

Article

The Phenomenology of Embodiment in the Theological Turn in French Phenomenology

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Abstract

The Theological Turn in Phenomenology, as represented in works by Chrétien, Levinas, Ricoeur, Marion, Henry, Falque, Lacoste, and others, is not a formal philosophical movement, but a collective set of insights into how revelation and phenomena interrelate. It has made a significant contribution to phenomenological reflection and has accomplished not only a further opening into how Scriptural and spiritual examinations by Catholic philosophy and practice further basic phenomenological structures and insights, but also how they attune us to deeper insights, both metaphysical and ontological. The challenge for these thinkers, drawing from prior insights of Hegel, Kierkegaard, Merleau-Ponty, Husserl, Heidegger, and others, is not only to expand the borders of theological and philosophical interaction, but to show forth a kind of return to a surprising complementarity of the two approaches. Each of them forges what can be considered a phenomenological anthropology, which was lacking in, for example, Heidegger's existential phenomenology, particularly in their approaches to embodiment. The paper will critically examine how three Catholic Philosophers address this issue: Marion discloses an *erotic phenomenology* as primary locus of embodiment, Henry affirms a *second birth* that follows from our forgetting of Truth, and Falque uncovers the continual presence of an *incorporation* with God guided by an organic corporeality.

Keywords: French phenomenology; theological turn in phenomenology; metaphysics; Jean-Luc Marion; Michel Henry; Emmanuel Falque; Friedrich Nietzsche; Martin Heidegger; eucharist; trinity; embodiment

1. The Theological Turn

Phenomenology, if we may call it a science or perhaps even a *method*, is a process of *reduction in phenomena*, ordinarily within the field of action of subjective experience.¹ Reduction moves in two directions: either from spatial formulations to simpler and unitive phenomena, or from temporal formations of the past or future as relative to a singular present or presence. Theological phenomenologists, as I will call them, in particular have carried through what is essentially a complex reduction, derived from the early Husserl's elaborate process that moves from the *epoché*, to categorical *intuitions* and their reference to given spatial objects as bodily entities, and then to the phenomenon of internal time consciousness able to gather kinesthetically and eidetically three-dimensional surfaces, movements, and qualitative modifications and even annihilations. The early Heidegger of course made the additional ontological reduction to *Being* (*Sein*) as the source of all questions of meaning (*Sinne*) about beings (*Seiende*): a significant reduction to what he calls the ontological difference.



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When phenomenology concerns *embodiment*, however, one ontological question needs to be clarified at the outset. One may consider a reduction to embodiment that could be considered a final or “absolute” reduction, redolent of Hegel’s absolute knowing in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. This query served as the framework for much of Heidegger’s later work. My aim here, though, emerges from the phenomenology of subjective *reception*, which Marion terms givenness, which is received by an act of consciousness of one whom he calls the *gifted*. But a first-person perspective of subjectivity ostensibly narrows the range of the transcendent. Thus, Husserl spoke of a field of a “whole of Nature” (Husserl 1960, p. 142), and Merleau-Ponty was prompted to suggest his new approach encompassing the second-person perspective: an experience in free play (*Spielraum*) in which “the world and the others become our flesh.”² In summary, the *existential* side of phenomenology considers this basic idea of agents capable of acting in third person *objective*, or second person *intersubjective*, form. The latter is evidenced in Marion’s erotic phenomenon, Henry’s incarnation, and Falque’s incorporation.

We’ll start with this existential side of phenomenology, then later consider the phenomenology of the body as such, and evaluate whether the latter requires further reductions.

2. Intersubjectivity and the Body

Existentialists, such as Sartre and de Beauvoir, who were influenced by Husserl’s notion of intersubjectivity, examined embodiment and intersubjectivity with metaphysical oppositions such as subjectivity and intersubjectivity, immanence and transcendence, freedom and necessity, body and flesh, self and other, and especially essence and existence. The existentialist aims for *truth* about the human condition and its relation to time, space, sensing, and thinking—whether finite or infinite. But it differs in its account of embodiment from those of phenomenological, and especially theological phenomenological, methods by not adopting the phenomenological method of *reduction*, in its various modes, as the grounds.

Kierkegaard considered the self always in a *relation* with another self. It can be understood either as a shared relation that unites two self-gazes (one for each self), or as the single shared *relation itself* between them. This led to a *dialectical* relation that, in his considerations, *united* the difference between both in a spiritual and potentially infinite relation, with God as the possible other.³ This presumably led Sartre, in *Being and Nothingness*, to posit a resolution of the gazes in an existential unity.⁴ He posited a *cognitive* relation based on the mutual, thus reversible, valences of the gazes between the two, able reciprocally to be iterated eventually even into the formations of unities of groups of agents.⁵

Our project ostensibly begins with the Husserlian argument in the *Fifth Cartesian Meditation* regarding *embodiment*. He held that a transcendental reduction to the sphere of ownness, through a *self-apperception*, situates us in the world. As transcendental, the ego constitutes the other as an alter ego co-present through apperception and necessarily given in the synthesis of an original *pairing*.⁶ The apperception transfers from my animate organism to the other, in an *analogizing* apprehension (Husserl 1960, pp. 110–11). My transcendental immanence always already includes the whole of Nature that consists of spatial Nature and a “synthetic unity belonging to me.”⁷ The Nature that is my primordial Nature is identical with the Nature “to which the body of the other belongs,” though our actual perceptions differ (Husserl 1960, p. 123). More objectively, if I then reduce others “to what is included in my ownness, I get bodies included therein” (Husserl 1960, p. 97). There is now another body, the alter ego, with which my ego can also *co-exist*, so the somatic is hereby *bodily governed* (*leiblich waltendes*) (Husserl 1960, pp. 117–19). Husserl still wonders if there is an “abyss” between me and the other, yet he knows that one can

have an *appresent* perception on the basis of what is presented forms a “co-perception” with the other (Husserl 1960, p. 122). But the lived body remains “filled with soul through and through.”⁸ The most important issue, for those in the theological turn, will involve *who* an embodied subjectivity is.

Simone De Beauvoir can be credited with an existentialism that ostensibly derived neither from biology nor embodiment per se. Yet in *The Second Sex*, written shortly after Sartre published “Existentialism is a Humanism,” she nonetheless sets the conditions for a phenomenology of the body that ultimately sees the difference between man and woman neither in an economic nor essentialist bond. She also rejected the assertion of biological constraints on women, compared to men, as well as the conceptualist or nominalist positing of woman as a kind of Platonic essence (de Beauvoir 2004, p. 297). The new grounding for the discussion involved Sartre’s concept of *situation* involving a self and other.⁹ In this framework, woman is the “other in a totality” with man.

In this paradigm of mutual interaction between self and other, each has a “reciprocal claim” on the other. De Beauvoir holds that these claims were brought about by neither historical events nor social changes, but *natural* conditions. From these conditions, there are limits: one cannot make a woman’s body into a man’s, for example. Both are, however, *flesh* and thus both are “passive” and “carnal.”¹⁰ These ground the interactions that are expressed fundamentally in sexual relations. This existential fusion promises the relations between the sexes to be “indefinitely open.” But de Beauvoir considers that many feminist writings present only “symbolic agitation” (de Beauvoir 2004, p. 302). Existentialism, though, avoids the *en-soi*, the “brutish life of subjection to given conditions, and of liberty into constraint and contingency” (de Beauvoir, p. 302). Moreover, it frees us from obligations to contribute to the happiness of others that indeed we are unable to measure. In sexuality, we may gain “the tension, the anguish, the joy, the frustration, and the triumph of existence.”¹¹ The relationship involves an erotic drama, in which the two play out the tensions of the flesh and spirit, and of finitude and transcendence.

How then do man and woman together live out this ambiguity of existence? De Beauvoir claims that only when they mutually recognize “each other as subject,” will each remain for the other and find their natural “form” (de Beauvoir, pp. 306–7). Therefore, she concludes that these “natural bonds” bestow freedom in the midst of the world of the given.¹²

Our path of discovery here will thus primarily examine the articulations of embodiment by reductions carried out by three Catholic phenomenologists of the theological turn: Marion, as he started what we can consider the phenomenology of the gift; Henry, in his discovery of absolute subjectivity; then Falque, and the manifestation of the organic body. We will focus most on the unique contribution of the latter two.

Marion in *Being Given* cannot be said to have a clearly demarcated phenomenology of the body. He neither reduces bodies from the intellectual hallows of metaphysics, nor produces a special ontology of embodiment. But he provides a vital description of embodiment in his ensuing exercise of reduction in his account of erotic phenomena.¹³

Starting with his early work, *Reduction and Givenness*, Marion shows how both Husserl and Heidegger laid out a field of phenomena rife for further reductions: they aimed beyond the field of causation to delimit what is *given* for the subject. He describes how Husserl had reduced entities originally experienced by the ego to ways of givenness (*Gegebenheitsweise*) with imaginative variations (Marion 2002, p. 5). Heidegger started by a reduction in all experienced by beings (*Seienden*) to what is disclosed, and alternatively concealed, by Being (*Sein*) (Marion 1998, p. 31). Each of the two thinkers interpreted their mode of reduction as effectively self-evident. But Marion insists that they both stripped givenness of its essentially non-conscious feature by the limits of their reduction, making what was reduced

an “idol of the gaze”: a denaturalization for Husserl, and a destructuring to gain essences or disclosures for Heidegger.¹⁴

Marion then provides a reduction derived in part from critiques of causation by William of Saint-Thierry’s rejection of Abelard’s causalism and Hume’s account of causation as undetectable. Hume’s skepticism had led to Kant’s categorical positing of an a priori category of cause and effect, spawning a neo-Kantian influence that culminated in Hegel’s absolute knowing (*absolute Wissen*) in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and *Science of Logic*. Since this action of Spirit (*Geist*) effectively neutralized all intellectual limits of finite intelligence, Nietzsche took his step to reduce forms of intelligence to the will to power—possessed by all living creatures. This led to a vast naturalism, accompanied by the neutralization of the finite measurement of chronological time, prompting the eternal return of the same and its corresponding death of God. As a result, teleological agency in the world vanishes—and metaphysics with it. Marion understands that he lives in the intellectual wake of Nietzsche’s death of God, as Heidegger had also, but realizes that this “event” does not entail atheism.¹⁵

Marion asserts that givenness is an inverted or *counter intuitive* reduction, which limits phenomena to a *fait accompli*, occurring in high degrees in saturated phenomena and is beyond all conceptual limits in revelation. He then provides types of categories, surprisingly derived from Kant’s reworking of Aristotle’s Categories in the “Amphiboly of Reflection” of the *First Critique*.¹⁶ Both their givennesses he interprets non-metaphysically, as anticipated in the works of the writings of Eastern Church Fathers such as Gregory the Great, St. Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, and later Bernard of Clairvaux. They understood that metaphysical and empirical causation is present in biblical accounts of God creating, gifting, and ordering of all creation. Consider even Jesus’s paradigmatic words to the Samaritan Woman at the well when he talks of himself as the living water that is “the gift of God” (John 4:10). For Marion, revelations such as these are emblematic of the phenomenology of the gift. The recipients never know the origin of the given, because the gifts are gratuitous and surpass all consciousness (Falque 2016, p. 218). Then revelation, as sacramental, “becomes a mode of Being of *counter-intentionality*,” directed at not a saturated intuition, but more radically as the “intentionality of God as such.”¹⁷

Falque, as we will describe further below, exhibits a keen and appreciative grasp of Marion’s givenness. He first stipulates what Marion rejects from predecessors: Kant’s categories of understanding and splitting of the empirical and transcendental selves; Leibniz’s principle of sufficient reason; Descartes’s *cogito*; Husserl’s adequation; and Heidegger’s *Jemeinigkeit* of Being towards death.¹⁸ This prepares him to highlight three of Marion’s intentions: (a) “what gives itself shows itself” unto one who makes himself “capable of receiving it”;¹⁹ (b) the *fait accompli* of phenomena accomplishes their “effect before its cause”; (c) time begins to “un-make” me from the instance I am made; and (d) temporally, one needs to “expose oneself to what has been made rather than willing oneself to make the world” (Falque 2018, p. 112). Marion reduces to givenness through an unparalleled interrogation of both language and concepts to yield saturated phenomena, which include paintings, music, events, historical interpretations, flesh, the Eucharist, persons, and culminating in the theological “intentionality of an other in *me*,” ultimately in the Trinity.²⁰ The latter becomes the phenomenological reduction par excellence.

3. Henry

Henry’s phenomenology of the body, as an ontological account of body, flesh, and intentionality, differs from Marion’s. Though these three terms are typical elements in such an account, his additional adoption of what is termed *absolute subjectivity* is unique. We can follow the development of the account primarily in his early work: *Philosophy, Phenomenology, and the Body*.

Henry insists that the ground for his “material” phenomenological analysis lies primarily not in the relation of corporeal phenomena to consciousness, but in the phenomenon of *incarnation* itself. He first qualifies the body in three modes: as biological; as a living entity relatable through perception; and as human, which through comparative phenomenology becomes a “new form.” But following from Maine de Biran, he then adds an original qualification: the body as “absolute subjectivity.”²¹ The existence of a body now lies at the heart of human reality. The *body* is an “I,” and presents unique conditions within the experience of the “I.”²²

Unlike Descartes’s stipulation of bodies as extended, de Biran had considered the body as an “I” not ideally, but *ontologically*. Cartesian modifications had been guided only by ideas—even desires—so the cogito was a power of *production*.²³ But he argued instead that the theory of the body culminates rather in a *volò, ergo sum* (I will, therefore I am), influenced by Scotus, such that the ego means not “I think” but “I can” as drawn from the “feeling of an action” (Henry 1975, p. 53). Henry follows in asserting that a body “is subjective and is the ego itself” (Henry 1975, p. 11). Now the ego no longer gives knowledge as a simple form but as “the very being of life and of concrete and personal existence” (Henry 1975, p. 42). After all, we generally accomplish our movements and actions without thinking of them, though not without knowing them through reflection. Reflection, as a thinking process, is an *intentionality*, and every determination of subjectivity is in itself known by reflection, even the will.²⁴ So no real distinction emerges between a reflective and a pre-reflective cogito: the structure of consciousness remains the same in either mode.

De Biran had concluded that bodily movement as such is never known through the meditation of thought. As Jules Lagneau concurred, action is thus revealed to us not as through a thought, word, or an idea of an effect, but rather as revealed to us “in itself.”²⁵ De Biran held that we employ a twofold usage of *signs* when we establish a relationship between the world we sense and a physiological organ. For example, “the words ‘I see’ have a twofold usage as it designates both the eye, or at least a property thereof, as well as the internal transcendental experience of seeing” (Henry 1975, p. 111). Sartre later disagrees with his model, holding that regarding the body, we have rather “pure facts of consciousness”; otherwise, we irremediably drive the body out of consciousness such that no bond expressed by signs can reunite the two.²⁶ He thus precludes semantic meditations from references to actual movement.

4. Intersubjectivity, Interbeing, and Resistance

Henry then considers a nonsemantic principle of a sensible individuality: that which occurs when a sensible phenomenon of movement is shared by a sensed body that *resists* it.²⁷ De Biran talks of it as “interior extension,” similar to what is considered a soul or, in Henry’s analysis, an *organic* body that gathers the termini of its movements into a coherent and irreducible practical totality. Moreover, even the different parts of our bodies are determined “from different ways they yield to our efforts.”²⁸ Likewise, as Merleau-Ponty insists, we grasp humanity:

first as another manner of being a body—to see humanity emerge just like Being in the manner of a watermark, not as another substance, but as *interbeing*, and not as an imposition of a for-itself or a body in-itself.²⁹

But where does this emergence take place? Henry maintains the place is known prior to the impressions which will fill it such as to make it an interior extension: it is one and the same act by which “I unfold the transcendental milieu of the organic body which is the terminus of my movement and whereby I perceive the internal sensations as situated in this milieu and belonging to it.”³⁰ Falque will consider this ontological *passivity*. But again, Sartre demurs. He considers consciousness as an inner intuition, and related not only to

bodily regions of the absolute subject, observable and scientifically analyzable, but also to the other by “a reasoning process” of *analogy* from their body to mine.³¹ By this claim Sartre rejects de Biran’s “sensation of effort,” by claiming that the locus or the resistance lies *within the subject alone*. Moreover, he thus rejects that a phenomenological unity emerges between what touches and what is touched, touch being the primary sense in effort, on the grounds that to touch and to be touched are in fact “two essentially different orders of reality.”³²

If de Biran and Henry nonetheless defend subjectivity and internal extension, we have the difficulty of the *individuation of ourselves* from the bodies of others we encounter. But Henry holds that *absolute life* “constitutes the *being* of the original body and maintains in its *unity* the organic body,” whose absolute life is life itself (Henry 1975, p. 134). To be preoccupied with one’s own body is not an immediate or habitual attitude, but rather an orientation ontologically towards the world. But this involves not the “ontic dualism” of Descartes, which confused the organic body with the body represented by the understanding.³³ Henry thinks that the problem is solved by ontologically grasping the absolute immanence of subjectivity as meeting transcendent being (Henry 1975, p. 153).

5. Incarnation and Intentionality

Henry maintains that concerns with problems relative to bodily life and the phenomenon of *incarnation*, which is fundamental to knowledge of the body, have hitherto also not been well conceptualized by ontology. Ontology is needed to determine “a priori” the knowledge of existence of the body.³⁴ It is not a matter, then, of a Husserlian reduction of eidetic structures of objects to structures of certain intentional acts. Henry purports a more original approach: an a priori reference to the *pairing* of absolute subjectivity and absolute body. With this remarkable unification, meaning arises without heterogeneity, and reveals itself through non-abstract “absolute immanence” (Henry 1975, p. 186). Its transcendent character neither designates what subsists after a flight from reality nor embodies simply a pure nothingness. From an eidetic view, subjectivity is concrete and indeed reduced to life itself.³⁵ Although bereft of metaphysical form, it derives from an original *revelation* that is nonetheless subject to degrees and thus to intensity or moderation—as Marion also holds.

How did this absolute unification emerge from an ostensible opposition between transcendence and absolute subjectivity? The analysis of the *body* is the crux. As absolute subjectivity develops, reality can no longer be defined for us by a subject’s consciousness, for we cannot determine its exact relation to the body.³⁶ Then incarnation would appear only as a paradox *within consciousness*, between a nothingness and a simple “being there.”³⁷ So Henry asserts that incarnation signifies “the reality of an ontological possibility which is not abstract but rather proves to be identical to the very being of the ego” (PPB, p. 187). What now emerges is the subjective *body*. This subjective body is indubitably concrete, with reference to *real* experience. After all, there cannot be something more real “than a look” or less illusory “than an appetite” (Henry 1975, p. 186). The body is an *intentionality* that orients change without a modification of the body’s ontology.³⁸ Absolute life and absolute body are thus no longer *contingent*.³⁹ So the body is not an ensemble of determinations surveyed by a Hegelian *Geist*, but rather “a *structure* made of virtually compatible intentionalities in conformity to their various eidetic types” (Henry 1975, p. 190). The objective body becomes an organic *totality*, redolent of transcendental determinations taking place in not a *horizon* but a *sphere* of absolute immanence that allows for our insertion in contingent situations.⁴⁰

Thus we describe bodies in movement as determinations which stem from an altogether different sphere of existence, for they correspond to different intentionalities in which the absolute life of our subjective body expresses itself. Besides considering means and ends in movement or action, intentionality functions as *objectification* (Henry 1975,

p. 200). While the Greeks posited this by way of reflection on *creation*, Hegel did so by a *dialectic* of action by which the self seeks to surmount its alienation and to re-discover its equality with itself.⁴¹ But Henry remains unsure whether such self-equality is tantamount to self-consciousness or to self-representation. Such contemplative stances fail to furnish a sufficient account of action.

What remains to be determined objectively, then, is how the positivity of the phenomenological account of the intention can confront the prior negativity of the body, such as its role in the finitudes of sin and anxiety.⁴² Henry starts by affirming that flesh and spirit are “two modes of existence”: two intentionalities that belong to the same ontological sphere of absolute subjectivity (Henry 1975, p. 208). But the *rights* of the flesh often conflict with those of the spirit. In Hellenic humanism they were distinct, but are united in Christianity where body has been ontologically constitutive of human nature. Nietzsche had criticized Christianity as “contemptuous” of the body, but Henry claims he wrongly attributed *essentialist* Greek thinking about the body to Christianity’s *existentialist* view of it as subjective and not heterogeneous to consciousness (Henry 1975, p. 209). Henry then asserts that sexuality, which Falque will also consider, is a positive existentiality of bodily life. The intentionality of sexuality directs a subjective element of being toward a transcendent absolute terminus.⁴³ It bestows an infinite and free essence on all the “original determinations of bodily life.”⁴⁴

Henry concludes that Life transcends *itself* as an absolute life, and thus remains in itself. The *auto affection* in immanence binds finitude to transcendence.⁴⁵ Needs, particularly the body’s subjective material needs, are where “existence takes place” (Henry 1975, p. 221).

I Am the Truth

In the later *I am the Truth*, Henry focuses more on the ontological analysis of truth than on its existential situatedness in transcendence and immanence. Truth now appears and finds its essence in *Life*, inasmuch as it serves as the basis of the phenomenological (Henry 2002, p. 33). Life necessitates a practical given of embodied action, motivated not through intellectual assessment but by a true *affectivity* forming the very bond between the individual and absolute life. The transcendental “me,” who experiences itself as existential, is now seen as the ego that leads paradoxically to a source of a life *that is not its own*: a life of “radical passivity” (Henry 2002 p. 152). This is the truth of Life.

The universal prescription here is a fusion of transcendental and immanent action, which results in a profound “forgetting oneself” (Henry 2002, p. 168). The transcendental ego is now effectively abolished, and the “Arch-Son” Christ, who reveals the truth of God, acts now *in me* (cf. Gal. 2:20). But how does this transformation of the worldly self come about? It requires action with “givenness to itself in the “Arch-Givenness” of the absolute Life of God, and in the “Arch-Ipsity” (Henry 2002 p. 170). The latter is the expression of the selfhood of God’s Son through whom God knows and experiences Himself. All is retained in reduction to the Arch Ipseity expressed in the Son’s original essence.

For Henry, our *cultural* development of this reduction of the transcendental ego is thus inherently religious and is connected to the theme of “second birth.”⁴⁶ Second birth is possible only within subjective praxis and, more precisely, through not the *charity* of Marion, but the *work of mercy*. Only the work of mercy engenders the forgetting of self in which no obstacle opposes the unfurling of Life.

Henry then gives an astonishing closure to this second birth. As possessing the second birth, he says one realizes that “*I am the Son* generated each moment” in experience whose three determinations are suffering, joy, and love.⁴⁷ This is one of the most difficult, but compelling, claims that Henry makes. I affirm the meaning is that this is the ultimate reduction which is now the revelation that from the glory of the Father we each are “in

Christ" (ἐν Χριστῷ) (1 Cor 1:30). "We have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor 2:16), and through the Son, God becomes "all in all" (1 Cor 15:25). So when that condition of the Son's life is our own, Henry concludes:

the condition of Faith is always posited. Only God can make us believe in him, but he *inhabits our own flesh*. (Henry 2002, p. 233)

We hence confront a paradox: we need for our own flesh to be related to God's Absolute Life, while this Life is *already in us* as our very body and flesh.

6. Falque

Falque both supports but also harbors key criticisms of Henry's phenomenology of the body. The support stems from its phenomenological method and theological extensions of it.⁴⁸ The criticisms emerge in significant part from Henry's exclusion of key theological considerations of Hellenism and Judaism.⁴⁹ Henry's characterization of Absolute Life, for example, produces for Falque a self-generation that is not only anti-Judaic but also overlooks the rational and dialectical thinking of the Enlightenment itself. Falque argues that theological thinking ordinarily starts its reductions from a metaphysical opposition and then forms unities or totalities that are theological, such as in the case of the Johannine account of the opposition of flesh and body into a dying and then resurrected Christ. Such reductions form a shared *third*. Falque's own case reduces the opposition between flesh as "auto-impressional and originary" and the "thingly body," into the unity of an *originary* flesh. This is the basis of his *spread-body* (*corps épandu*) with initial chaotic drives and animality.⁵⁰ De Biran and Descartes both effectively grasped the notion of flesh from these realities.

Falque specifically criticizes Henry's claim that "being given" is formed such that life allows access to thought through the singularity and *haecceity* of the flesh—not vice versa.⁵¹ Rather, Henry maintains that in this view each person's life is an authority only within the locus of its utter nonintentional "apassivity": the person *receives* the Absolute life into their own. But he maintains that Heidegger's disclosure and concealment of Being effectively immobilize us bodily.⁵² Similarly, Henry's claim that "invisible phenomenon forgets the visible body" actually overlooks for Falque that we need the embodied visible to grasp the invisible (Henry 2002, p. 166). Falque points out that the gospels claim that each time a life enters into a body and turns into flesh is both finite *and* visible.

Falque concludes that Henry is a "semi-Jansenist," one who either reaches Life or refuses it, and who fails to hold a view of creation as coming into the world to form *relationships* with God. Falque holds instead that flesh has to be capable of *giving itself* (Falque 2018, p. 169). We need to see ourselves not as going through Henry's "passivity of life," which responds not to the world but to Life itself, but rather as submitting to an "*ordeal* of the world's irreducible finitude."⁵³ God the Father puts us through a "mortal corporeity" (Falque 2018, p. 170). Even Heidegger realized the nature of such a loving struggle in the world, as opposed to merely a "simple belonging to the same."⁵⁴

7. Incorporation and Carnal Pathos

Falque's notion of enfleshment, which in Henry's view is affected in all experience, is actually fulfilled not in *incarnation* but in the tension of an "impossible *incorporation*."⁵⁵ While Henry distinguished between our incarnation as humans and God's becoming man, Falque combines them so as to bring an intersubjectivity among a community of saints.⁵⁶ The first reduction needed to grasp it involves the limits of subjectivity as such.

To begin the analysis of the reduction, Falque turns to Marion's phenomenology of ordinary experience in givenness. Marion's process requires an *elsewhere* (*d'ailleurs*), external to and imposed on the self. But when emerging from an erotic deed, it reveals itself

in “another present,” a space that is other, and two fleshs that are situated elsewhere.⁵⁷ Yet anamorphosis, contingency, unpredictable landing, and the *a posteriori fait accompli* are all already included in this erotic phenomenon. So Falque too holds onto lived experience as immanent to consciousness, though notably revealed only in nonconceptual descriptions.

8. Limits Versus Exceptional Life

Falque then asks of Marion, “What is to be said, and done, when finitude of limitation, either of a horizon or transcendental I, is conceived and articulated solely in terms of givenness and specifically in givenness understood as *revelation*?”⁵⁸ What becomes then of *ordinary* or of *exceptional* life in lived experience? Marion starts with saturated phenomena as the one norm for phenomenology.⁵⁹ It enables both the more limited common sense and poor phenomena under it. But what is Marion’s underlying principle of the *unlimited*? Like Kierkegaard, he considers it as emerging from the principle that “for God all things are possible.”⁶⁰ God can, as it were, reveal a new possibility that we had been limited in thinking, like the resurrection from the dead. But Falque insists that even resurrection nonetheless shows by “counter-relief” its *carnal ordinarieness*: it does not take a saturated phenomenon to be a greater and more exemplary original of embodiment. Falque thus urges us to focus on *finite* aspects of Marion’s revelation. He finds in the participation in eucharistic liturgies, especially the Easter liturgy, a unique conversion of, or reduction to, our finitude as creatures (Falque 2018, p. 208). We need not always “leap into the unlimited” of paradox, since even Marion still maintains that limits remain in principle permanent, and insists that certain phenomena may appear as “playing at the limits of phenomenality,”⁶¹ and provide broadenings of the *fait accompli* of a singular phenomenon.

9. Carnal Ego

How is the body itself, then, seen as a limit? Falque argues that Heideggerian “ready at hand” (*Zuhandenheit*) only “equipmentalizes” a body in the world but cannot “feel it under our skin” as a practical limit to our organic body as originary flesh.⁶² Falque claims that Husserl had overlooked the passive synthesis that belongs to a body, not consciousness, and so his touching-touched phenomenological grasp of its carnal ego is only *ekstatic* and thus fails to arrive at Merleau-Ponty’s expansive flesh of the world.⁶³ Yet Falque holds, with Henry, that the carnal ego cannot be reduced, as Merleau-Ponty thinks, since flesh feels not any solidity in an object, but only in *itself*.⁶⁴ This is the carnal *pathos* of flesh. Thus, *eros* for Falque is not a mere fusion with, but rather a manifest tension relative to, flesh of an other: each experiences the limits of its other (Falque 2016, p. 160).

Falque then considers Marion’s *erotic* reduction, which refers ultimately to the phenomenology of love, a bracketing of an erotic situation emerges in five dimensions. It begins from a “zero point,” from which the self determines how far the beloved other is *elsewhere* from itself (Marion 2015, p. 29). It is troubling, since the self wants to be in the same place with the beloved and thus the other is initially more intimate to the self than the self is to itself. Then in the second dimension, *time* replaces place. In neither a future anticipation, nor a past memory, does anything happen in the relationship with the other (Marion 2015, p. 30). The erotic thus involves a *waiting* for the presence of the beloved. In the third dimension, the self cannot establish itself as an *ego cogito*. Rather, one thinks insofar as one is *thought* by the beloved. Thus love requires neither a prerequisite on the self’s part to be loved by the other, nor a reciprocation from the other if so. Then the reduction shifts in a fourth dimension. Erotic love suspends any form of exchange, or justice. We experience a *radical inequality* with the beloved that will never be balanced. It had emerged when only one of the two began, or willed, to love, free from any *apriori* conditions. The final dimension can then culminate in the paradox of *giving* and *for-giving*

(Marion 2015, p. 27). The illustration Marion uses is the relationship between Abraham and his long awaited and beloved Isaac, whom God has commanded that he sacrifice. Since Isaac was not Abraham's property, but God was the *giver* of the gift of his birth, Abraham needed to *forgive* by giving back the radical command of the sacrifice and instead seeing, forever, God as the giver. Falque affirms that then "to for-give is a variation of the gift which is the erotic reduction" (Marion 2015, p. 33).

10. Speech, Naming, and Animality

Given this erotic "gap of the flesh," Falque holds that suffering cannot be shared with an other (Marion 2015, p. 170). So speech comes to signify for the other what the flesh cannot: a middle *voice* that emerges from the experience of language use.⁶⁵ Derrida claims that this is also where I "hear myself doing," since the voice has a token of self-presence, markedly unlike the noncorporeal phenomena of reason and discourse that we ordinarily appeal to when direct speech is exhausted. The corporeal voice itself simply "does not lie."⁶⁶

Inspired by Chrétien, Falque augments the close relation between speech and the body.⁶⁷ In Genesis, Eve is *named* by Adam, who corporeally recognizes her as both "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" (Gen 2:23). Adam then also names the *animals*, not so much to order their singularities,⁶⁸ but to receive animality in himself and make it possible "to dwell in us."⁶⁹ Falque insists that naming is the link to bodily passions and drives, emerging from chaos to *safeguard* our animality. The Son of God is, after all, the Word made flesh, announced at the baptism by John from the "voice from heaven" (Matt 3:17).

11. Reductions to Origins

Falque has explicated embodiment and animality in a theological phenomenality. He has set the structure on a reduction not primarily to flesh but to the *organic* and *bodily*. He departs from other modes of thought about the philosophy of the body, such as Derrida's restriction of the body's immediacy to itself, and Deleuze's rhizomes and extraterritoriality. Instead, he maintains that the bodily can be reduced neither to a geometric form nor to an ego. He starts from a twofold distinction: *objectivity* of the body and *subjectivity* of the flesh (Falque 2016, p. 14). To what limit of unity can they be reduced?

In his *Nietzsche* volumes, Heidegger took up one level of this kind of reduction. He considered, from Nietzsche, Hesiod's manifestation of *Chaos* as a disordered field of origin and an abyss yet self-opened and able to uncover truth (*a-letheia*), even the truth of the body. Heidegger affirms the Nietzschean pathway of return to Chaos to form bodily *animality*. He holds that "Behind, so to speak, what appears so harmlessly and conclusively to us as an object, we do meet up with the mass of sensations—Chaos" (Heidegger 1991, 3:79). For Falque, Chaos can thus be named "bodying life" (Falque 2016, p. 26). Moreover, he holds that embodiment originates not from constant appeals to the lived experience of consciousness or the flesh, but as Nietzsche affirmed, "from the solidity of the body in its biological dimension and drives."⁷⁰

Falque proposes a level of such reduction from the book of Genesis. God's creation was thought to emerge from a formless void from which He creates *ex nihilo*.⁷¹ Moreover, creatures can grasp this God-given origin:

I beg you, child, to look at the heavens and the earth and see all that is in them; then you will know that God did not make them out of existing things. In the same way humankind came into existence. (cf. 2 Macc. 7:28)

Augustine's *Confessions* XII continues the context for this reduction:

Was it not you, Lord, who taught this soul of mine which now makes its confession to you? Was it not you, Lord, who taught me that, before you gave shape and variety to this *formless matter*, there was nothing: no color, no outline, no body, no spirit? And yet not absolutely nothing; there was a kind of formlessness, lacking all definition.⁷²

The modern period later, however, drew “secular” levels of reductions not only from things with varieties and oppositions, but from transcendent unities forming concepts and reasoning.⁷³ Kant showed the need for a transcendental ground of unity to void his “mass of sensations,” such as manifolds (*Mannfaltiges*), by a kind of formlessness giving forms of intuition in space and time.⁷⁴

But what would be solidity of a body’s mass of sensations as such? Falque effectively asks us to consider the *suffering* that is unique to flesh, or embodiment, or both. First, suffering is not linked to a singularity of givenness in Husserl’s sense, but rather it is *meaninglessness* or indeed an absence of the self, or more akin to Nietzsche’s recognition of the sheer “*physiology* of the flesh.”⁷⁵ It prompts the need for a *carnal finality*, in the same way that Christ’s crucified and resurrected body is the gift given for us in the Eucharist (Falque 2016, p. 45). But Falque does admit that Marion, though not embracing finality of suffering per se, did provide the “counterbalance” of the *erotic phenomenon*, which describes and is founded upon an objectivity of a “true experience of the body (see Marion, as well as Bataille or Artaud) with that of a charitable phenomenon.”⁷⁶ The non subjectivism but objectivation of the charity of God is a movement of the gift of the Eucharist:

in the eucharistic present, all presence is deduced from the charity of the gift: all the rest becomes appearance of a gaze without charity: the perceptible species, the metaphysical conception of time, the reduction to consciousness, all are degraded to one figure (or caricature) of charity.⁷⁷

Charity requires the suffering that is perceptible and temporal, that addresses us and can be comforted. So while Marion insists on the embodiment in charity within eucharistic reception, Falque speaks of the animality that is converted to full humanity through the embodiment of *filiation* “of the whole cosmos” as fully gifted in the Eucharist through the Father’s bestowal of Christ.⁷⁸ Given the Eucharist’s bestowal of the *objectivization* of the charity of God, a failure to recognize this gift is mere disembodied “angelism.” Falque concludes that we are “completely body” and Christ takes responsibility for “all the sufferings of our flesh” (Falque 2016, p. 208).

12. Body and Power

Ordinarily in metaphysics, bodily movements are *caused*, arising only from forces or powers that are principally substances. The early Heidegger in his destructing of metaphysics focused on not causation but *manifestations of entities*, either embodied or not: “What is itself given need not be bodily given, while conversely anything which is bodily given is itself given.”⁷⁹ But Nietzsche had grasped a middle point, insisting that the “unconscious of the body” had itself shifted away from consciousness, a mere instrument, so as to become itself an *organic source* of the meaning of flesh (*Leib*).⁸⁰ So for him the power of the body is no longer what is (Aquinas), what should be (Kant), nor what appears to be (Husserl), but “what comes to be” through willing (Falque 2016, pp. 109–10). But for Falque, Christians see flesh and power in a reversal of Nietzsche’s shift: now not in his denial altogether of the power of substance, but grounded in a *tran-substantiation* by the Spirit in the power by which the Eucharist is made manifest. In this the body does retain a passive *power*: its *reception* of the sacrament, as a gift, takes on responsibility for the “organicity of our own embodiedness” (Falque 2016, p. 125). Husserl, Heidegger, and

Marion all understood this general framework as a “donation of the flesh.”⁸¹ But St. Paul had already proclaimed this embodiment theologically, proclaiming that “the deity dwells *bodily*” in our receptivity (cf. Col 2:9–10) and “has put all things under his feet and has made him [Christ] the head over all things for the Church, *which is his body*, the fulness of him who fills all in all.”⁸²

In summary, this theological phenomenology bespeaks a unique form of transcendence for Falque. It was elevation for Augustine, and openness for Husserl. Blondel had used Leibniz’s solution to the problem of how separate monads, or totalities, can form a substantial, not consubstantial, cohesive body through the *vinculum substantiale* that he formed into the *vinculum proprium Christi*. The latter prepares a transforming union, that includes even the domain of the subconscious, for our incorporation with Christ that respects our bodily nature. An “inverse intentionality” drives “the power of embodiment not just as it is produced by me, but where it is offered and driven by an other in me” in *love*.⁸³ Ultimately, Falque affirms Simone Weil’s reflection, “Insofar as I become nothing, God loves himself through me”: we are transformed into the very embodied life, made possible by Christ, of the Trinity itself.⁸⁴

13. Conclusions

Each of these phenomenological thinkers lends voice to the complexity of the bodily, mental, and spiritual totality of the human person. Each works from a set of reductions. Each of the reductions was developed in a specific context inspired by Husserl’s *epoché* and then applied to some aspect of embodiment. Falque has considered the theological elements of Merleau-Ponty, Levinas, Ricoeur, Marion, Chrétien, and Henry, all as affirming this reduction ultimately to a form of an organic body, expressible in speech and resisted by other bodies, in a background of a theology of creation.

I conclude with a question. What kind of access do these Catholic theological phenomenologists give to possible *non-theological* reductions to embodiment? The key point that remains unsettled through this discussion has been differences between incarnation and incorporation, which probably put most pressure on Marion’s saturated phenomenon, which in turn maintains itself without any direct reduction to the level of organic corporeality that Henry and Falque carry out. So perhaps we could then *further* reduce, acknowledging the rich theological scope of these projects, to forms of non-theological and non-absolute grounds, which may disclose additional principles of phenomena, inclusive of and yet *beyond* revelation, of the shared divinization of the human and divine expressed in other embodied voices?

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Notes

¹ Heidegger referred to a method of ontology as “ontology phenomenology.” See Heidegger (1982, p. 328).

² See Merleau-Ponty (1995, pp. 211, 224). In *Nature*, Merleau-Ponty clarifies Husserl’s intentions. “Husserl thus oscillates between these two directions: on the one hand, the rupture with the natural attitude; on the other hand, the understanding of this pre-philosophical foundation of man. ... Phenomenology denounces the natural attitude and at the same time does more than any other philosophy to rehabilitate it. See Merleau-Ponty (1995, p. 72).

- 3 See Kierkegaard (1954, pp. 171–75). The Other, especially for Kierkegaard, can be God.
- 4 See Sartre (1956, pp. 228–39). The “Look,” is the primarily manifestation of the gazes.
- 5 In his later works, Sartre treats not just individual or intersubjective dynamics, but group dynamics.
- 6 See Husserl (1960, p. 112). Note the pairing nonetheless ends up in a oneness for each.
- 7 See Husserl (1960, pp. 116, 120, 142). So Nature is both spatial and non-spatial. The latter is necessary for ultimately categorical intuition.
- 8 To what extent does *empathy* play a role? It is mentioned in the *Cartesian Meditations*, but treated much more in *Ideas II*. Husserl rejected Scheler’s lack of a constitutional basis for empathy (Husserl 1960, p. 147). But it is clear that it is expressed bodily.
- 9 Heidegger’s consideration of Sartre’s *Existentialism is a Humanism* had already criticized the latter’s abandoning of ontological essences such as *Mitsein*.
- 10 de Beauvoir (2004, p. 305). Falque argues that the master/slave dialectic, as the humanization of nature, gave way to the man /woman dialectic, as hominization—which Christianity sees ultimately in filiation. See also Falque (2016, p. 160).
- 11 de Beauvoir (2004, p. 306). This can be contrasted with Irigaray. For her Western thinking has unfortunately not found a difference between body and soul, particularly the embodied side, that must involve some kind of spirituality. “It is surely a question of the dissociation of body and soul, of sexuality and spirituality, of the lack of a passage for the spirit, for the god, between the inside and the outside, the outside and the inside, and of their distribution between the sexes in the sexual act. Everything is constructed in such a way that these realities remain separate, even opposed to one another.” See Irigaray (1993, p. 15).
- 12 de Beauvoir (2004, p. 307) [italics mine]. Marx said much the same about the natural relation of humans found in the pair bond between man and woman in a family.
- 13 The erotic for Marion reduces ultimately to embodied *love*. See Marion (2015, pp. 27–35).
- 14 Marion states, “For this paradox must be admitted: the phenomenon remains, inasmuch as it is an instance exterior to consciousness, completely univalent, since evidence is defined as a mode of consciousness alone.” See Marion (2002, p. 20).
- 15 See Marion (2001, p. 32).
- 16 See Kant (1998), A260/B316–A292–B349.
- 17 See Falque (2018, p. 138); Marion (2002, p. 268). Marion discusses other counter-realities as well: method, experience, appearing, consciousness, and modality. See Marion (2002, pp. 10, 216, 225, 266, 267).
- 18 Falque (2018, p. 106). See also Marion (2002, pp. 36, 182–183, 210, 252, 278). He later criticizes Heidegger’s covering up of the *es gibt* by *Ereignis*.
- 19 See Marion (2002, p. 34); Falque (2018, p. 105). The reception is understood in the “dative case.”
- 20 Falque (2018, p. 14); Falque (2018, p. 139) [italics mine]. Ricoeur holds that narrative thinking grasps *time*.
- 21 Henry (1975, p. 8). Regions are able to be reduced to *absolutes*.
- 22 Henry (1975, p. 8) [italics mine]. The point is that the ego is a condition for self, ultimately.
- 23 He thinks the deduction of the category of causality prefigured the interpretation of the concrete being of the ego as *cause* or effort. See Henry (1975, p. 53).
- 24 Henry (1975, pp. 55, 112). Effectively, thought and reflection are interchangeable terms for Ricoeur.
- 25 Henry (1975, p. 67). He was known to develop reflexive method philosophy.
- 26 Sartre (1956, pp. 282–83). The constitution of space as various relations emerges only from the abstractions from science.
- 27 Henry (1975, pp. 75, 102–103, 110). Thus resistance is unable to be expressed propositionally.
- 28 Henry (1975, p. 110). “Interobjectivity,” in Latour, would be a similar term.
- 29 Merleau-Ponty (1995, p. 208) [italics mine]. The early Merleau-Ponty’s study in *Phenomenology of Perception* was about the body as “interbeing,” but later he reflected on the totality of ambiguity, because he thematized the natural world.
- 30 Henry (1975, p. 131). Heidegger makes a similar argument in *Building, Dwelling, and Thinking*.
- 31 Sartre (1956, p. 279); Henry (1975, p. 128). See also de Biran (1932, pp. 214–16).
- 32 Sartre (1956, p. 280). Merleau-Ponty also discusses this as a reversibility between the touching and touched.
- 33 Henry (1975, pp. 148, 150). In his *Letter to Elizabeth*, Descartes said that “life and conversation” teach us to understand the relationship of body and soul and we need to abandon ourselves to the “relaxation of our senses,” which Henry, though, considers a rejection of philosophy.
- 34 Henry (1975, p. 184). The early Heidegger extended ontology into embodiment uniquely through *Dasein*, death, and being in the world.
- 35 Henry (1975, p. 186). So yet as Hegel noted, to maintain a dead (inorganic) element is “that which requires the greatest force.” See Hegel (1967, p. 93). Hegel had an opposition between the positivity of being, and the negativity of spirit. Henry grants that life is the negativity of spirit: the concept. It “traverses the various parts of the organism.” See Henry (1975, p. 197).
- 36 Henry (1975, p. 188). This is a startling rejection of consciousness’s role in embodiment.
- 37 Henry (1975, p. 189). For Sartre, a transcendent being cannot act on consciousness and the latter cannot construct a transcendence from elements of subjectivity. See Sartre (1956, pp. 147–48). He defines it as “a being such that in its being, its being is in question in so far as this being implies a being other than itself.

- 38 Henry (1975, p. 191). Intentionality is thus the link between body and consciousness.
- 39 Henry (1975, p. 190). This mirrors Kierkegaard's defense of necessity relative to contingency. A self necessarily has to not only be itself but also become itself through possibility. In the process, more and more things become possible, and it outruns necessity. So it is no longer the case that necessity is a unity of possibility and actuality; it is a unity of possibility and necessity. See Kierkegaard (1954, pp. 168–69).
- 40 See Henry (1975, p. 191). For Henry the absolute body's situation gives the objective body its particular characteristics.
- 41 Henry (1975, p. 200). For Hegel it emerges as making something of itself through the "beautiful soul" as a form of subjective idealism. It flees objective nature, but then flees by not wanting to alienate itself.
- 42 Henry (1975, p. 205). Falque will claim that for Henry, desire is not biological; it emerges only from anxiety.
- 43 Henry (1975, p. 213). Note that it is "transcendent," thus a beyond or horizon, and not "transcendental," which is a condition of possibility.
- 44 Henry (1975, pp. 217, 218, fn. 11).
- 45 Falque mentions that accounts of *auto affection* occur in Husserl, Scheler, Henry, and Levinas. See Henry (1975, p. 120).
- 46 This "second birth" (cf. John 3:5–6) is similar to the "new birth" that 1 Peter and 2 Corinthians speak of, as a living hope given by the power of God, and safeguarded through faith. See 1 Peter 1:3–7; 2 Cor 5:17.
- 47 Henry (1975, p. 231–32) [italics mine].
- 48 Falque (2018, p. 152). Even Husserl himself combines these three levels such as in experiences of emotion, joy, or anxiety. See Husserl (1952, sec. 30).
- 49 It is important to note that the Nicene Creed itself does refer to Hellenism, as for example in the very word "consubstantial", that has reference in Greek to embodiment and anxiety. See Falque (2018, p. 147).
- 50 See Ullrich (2024). Ullrich places Falque's "spread body" as a criticism relative to Henry's phenomenology of the affective. Falque's embodied resolution is, for Ullrich, a kind of *deus ex machina* that appeals to the Eucharist itself. I will effectively refute this criticism below. Ullrich is right to say, though, that Falque relies too much on a transformation of animality away from its possible problematic effects, and does not give a sufficient explanation for *how* that transformation can happen.
- 51 Henry also, according to Falque, effectively takes up Scotus's *haecceity*, emergent from Aristotle's *tode ti*, that results in grounding each person in a singular auto-impressional flesh. See Falque (2018, pp. 153, 154).
- 52 See Henry (2015, p. 230); Falque (2018, p. 170).
- 53 Falque endorses Merleau-Ponty's affirmation of this. See, Merleau-Ponty (1995, pp. 174–75).
- 54 Falque (2018, p. 152). He refers to this as a "chain of corporeality."
- 55 Falque (2018, pp. 155, 171). For Falque, unlike Heidegger, appearance always "unveils."
- 56 See Marion (2024, pp. 7–9).
- 57 Falque (2018, p. 100); Marion (2002, p. 189). Falque praises Henry's use of conceptuality to grasp everyday experience.
- 58 Falque holds that ironically this is what metaphysics rules out as an exception. See Marion (2002, p. 227).
- 59 See Marion (2017, p. 95). Saturated phenomena begin from a level of intuition that exceeds our capacities for cognition.
- 60 Marion (2002, p. 189); Falque (2018, p. 104). Both authors speak of the phenomenality that exceeds limits.
- 61 Falque (2018, p. 157). While Husserl applies the flesh to purely intentional lived experience without relating it to the passive synthesis of the body, Merleau-Ponty's is always anonymous and, like Henry, does not consider *haecceity*. See also Falque (2018, p. 158).
- 62 Note that Marion claims that this *ekstatic* dynamic is what makes the real presence of the Eucharist not limited to the here and now. See Marion (1995, pp. 101–8).
- 63 See also Marion (2002, p. 146); Falque (2016, pp. 112, 171).
- 64 See also Falque (2016, p. 88), as this also applies to my voice: "I hear myself during the time I speak."
- 65 See Marion (2002, p. 146); Falque (2016, p. 112).
- 66 Derrida (2011, p. 66); Falque (2016, p. 88).
- 67 He uses the Hebrew term *basar* for body. He considers the body neither Husserl's *Leib* nor *Körper*, since they are only two different types of corporeality. See Falque (2018, pp. 175, 179).
- 68 Gen 2:19; Falque (2018, p. 178). The Ark of Flesh guards, and for Hegel, Adam carried this out in the naming of the animals that gave him lordship over them by forming an alterity by the concept (*Begriff*). It was a foundational act of human consciousness, language, and lordship over nature. See Falque (2016, p. 21).
- 69 Falque (2018, p. 179). For Tertullian, Adam thus had become the "ark of flesh, as what we have to carry in life, as well as the "weight of the body." See Falque (2018, p. 173).
- 70 Falque (2016, p. 21). Falque briefly discusses the importance of phenomenologist's interactive criticisms. He also calls theirs not a method, but a "struggle." See also Heidegger (1982, p. 328).
- 71 Gen 1:1–2; Falque (2016, p. 16).
- 72 See Augustine (1963, p. 286) [italics mine]. See also Falque (2016, pp. 16, 32).

- ⁷³ See Ullrich (2024). He claims that Falque himself is concerned with making Christianity believable in a growing secular world. See also Falque (2012, pp. 30–40).
- ⁷⁴ Falque (2016, p. 32). Kant says that all connections with universal laws require a unity determined for space and time, which are the formal conditions of intuition, and the categories, which are the conditions of the possible experience. See Kant (1998, p. A111).
- ⁷⁵ Falque (2016, p. 21) [italics mine]. Many phenomenologists overcame Chaos by appeal not to the solidity of the body, but to consciousness or flesh. See Falque (2016, p. 21).
- ⁷⁶ Falque (2016, p. 48) The inclusion of charity is based on Marion's theory of the Eucharist.
- ⁷⁷ Falque (2016, p. 57). See also Marion (1995, p. 178).
- ⁷⁸ Falque (2016, pp. 32, 57). Falque sees the journey of the development of flesh in three phases, from "the silent flesh," to the "waiting flesh," to the "flesh in common." Three processes are present in each phase: from organic body (lived experience of the flesh), this is my body aiming for incorporation through transubstantiation; to animality (the passions), the Lamb and not simply humanization but *filiation*; and then to love (the body given and given up—as *agape*), as eros not like the mutual gift of the bodies of spouses, but as the gift of Christ to the Church that holds the gift of the spouses together. See Falque (2016, pp. 231–32).
- ⁷⁹ Falque (2016, pp. 125, 271); Heidegger (1985, p. 41).
- ⁸⁰ Falque (2016, pp. 106, 107, 113). *Leib* here is equivalent to flesh, *Körper* is more objective.
- ⁸¹ Falque (2016, p. 125). The "donation of form," to avoid a genitive ambiguity, would have to be rewritten as not "the flesh's donation," but the "donation's flesh."
- ⁸² Eph. 1:23 [italics mine].
- ⁸³ Falque (2016, pp. 215–16).
- ⁸⁴ Falque (2016, p. 206); Weil (1977, p. 80). With these words of transformation, I am thankful for Jonathan Scruggs, Peter Ryan SJ, Jeff McCurry, and Zilai Wang for their collaboration and suggestions on this research.

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