introducing the method of phenomenology. Cairns defended the ideal of radical knowledge as a more desirable motivation, since it is not culturally laden and thus universally applicable to every individual. While Husserl defended the ideal of science because of a simpler exposition, he has also considered the motivation through the ideal of radical knowledge and developed it in the lecture course of *First Philosophy*, held almost ten years before their conversations. See Cairns (1976, pp. 80–81). Besides, Guillermo Hoyos Vásquez (1976) has attempted a systematic reading of the “teleology of history” and the “teleology of intentionality” in Husserl’s works, which correspond neatly to the two parts of *First Philosophy*.
- 19 For example, Husserl has left the following annotation of the *Sixth Cartesian Meditation*: “Die Reflexion hat ihre Merkwürdigkeit. Schon das ist ein Problem, wie sie motiviert ist, und wie, wenn sie eingetreten ist, ohne weiteres das Bewusstsein des „ich kann abermals reflektieren“ zustande kommt und dann das „ich kann immer wieder“– als Bewusstsein der offen unendlichen Iteration” (Fink, 1988, p. 204).
- 20 Fink also calls the problems addressed by these two parts the “why” and the “how” of phenomenologizing respectively: “Inasmuch as phenomenology gets its real *beginning* precisely in the reduction as the pregiving and opening up of the problem dimension of philosophy (in a phenomenological sense), we can first of all ask not only *how* phenomenologizing comes about as the performance of the reduction, but *why* it takes place at all. In other words, this is the *question of the motivation* of the phenomenological reduction” (Fink, 1995, 30); “The theory of method of the phenomenological reduction, however, has to do not only with the ‘why’ of the action of reducing, but also, and above all, with the ‘how’ of phenomenologizing itself. Is it not precisely the phenomenological onlooker who does the reducing?” (Fink, 1995, p. 39)
- 21 “[J]ust as the phenomenological reduction is *not within reach* of an ‘anthropological-existential’ characterization (and critique), phenomenologizing in itself is as little able to be explicated by ‘historicizing’ interpretations.” (Fink, 1995, 129)
- 22 Fink further claims that the “self-reflection of the phenomenological reduction is not a radicality that is within human reach; it does not lie at all within the horizon of human possibilities” (Fink, 1995, p. 32). By claiming so, he does not mean to depict the phenomenological reduction as something like a supernatural phenomenon. He wants to indicate a higher and purer level of self-consciousness, self-consciousness as a transcendental subject, than our ordinary self-consciousness as human beings in the world. He explains that: “it is not that man reflectively thinks about himself, but rather that transcendental subjectivity, concealed in self-objectivation as man, reflectively thinks about itself, beginning *seemingly* as man, annulling itself as man, and taking itself down as man all the way to the ground, namely, down to the innermost ground of its life” (Fink, 1995, p. 32). This higher and purer level of self-consciousness is attainable only through the radicality of the phenomenological reduction, a self-reflection with “a wholly new kind of structure” (Fink, 1995, p. 32).
- 23 “Transcendental radicalism is of a nature that is different in principle motivated by transcendental insight, it puts into question what can never be put into question at all in the natural attitude. [...] If we take ways into phenomenology to mean a *continuity in motivation* that begins in the natural

- attitude and by inferential force leads into the transcendental attitude, then *there are no such ways*" (Fink, 1995, p. 33).
- 24 "Phenomenological cognition is *never motivated by mundane* but always by *phenomenological* knowledge. The concept of *motivation* too must at the same time be freed from mundane ideas and taken in a new transcendental sense" (Fink, 1995, pp. 35–36).
- 25 "Wer philosophiert? Auf alle diese Fragen liegt die Antwort bereit: der Mensch. Dies ist zwar in keinem Sinne zu bestreiten. Die Philosophie hat ihren „Ort“ im Leben des Menschen, ist eine der Grundmöglichkeiten seines Daseins" (Fink, 1988, p. 18).
- 26 "Alle in den sonstigen Selbstbesinnungen sich offenbarenden Situationen befinden sich, ohne es zu wissen, innerhalb dieser Grundsituation, die sie alle umgreift. Diese umgreifende Grundsituation hat die grösstmögliche Weite und eine Tiefe, die keine Selbstbesinnung auf das eigene individuelle Leben und Wesen je erreichen kann" (Fink, 1988, p. 24).
- 27 "Die radikale Selbstbesinnung des Menschen, mit deren Vollzug die Bewegung des Wissens der Philosophie beginnt, ist die abgründige Reflexion auf seine Weltsituation" (Fink, 1988, p. 24). He adds that the reflection on the world-situation is equal to the self-reflection on the conditions of possibility of all other self-reflections: "Die Besinnung auf die Welt als Situation ist die Selbstbesinnung auf die Bedingung der Möglichkeit aller sonstigen Selbstbesinnungen" (Fink, 1988, pp. 24–25).
- 28 "Vielleicht zeigt es sich, dass der „Mensch“ keineswegs ein Ursprüngliches und Unzurückleitbares ist, sondern dass die Frage nach dem Menschen gerade zurückleitet in den Ursprung des Menschen, der sich in ihm verhüllt, dass keine noch so philosophisch sich gebärdende Auslegung des menschlichen Daseins, solange sie in dieser Einsatzreflexion befangen bleibt, einen wirklichen Begriff der Philosophie sich anzueignen imstande ist. Vor dem Wirklichsein der Philosophie kann die Frage nach dem eigentlich in ihr Philosophierenden keine Beantwortung finden" (Fink, 1988, p. 19). According to Fink, philosophy can truly begin only when we are ready to uncover the hidden and profound dimensions of ourselves: "Erst wenn wir die Bereitschaft gewonnen haben für das Unbekannte schlechthin, unter Hintanstellung aller voreiligen und vorlauten Meinungen, sind wir frei für den Beginn und das Beginnen der Bewegung des Wissens, welche die Philosophie ausmacht" (Fink, 1988, p. 26).
- 29 "Die radikale Selbstbesinnung kommt nur in Gang, wenn wir imstande sind, in einer äussersten Anstrengung über die Welt im Ganzen hinausfragend, sie preisgebend, eine den Boden der „Ur-phänomene“ durchbrechende, sich von der Welt im Ganzen abstossende und sie transzendierende Fundamentalreflexion zu vollziehen, die unsere wahre und letzte Situation [...]" (Fink, 1988, p. 63).
- 30 "Diese die Welt transzendierende Reflexion nennen wir die „transzendente Reflexion“; ihre methodische Ausgestaltung: die phänomenologische Reduktion" (Fink, 1988, p. 63).
- 31 "Die Phänomenalisierung der Welt [...] ist ein dem gewöhnlichen Leben so befremdliches Geschehen, dass nicht nur nicht die mögliche philosophische Bedeutsamkeit, sondern selbst eine Motivation dafür dunkel bleibt. Und in der Tat haben wir zumeist für den Vollzug einer solchen Phänomenalisierung keinen Anlass. Die Motivation, die zu diesem radikalsten Infragestellen der Welt selbst führt, kann nicht bestimmt angegeben werden. Die die Menschen jeweils zur Philosophie treibenden Anlässe sind nicht nur mannigfaltig, sondern auch für diese verborgen und untypisierbar" (Fink, 1988, p. 29).
- 32 Fink also calls a religious motivation turning our world into a universal mystery a "shock" (*Erschütterung*) (Fink, 1988, 33).
- 33 Depraz once suggested replacing the vocabulary of motivation, "which is quite incapable of characterising the type of predisposition for the reduction which we are looking for", with the term "aid". She thinks that "the structure of motivation is aporetic", since "it remains dependent upon the factual and a-phenomenological duality of natural exteriority and transcendental interiority" (Depraz, 2003, pp. 199–200). This is correct as long as we only confer a factual meaning to the concept of motivation. In my reading, Fink's conception of motivation transcends precisely the factual register. Anyway, her employment of the term "aid" coincides a lot with the transcendental role of motivation I wish to highlight in this chapter: "In making use of the term 'aid' ('supports' in French), we are trying to define the framework, or the context, which makes the disclosure and the unfolding of the reduction possible. An aid is neither an a priori, nor a contingent condition. It makes its contribution to the reduction. Without it, the reduction could not take place and yet, even with the aid, there can be no a priori guarantee that a reduction will take place. In

- other words, an aid is not a mechanical trigger automatically releasing the reduction but it is not a circumstance which remains extrinsic to its accomplishment either. In this way we try to render intelligible the concrete genesis of the reductive activity which cannot be naively empirical since it is upheld by the transcendental meaning which inhabits it” (Depraz, 2003, p. 200).
- 34 Fink has included a section on the “situation of reduction” in his early work “Presentification and Image”. There he has already mentioned the need for a transcendental self-grounding (*Selbstbegründung*) of “phenomenological objectivity”, whereby the phenomenologist clarifies its “mundane-objective” character as an occurrence in the natural attitude. He reminds us not to confuse this transcendental self-grounding with the “transcendental self-critique” delineated by Husserl, which focuses purely on the naivety inside the transcendental sphere (Fink, 1966, p. 16).
- 35 For sure, they are not the only contributors to the phenomenological self-explication in terms of motivation. Many other phenomenologists, like Max Scheler, Martin Heidegger, Dorion Cairns, Ludwig Landgrebe, Jan Patočka, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Enzo Paci, et al. have also participated, directly or indirectly, in the debate over the motivation for phenomenological reduction. It awaits future studies to review their relevant contributions systematically.
- 36 The inspiration from Heidegger is obvious here.
- 37 Meanwhile, Husserl also specifies the mutual implication between theory and practice, such that neither the Greek tradition is exclusively theoretical, nor the Indian tradition exclusively practical. For he writes: “*The universality of ethics (ethical praxis) encompasses the universality of science as one praxis among many*. Every truth of knowledge corresponds to a practical truth, if it is right that every judgment, as a practical activity, when directed towards truth, is a practical truth. [...] Conversely: any statement about the truth of the will and therefore ethics must be true as knowledge. Only if the activity of practical deliberation takes place in the realm of true judgements of knowledge and ends in true judgements of the kind that express practical truth can practical truth itself be practically possible” (Husserl, 2017, pp. 412–413).
- 38 For further discussions about Husserl’s view on Buddhism, see Sinha (1971), Schuhmann (1992), Ni (2011), and Lau (2016).
- 39 The outline is as follows: “Das System des sich vollendenden Geistes / I. Teil: Kosmologie (Demonstration) / II. Teil: Phänomenologie des Geistes (Reduktion) / III. Teil: Meontische Kosmogonie (Spekulation). / In der Sprache der alten Metaphysik, I. Kosmologie, II. Psychologie, III. Theologie / in der Sprache des Buddhismus: I. Lehre vom Samsāra; II. Der siebenfache Weg; III. Lehre vom Nirvāna” (Bruzina, 1992, p. 287). Fink coined the term “meontic”, which literally means non-being, to characterize the absolute, so the origin of the subject and the world. See Bruzina (1992).

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