
JAGNA BRUDZIŃSKA

THE POLARITY PARADIGM

*Phenomenological and Psychoanalytical Insights into the Subject*¹

Abstract

This article tends to connect phenomenological research with the psychoanalytical approach by focusing on the issue of conflict as the crucial dimension of human nature and its dynamics. On this basis, it becomes clear that human nature cannot be explained through a strict causal schema; rather, it can be grasped by exploring the dynamic motivational structures of experience which are expressed in the ambivalent tensions and striving tendencies of persons as subjects of the lifeworld. I stress that conflict is not a mere additional and accidental characteristic of experience that can somehow be eliminated, but rather, it affects the fundamental structure of personal experience and should therefore be understood as a constitutive moment of human nature. Thereby, my claim is that both self-experience and the development of community can only be understood in the light of motivational conflicts.

Keywords: Ambivalence; Conflict; Individuation; Phenomenology; Psychoanalysis

1. *Introduction*

Modern philosophy and modern sciences have construed a model of human nature based on a unitary and harmonic view of human life. This however, overlooks not only the many occurrences of concrete conflict burdening our daily life, but the fundamental character of conflict intended as an essential feature of human existence.

The idea of conflict is seen throughout the history of philosophy, from the Greek to the Hegelian approach. In my opinion, this tradition can also be seen as the deep roots of phenomenology and phenomenological psychopathology².

In this context, Karl Jaspers' proposal is worth mentioning, since he further develops the notion of polarity as the basis for his so-called comprehensive or understanding psychology (*verstehende Psychologie*). This is intended as a structural comprehension of psychic dynamics.

In his *Allgemeine Psychopathologie* (1913), he shows that the understanding of the human psyche requires a radical exploration of the opposite movements that constitute and characterize human life³. Following this path, he develops a genetic understanding

1 This research was supported by the National Science Center of Poland as part of project OPUS no. UMO–2018/29 / B / HS1 / 02953. A previous version of this paper was published in «Dialogue&Universalism», XXVI, 3, 2016.

2 For an extended reconstruction of this philosophical path see J. BRUDZIŃSKA, *Human Nature in Conflict. Reflections from a phenomenological and psychoanalytical perspectives*, in «Dialogue&Universalism», XXVI, 3, 2016, pp. 41-58.

3 K. JASPERS, *Allgemeine Psychopathologie*, (8th edition), Springer, Berlin 1923, p. 283.

of the psyche intended as a strict psychological understanding and distinguished from the process of causal explanation. In Jaspers' view, the genetic understanding focuses on the «arising one from another» (*Auseinanderhervorgehen*) of psychic moments⁴. Such a process becomes visible in motivational structures, in contrasting effects, and in almost dialectical turns that characterize the soul in its individuality. Here, the polarity notion rules the primary conflict of human living experience.

In this sense, Jaspers' inquiry implicitly gets close to the psychoanalytical therapeutic work and the correlated research. Psychoanalysis explores a plurality of conflicts within the psychic dynamics. Ambivalence is for Freud and for the whole psychoanalytical tradition after Freud a distinguished trait of human nature. The relationship to Jaspers' approach to polarity thinking is evident. Nevertheless, although longing for a coherent epistemological foundation of such a view, psychoanalysis cannot yet rely on the foundational work provided by Jaspers due to his known scepticism toward fundamental psychoanalytical presuppositions.

In his theory of understanding, by focusing his research mainly on the problem of the evidence of experience, Jaspers abandons the notion of polarity. As a consequence, the idea of conflict itself ultimately disappears in the background, thus restraining his discussion with psychoanalysis to the question of evidence and the limits of understanding. In this context, Jaspers accuses Freud of disregarding the barriers that are imposed on understanding both by biology and existence, thus trying to extend the process of understanding to both these fields without any legitimacy. In Jaspers' view, this produces a methodological derangement that finally leads to what Jaspers considers a mere «as-if-understanding»⁵.

Actually, his critique goes even further claiming the necessity of identifying ideal-typical structures within the psyche that can bear an evidence-based a priori foundation of his hermeneutical psychology. Among others, Graumann underlines that by referring to ideal-typical structures, Jaspers seems to fall back on a *static* theory of understanding, thus leaving the field of the genetic approach⁶. For the same reason, the idea of polarity also loses its significance and introduces a growing distance between Jaspers and psychoanalysis.

In conclusion, Jaspers' influential approach to psychic life reinforced the reservations toward psychoanalysis, thus letting promising psychoanalytical insights into epistemological and anthropological issues disappear from the focus of psychological and philosophical research. In this way, a fruitful approach to the understanding of the crucial role of conflict within human nature and human experience was dismissed. The possibility to use phenomenological and hermeneutical instruments to corroborate the psychoanalytical understanding of ambivalence as a fundamental trait of human nature and the connected psychic conflicting dynamic was, therefore, completely missed.

Nevertheless, in my view psychoanalytic results are central for the undertaking of

4 *Ivi*, p. 255.

5 *Ibid.*

6 M.H. GRAUMANN, *Das Verstehen. Versuch einer historisch-kritischen Einleitung in die Phänomenologie des Verstehens*, in W. Balmer (ed.), *Die Psychologie des 20. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 1: *Die europäische Tradition*, Kindler, Zürich 1976, p. 212.

an adequate interpretation of human nature free from naturalistic and idealistic misconstructions. In order to be fruitfully applied as a comprehensive theory of conflict, however, such results require a preliminary suitable foundation that can be provided, in my view, by Edmund Husserl's phenomenology and in particular by intentional-genetic phenomenology.

Such an effective encounter between psychoanalysis and phenomenology presupposes a new understanding of phenomenology itself. This should no longer only be a source of essential descriptions of acts of consciousness, but should instead provide an encompassing and complex theory of personal experience⁷. Indeed, the Husserlian elaboration of the phenomenological method already provides excellent tools for the analysis of the developmental processes of human subjectivity. At the core of his genetic phenomenology lies the understanding of the ambivalent structure of subjectivity as well as a strong theory of motivation intended as a dynamic structural law of personal experience.

In what follows, I unfold the psychoanalytical insights into the conflicting structure of human experience by interpreting them with the tools of the intentional-genetic analysis. On one hand, I aim at gaining an epistemological foundation suitable for the psychoanalytic claims, and on the other, I attempt to make a contribution to phenomenological anthropology. Finally, the great potential of the intentional-genetic method developed within the phenomenology of Husserl should become manifest.

2. Polarity and Conflict in Psychoanalysis

Leon Wurmser (2001) claims that psychoanalysis is properly a science of conflict. The point of departure of such a science is the experience of scission (*Spaltung*), the observation of the conflicting reality of self and world, the experience of «harsh oppositions», and the polarisation of good and evil, justice and injustice, joy and pain, magnitude and nullity, and trust and horror⁸.

For Freud, psychic life is already a fight of opposite tendencies or, if we do not want to describe it in dynamic terms, it consists of contradiction and opposition pairs⁹. The aim of psychoanalysis is to determine in which way these oppositions shape each other into a reciprocal relation, how one influences the other, and which tendencies radiate from the other¹⁰.

7 Husserl develops this view systematically in *Ideas II*: E. HUSSERL, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. Second Book. Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*, translation by A. Rojcewicz, A. Schuwer, Kluwer, Dordrecht 1989, pp. 183-293.

8 L. WURMSER, *Die zerbrochene Wirklichkeit. Psychoanalyse als das Studium von Konflikt und Komplementarität*, vol. 1: *Die Suche nach dem Absoluten und das Finden des Maßes*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 2001, p. 12.

9 See S. FREUD, *Introductory Lectures On Psycho-Analysis*, translation by J. Strachey, The Hogarth Press, the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, London 1963 (The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, vol. XV), Lecture IV. (Freud's texts from the Standard Edition will be cited in terms of: author, year of origin, S.E., volume (numeral), page).

10 *Ibid.*

Concepts such as opposition, contradiction, polarity and ambivalence are present in each stage and in each moment of the development of Freud's psychoanalytic theory. They play a descriptive function but are also described as conclusive results and even as ontic postulates of the theory. By means of such concepts, he tries to determine factual and at the same time unavoidable traits of human nature. In 1892, Freud had already used the term 'opposite will' (*Gegenwillen*) to describe the primary conflict dynamic of the psyche. This notion works as a forerunner of the psychoanalytically crucial concept of 'defence' (*Abwehr*). Furthermore, with the progressive increment of the analytical material, more and more opposition pairs appear gathered directly from the psychic dynamic. Those are the tendencies and contra-tendencies responsible for Freudian slips, symptoms, dreams, conflicting active and passive aims of libido, antagonisms in the field of partial drives as well as daily experiences of ambivalence that every so-called 'normal' human being may be familiar with.

Freud's idea of polarity remains unthematized for a long time, even if implicitly widely used and unfolded in the descriptions of singular psychic dynamics. However, in the essay *Triebe und Triebchicksale* (1915) he appears to strive towards a general conception of this fundamental idea¹¹. In this essay, Freud claims that the awakening of drives is influenced by three fundamental polarities that rule on psychic life and that also determine the drives' destinations. The first (1) is the polarity of activity and passivity intended by Freud in terms of biological forces. The second (2) is the polarity between the I and the outer world. This is understood as a real polarity, i.e. as a factual contraposition between the subject and the world. The last one (3) is the polarity between pleasure and displeasure, that for Freud delineates an 'economic' of the psyche.

These three polarities gain their decisive significance in Freud's psychoanalysis in the context of his structural model of the psychic personality in connection with the psychodynamic law of the drive-defence dynamics. This model was presented for the first time in Freud's work *Das Ich und das Es* (1923) and marked an essential turn in psychoanalytic thought about subjectivity¹². In contrast to the traditional philosophical theories of subjectivity, Freud unfolds a very complex, multi-layered and dynamic theory of psychic personality. In his view, the I represents no autonomous bearer of subjective action. The I is rather described as the structure of the person, which is developed when the person itself is already involved in manifold dependencies and has to face conflicts on many levels. Therefore, the I is exposed to demands coming from its own corporeality as well as from drives (*Es*) and from the outer world characterized by moral norms and culture (*Überich*) where intersubjective social obligations play a decisive role. According to this view, the I is not understood as a pure residue of consciousness, but rather as an agent that functions unconsciously at least partially, but in a fundamental sense. The I is the subject that faces the life-determining task of conflict-coping. In order to accomplish such a task, the I must be able to integrate contradictory tendencies, demands and desires within the psychic personality and be able to make them suitable for social interaction.

11 FREUD, *Instincts and their Vicissitudes* (1925), S.E. XIV, pp. 117-140.

12 Id., *The Ego and the Id* (1923-25), in S.E., XIX, pp. 1-66.

In the context of this analysis, Freud's crucial achievement consists of the description of the elementary processes implied by the conflict transformation. He describes both successful as well as failed solutions to conflict situations drawing on so-called 'drive defence mechanisms' (*Triebabwehrmechanismen*). The drive defence mechanisms function essentially on an unconscious level thus eluding the subject's capability to reflect on itself. Despite this elusive character, however, these mechanisms can be made understandable in the context of the psychoanalytic work. To accomplish this task, the psychoanalytic understanding does not simply aim at a mere reconstruction of the past. It instead strives toward the unfolding of unconscious conflicts and conflict transformation processes that have taken place at the unconscious level.

The psychoanalytical technique achieves awareness of conflict relying on the method of free association, the analysis of dreams and especially the analysis of transfer and contra-transfer dynamics in current intersubjective situations¹³.

Conflict transformation connotes here the development of personality that takes place through different forms of integration of its inner contradictory poles, depending on her own maturity. Concretely, this means training ourselves to abide the fear that comes together with each desire, to keep loving despite frustrating and aggressive impulses, to realize our plans despite unavoidable uncertainty and lack of experience. We do not always succeed in coping with such tasks¹⁴. In this case, we persevere on the one desired pole of the contradiction while we split away from the feared pole, trying to ignore that they belong together. We deny, idealise, rationalise. We hold on unrealistic plans or do not dare to begin anything new. We ascribe our negative impulses exclusively to others (projection) or blame ourselves even when we could not have had any possible influence on the events (melancholia).

These processes determine our (subjective) psychogenetic development and at the same time extensively influence the formation of our social reality, our relationship with others, and our valuation and assessment capacity. We face fields of experience that can be designated from a phenomenological point of view as the pre-predicative sphere of experience. This is the field of passivity that essentially determines the motivational horizon of personal subjects. We will soon see how such passivity can be understood in the genetic phenomenology of the lifeworld. Nevertheless, before we proceed to this next point, it is important to mention the significant role played by conflict dynamic in human experience both in the biographical ontogenetic perspective of becoming a self and in the understanding of current subjective and intersubjective experience connections in the sense of an actual-genesis¹⁵.

13 On the psychoanalytical transfer see M. NEYRAUT, *Le transfert. Etude psychanalytique*, PUF, Paris 1974.

14 Particularly the late psychoanalysis shows that the success or failure facing such existential tasks do not only depend on us, but rather involve the experience of a «holding surrounding world» (see D.W. WINNICOTT, *The Maturation Processes and the Facilitating Environment: Studies in the Theory of Emotional Development*, in M. Masud, R. Khan (Eds.), Tavistock Publications, London 1965, pp. 42-47.)

15 The notion of actual-genesis traces back to Kurt Lewin, who develops this concept within his field

3. Genesis and Motivation of Conflict

Stavros Mentzos dedicates much attention to psychogenetic conflict. In *Neurotische Konfliktverarbeitung* (1982) he systematizes and differentiates multiple conflict forms and levels all belonging to the psychogenesis of the human individual¹⁶. In this context, he takes into consideration the early forms of individualizing dynamics that characterize the so-called pre-oedipal development of the human subject only rudimentarily treated by Freud. His investigation makes it clear that in its development, human beings do not get involved in conflict situations as soon as the social integration takes place. Rather, the development of the Self itself begins in the face of the challenge of conflict¹⁷. More precisely, the process of coping with conflict provides the condition for every possible development of the subject.

The deepest and most elementary level of conflict that characterizes the human ontogenesis begins in Mentzos' view with the dynamics of incorporation and extrapolation. In feeding and care – as physiological and emotional processes – the human child is an active subject and passive object of elementary processes at the same time. Along these processes, the baby attempts to reach an outline of the other on which basis she can finally form her own self-image.

Undoubtedly, from the point of view of the external observer such processes already bear a social character presupposing two individuals who are able to communicate with each other. However, in this phase we cannot identify any individual separation from the point of view of the experiencing inner perspective. The I, i.e. the Self, is far from being given as a definite and separated unity. It rather arises and forms itself as a proper subjective structure only in the course of the differentiating process, which in turn implies coping with conflict and conflict transformation.

Mentzos shows how the diverse forms of conflict are transformed differently accordingly to the corresponding developmental stage and maturity of the subject. Only in this way may conflict reach its manifested intersubjective form. Conflict transformation does not namely refer only to social conflicts already structured and visible in the interpersonal world, but also to conflicting tensions that inform both the inner and the intersubjective world and of which both need to be transformed since conflict cannot be eliminated from human subjectivity.

In his work, Mentzos admirably manages to describe human ontogenesis in a highly differentiated way on the basis of conflict dynamics, thus providing the understanding psychology and, in my view, also the philosophy of subject with a lively framework for genetic analyses. However, conflict also plays a significant role in the actual-genesis of human subjectivity. The focus on actual-genesis implies the consideration of a current experiential situation that is analysed by referring to its specific motivational dynamic. Such an actual-genetic approach is particularly adequate to overcome the limits of the

theory. See: H. FITZEK, *Gestaltpsychologie kompakt. Grundlinien einer Psychologie für die Praxis*, Springer, Dordrecht 2014, p. 9.

16 S. MENTZOS, *Neurotische Konfliktverarbeitung. Einführung in die psychoanalytische Neurosenlehre unter Berücksichtigung neuer Perspektiven*, Fischer, Frankfurt a. M. 1984, p. 23.

17 *Ivi*, pp. 42-56.

naturalistic reduction since it allows us to drop the linear causal schema that immediately connects causes and effects and to instead directly refer to motivation. This should not be understood as a weak form of causality. It rather indicates a dynamic force field (*Wirkungsfeld*), which is characterized by manifold tension structures and complexity of needs.

Moreover, motivations do not indicate universal needs constantly belonging to the subject, for example, in the sense of Maslow's hierarchies of needs¹⁸. They are instead always concrete intentionalities and indicate specific and vivid possibilities of establishing a relationship with oneself and with the world. They are shaped through experience and are always specifically focused on determinate objects or classes of objects. Above all, motivations configure contrastive pairs, they urge us to take a decision, and compel us to compromise our behaviour, therefore shaping our development as subjects in the lifeworld.

Such an understanding of motivation can be traced back to Wilhelm Dilthey's life philosophy and his interpretation of motivational structures. Dilthey shows that motivations are composed in complex structures (*Strukturzusammenhänge*) that are at the same time described as developmental structures (*Entwicklungszusammenhänge*). According to his view, each lived experience does not identify a frozen mental state within the psychic context, but should rather be understood as an effectively working unity involved in multiple tension fields that cover the entire psychic life¹⁹.

Following Dilthey, Jaspers also refers to tendencies immediately generating contra-tendencies, desires permanently accompanied by fears, willing carrying an opposite willing in itself, and so on. Such an approach corresponds to the psychoanalytic understanding of motivational dynamics and promises a fruitful treatment both of daily phenomena and pathological conflict symptoms. As we know, psychoanalysis addressed foremost the field of those failing conflict transformations that gained the title of neuroses. As a result, this discipline is prejudicially held to be exclusively committed to pathology thus being unable to provide a general psychology and, more importantly, a universal theory of the subject. In my view, the phenomenological analysis of subjective experience can help invalidate such a prejudice²⁰.

4. *Phenomenology of the Person and the Role of Conflict*

Phenomenology originally deals with consciousness as a structure of intentional experiences. However, in the course of Husserl's investigations, phenomenology devel-

18 A. MASLOW, *A Theory of Human Motivation*, in «Psychological Review», 50, 4, 1943, pp. 370-396.

19 See W. DILTHEY, *Ideen über eine beschreibende und zergliedernde Psychologie*, B.G. Teubner Verlagsgesellschaft/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Stuttgart 1957 (*Gesammelte Schriften*, V), p. 139 ff.

20 I present a systematic attempt to ground psychoanalysis as a general psychology from a phenomenological point of view in: J. BRUDZIŃSKA, *Depth Phenomenology of the Emotive Dynamics and the Psychoanalytic Experience*, in D. LOHMAR, J. BRUDZIŃSKA (Eds.), *Founding Psychoanalysis Phenomenologically. Phenomenological Theories of Subjectivity and the Psychoanalytic Experience*, Springer, Dordrecht 2011 («Phaenomenologica», 199), pp. 28-65.

ops into an encompassing theory of personal experience and lifeworld as the concrete environment of such experience. In this context, the turn impressed upon the concept of experiential subjectivity that transforms the latter from a theoretical subject of consciousness into a complex and concrete person gains decisive importance. The notion of person first emerges in phenomenology in Husserl's lectures from 1910–11 as the so-called, «natural person»²¹. In contrast to the abstract subject of consciousness, here the person is described as a holistic developing structure embracing bodily, psychic and motivational dimensions. Accordingly, the body is no longer grasped as a mere givenness within nature. We rather gain insight into the double givenness of the material body and the perceiving living body. Furthermore, in his *Ideas II* Husserl conceives such a person in terms of a spiritual person (*geistige Person*) who in the transcendental perspective is grasped as the personal I of habitualities. In a certain sense, this perspective can still be considered as egological, even if egology is here interpreted in an entirely new manner.

Husserl's analysis focuses on the differentiation of two attitudes of experience: the naturalistic and the personal attitude²². The latter no longer refers to the person in terms of a layered model or a psychic-spiritual annex connected to the body. The person rather stands out as a unity characterized by two fundamental traits: the reference to the surrounding world and the social connection. It becomes clear that living body (*Leib*) and material body (*Körper*) belong to different experiential contexts and should therefore not simply be grasped as unities lived and experienced from inside or from outside. The living body represents rather a personal and even passive sense-performing structure (*Sinnleistungszusammenhang*) that makes an elementary first awareness of the body itself as a natural thing possible in the first place.

In this context, bodily passivity, does not indicate a lower layer of experience. The latter should instead always be grasped as a permanent interaction of passivity and activity. Within such a dynamic structure, passivity functions essentially as a pre-reflexive and unconscious field of experience in the broadest sense. Addressing the instinctual, willing, and affective characters of the passive sphere, Husserl refers to them as the «bustle (*Getriebe*) in the sphere of passivity»²³. It becomes clear that such a living structure that supports all intentional reference to the world cannot be characterized in a linear, unambiguous and unique way. It rather indicates a highly conflicting structure characterized by contrasting streaking and interweaving tendencies, strivings and willing impulses. Therefore, passivity appears as an effective and functioning field that crosses the whole intra- and inter-subjective dimension of experience including the unconscious sphere. It emerges, finally, as a particular form of activity, also identified with the notion of receptivity.

In order to prove such a claim, we refer to Husserl's analyses on affective tendencies and receptivity as the lowest level of the egological activity as they are presented

21 HUSSERL, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology. From the Lectures, Winter Semester, 1910-11*, translation by I. Farin, J. G. Hart, Springer, Dordrecht 2006, p. 2.

22 ID., *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology*, cit., pp. 183-194.

23 *Ivi*, p. 234.

in *Experience and Judgment*²⁴. Here he points out the interests of the I expressed by its ‘tententious behaviour’ and its striving towards realization as well as all of the I’s apperceptive performances even on the lowest level of passivity. In the context of such analysis, it becomes evident that even association cannot be understood as a formal law of consciousness, but must rather be interpreted as a content-laden and also, a motivational lawfulness based on the transfer of affection from one experience to the other and functioning as an awakening process²⁵. Affective tendencies have an impact in each awakening of experience, either in an associative or in a dissociative way, i.e. either confirming the experience or destroying it. Affections are at work in the transfer as well as in the inhibition of the transfer of the affective content in present perceptions, in the constitution of past and future dimensions of consciousness, and finally in empathy, which is understood in a broader sense as phantasy performance.

Moreover, whenever the impressional present does not dominate consciousness, subjective inclinations, impulsive and affective, need-, desire- and fear-determined anticipations gain high significance for the constitution of the experience. This is what happens in dreams, memory, and also in interpersonal interactions and in practical actions. Here the transfer-processes of the affective content appear to adapt in different ways to our practical necessities. In coherence with Freud’s observations, we subsume these manifold processes under the title of ‘logic of desire’ since it is above all desire and need that work here as driving forces shaping the sense of experience.

In this context the deep teleology of personal life emerges and the unfolding of the striving nature of experience finally reveals the practical character of intentionality. This is not restricted to a particular class of intentionality, such as phantasy or willing tendencies, but rather informs all kind of intentional experience and connects directly with the notion of affection. In contrast to the transcendental idealistic critique of knowledge developed by Kant, phenomenology does not identify affection with alleged passive-sensual sensibility of consciousness or with the mere reaction of a content-deprived I, free from affections and bodily conditioning. The obscure reign of passive genesis rather appears as the motivated and concrete source of awakening interests of the subject. Passive genesis represents the most elementary level of subjective performance qualified through a striving character and pushed towards expression in the diverse dimensions of representation, corporeality or affectivity. Husserl also detects in this context instinctive and drive-based preferences that lead to an effective comprehension of the striving character of affective experience²⁶.

At such an elementary level of our experiential life, our attention and interests are awakened as we strive toward something or flee something, when we follow our preference or feel disgusted by something. In this context, drives do not simply bear willing models, but rather unveil preferences which are grounded in subjective biography and trace back to the experiential history of the subject itself.

24 HUSSERL, *Experience and Judgment. Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic*, L. Landgrebe (Ed.), translation by J.S. Churchill, K. Ameriks, Northwestern University Press, Evanston 1973, p. 76 f.

25 ID., *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis. Lecture on Transcendental Logic*, translation by A. J. Steinbock, Kluwer, Dordrecht 2001, p. 198 f.

26 *Ivi*, p. 197.

On the basis of such descriptions, the meaning of Husserl's claim assessing affection as the lowest level of subjective activity – an activity in passivity – becomes clear, thus revealing affection itself as co-determined by the whole content (*Bestand*) of experience of personal life. In contrast to the classic perspective of transcendental philosophy, passivity does not indicate a sphere deprived of the I. This sphere rather determines the I itself in a fundamental way as *subject of practical intentionalities*.

Therefore, passivity is not reduced to mere neutral affections and indifferent external sensual stimuli rushing in from outside. Each motion within this living sphere produces valuation, thus expressing willingness, inclinations or repulsions. This is the subjective life form that can only be experienced through emotive motivational evidences, tendency and striving, preferences and tendentious moods, and can therefore be effective in the form of actual awakened interests. This complex dynamic reveals the practical character of intentionality whose core is essentially shaped by conflict and ambiguity.

Husserl calls the proper subject of such intentionality 'transcendental person'. He elaborates this notion in the 1930's in order to address an apparently hybrid figure that he also calls, 'concrete transcendental I'²⁷. This is a subject determined both by its corporeality and affectivity, which is temporally and historically structured and finally emerges as an encompassing motivational connection that can only be appropriately comprehended from within. In this context, personal corporeality appears not simply as the material bearer of the spiritual capacity to take position and commit to values, but rather as an organ of expression of evidences that are always pre-shaped on the pre-reflexive level. Personal world consists in an intertwined connection in which the I and the Thou function reciprocally merging and affecting each other interdependently. The discovery of motivation as a fundamental lawfulness of the infinite stream of consciousness and the personal life indicates that such intersection of tendencies can still be understood despite their interwoven character. The attempt to achieve such a kind of comprehension based on motivation and on its conflicting structures characterizes the genetic-phenomenological meaning of experience.

5. Conclusions: The Case-Study of Peace Workers in NGO

The vitality of the passive sphere of experience draws upon its conflicting nature intended as a motivational bustle. Here we face synchronic contradictory tendencies, tendencies that immediately produce the opposite, inclinations intertwined with repulsion, just as Dilthey, Freud and Jaspers described it. In other words, we face the logic of ambivalence. As suggested in Husserl's analyses from the 1920's, particularly in his investigation on passive synthesis, conflict is not an additional, accidental or merely

27 HUSSERL, *Zur Phänomenologie der Reduktion. Texte aus dem Nachlass (1926-1935)*, S. Luft (Ed.), Kluwer, Dordrecht 2002 (*Hua XXXIV*). See also S. LUFT, *Phänomenologie der Phänomenologie. Systematik und Methodologie der Phänomenologie in der Auseinandersetzung zwischen Husserl und Fink*, Springer, Dordrecht 2002, p. 302.

possible character of experience that can and should be deleted. Conflict rather provides the fundamental structure of experience.

The insight into the motivational connections as developing structures of subjectivity characterizes phenomenology as an intentional-genetic theory of personal experience.

However, the unfolding of motivational structures requires the pursuance of the tensional structures that already shape motivation on the pre-predicative and even associative level. Here, the significance of conflict as constitutive character of experience emerges fully. Moreover, it becomes unmistakable that motivation cannot be treated as a weak and imprecise form of causality since it is unveiled as a fundamentally different kind of experiential structure.

In order to clarify such a structure, I would like to consider in my conclusive remarks an example taken from the motivational analysis in psychological research. However, in order to undermine the prejudicial claim that psychoanalysis as a conflict theory can only draw on and treat pathological phenomena, based on an example taken from qualitative research in morphological psychology based on psychoanalytical and phenomenological tools²⁸. By doing this I intend to show how a well-informed and methodologically aware motivational analysis should proceed and what the results of such analysis focusing on the conflict structure of human experience can lead to.

The following example is taken from a morphologic research on peace organizations and peace workers²⁹. The leading question of the investigation was «why do people engage in peace work?». On the basis of free associations, many reasons can be mentioned: the fear of external threat, the desire to achieve something good for the world or, as philosophers prefer to think, the striving toward the realization of higher values. Indeed, at first we face a manifold of impulses and tendencies, which can be revealed through free associations and are either conflicting or at least not immediately reducible to a unique coherent explanation.

However, the morphologic approach allows us to pursue the diverse motivations, and grasp and arrange them into determining tension structures. In this way, we can recognize the polarity between the need for harmony and security and the opposite tendency towards active behaviour. On one side, the need for security constitutes a central tension field in the social world and accompanies us from childhood. On the other side, we have the will to influence the world, the need to keep control of events, and to face inner and outer conflicts. In other words, the polarity between passive and active tendencies comes to the foreground. To this point, it should be clear that both poles are understood as effective functioning unities that do not simply contradict each other, but on the contrary are reciprocally motivating and improving.

On the basis of this primary polarity, the peace worker is motivated to seek an adequate framework for her contrasting needs. She has to structure her own action and life

28 Morphological psychology is an everyday and cultural psychology developed at the University of Cologne by Wilhelm Salber in the 70-ties; see W. SALBER, *Wirkungseinheiten*, in N. Endres, A. Schulte (Eds.), Bouvier, Bonn 2007.

29 Motivational research developed by J. Brudzińska on behalf of Forum Ziviler Friedensdienst e.V. Cologne, 2015.

project between passive needs for security and active desires to act. In this process, she considers concrete possibilities and struggles with different frameworks that promise more or less feasibility and a positive outcome in terms of reforming the world, but at the same time she faces existential insecurity in the form of an often insecure, financially unclear and non-continuous career.

Furthermore, the concrete activity of the peace worker is designated to raise even more tensions. The often spiritually motivated and value-oriented dream of making the world a better place is confronted with boundaries. The other's pain, sufferance and trauma might produce discouraging effects. Ideals conflict with reality. Also in this case, the peace worker requires strategies in order to cope with the shadows of concrete experiences. More conflicting motivational tendencies emerge throughout this process. The peace worker pursues education, acquires technical competencies, and tries to prepare for new challenges by striving after a difficult balance between technical coverage and personal maturity. In this process, she experiences apparently unjustified since not pure altruistic and selfless motivations as determining. Those are desire of adventure, self-realisation and self-enhancement.

Are all of these motivational streams contradictory? Are we in need of a hierarchy, or an evaluation of the most important motives in order to take a decision about the reliability and adequateness of our engagement? A comprehensive and unveiling motivational analysis teaches us the contrary. We learn that the motivational field of a peace worker is grounded on and supported by *all* the previously mentioned motivational poles and tensions. All of that constitutes her vitality. The apparently contradictory constellations surely require solutions and these will be different according to ones own biography, character, culture, etc. One will strive towards more risky activities and concrete outcomes, the other will prefer more passive, secure, or perhaps spiritual and appealing ways. Nevertheless, all those who engage in peace work live in and experience the same motivational field. In order to understand their decisions we must gain insight into the specific constellation of motivational poles that are in no way direct causes of their action but still define the framework of their concrete personal and individual development.

The presented example aims at clarifying motivational dynamics in a field of relatively manifest phenomena. On the contrary, psychoanalytical understanding addresses deeper dimensions and attempts to unveil also latent and even unconscious motivations. To this end, specific techniques are required. However, in both cases the comprehensive understanding involves emotional insights and not merely logical evidences. Moreover, psychoanalysis aims not just to unveil tension structures and motivational conflicts, but also to integrate them into subjectivity.

In this sense Thea Bauriedel states the integration of motivational poles within the experience as the proper goal of psychoanalysis instead of the dissociation and elimination of undesired tendencies³⁰. Along with her, I claim that conflict cannot be eliminated from human subjectivity; rather, it essentially determines human nature and must conse-

30 T. BAURIEDL, *Beziehungsanalyse. Das dialektisch-emanzipatorische Prinzip der Psychoanalyse und seine Konsequenzen für die psychoanalytische Familientherapie*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a. M. 1989.

quently be taken seriously as constitutive element of human experience. This represents a decisive challenge for every psychology, anthropology, and philosophy that want to avoid naturalistic misinterpretations.