

develop the basis for an ethical relationship with the other based on proactivity and responsibility, while not employing traditionally continental arguments (e.g., Levinas' argument of the Face, 1991). So next time, when a philosopher wonders about the relationship between the self and the other, with a specific challenge in mind: two questions arise by thinking about this thought. First, how much of the Other is there traced in myself and what do we have in common? Second, how much can I be free and original in my responsibilities towards the other?

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Russia as the Other. A Phenomenological and Pragmatist Take on the Current Events in Ukraine

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The aim of my paper is to analyze the moral rift that underlies the current political rift between Europe and Putin's Russia. That there is such a rift is indicated by the fact that the Russian invasion of Ukraine has brought back war as a means of politics into the heart of Europe. Banning war as a means of conflict is the most fundamental aim of the European project. "Never again!": this catchphrase of the interwar pacifist movement has become the guiding principle of European Politics, the taboo on war demarcates the line between the politically justifiable and the unjustifiable in the relations of those who are part of this political and ethical community. In the past year, Europeans witnessed in shock how untroubled the Russian head of state seems in starting a spiral of escalation and destruction

in pursuing dubious ideological motives, an unreasonable desire for absolute security that really is a pretense for war, and very possibly a profound disgust precisely for the European peace project that he has come to challenge.

I will discuss the question of whether the key difference lies in a certain organizing principle of moral and political judgement, in the availability respectively absence of a certain foundational axiom. I will call it *pathic evidence*. I want to outline this idea by engaging in a discussion with several phenomenological and pragmatist thinkers. I will elaborate the idea of the foundation (Stiftung) of an organizing principle of thought by a historical, bodily experience: the experience of the violence of modern warfare and totalitarian rule. Phenomenology helps to understand the intermingling of the empirical and the transcendental, of the bodily and the ideal in experience, thus enabling to conceive of morality not as founded in *apriori*-concepts or in rational calculation of maximal general advantage, but as sedimentations of past experiences and thus history. Pragmatism helps to conceive of this process as a dialectics of means, ends and the consequences of the application of means that is mediated by certain conditions of communication and a certain constitution of the public. It will be discussed if a difference between two kinds of moral reasoning is rooted in different political systems, the freedom of communication und thus the capacities of making something evident. Democracy and authoritarianism provide different chances for the pathic evidence to become collectively shared. Whereas pathic evidence is – as shall be argued – essentially a breakdown of meaning, authoritarianism is marked by the tyrannical stabilization and clinging to a certain political project of meaning, thus by the suppression of pathic evidence. It is a rift in what I call the *flesh of the political*; a rift concerning the appearance of war that itself appears in this war and confronts European politics with a profound moral dilemma. The paper finishes with reflections on the fact the latter not only has to face an exterior that is marked by moral alterity, but an endangerment from the inside. From this *metaethical* standpoint, it is shown that the criteria of ethical thought are fragile and have an innerworldly fate. Thus, the philosophical reflection on the fragility of the moral foundations of the liberal order leads to the political question of

securing conditions in which the pathic condition not only survives but might become a common one after the ongoing bloodshed and destruction has come to an end.

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From the faceless pandemic to human tenderness

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Is it already possible to speak of a post-Covid era, and is it possible that, in barely a year, such a radical change in human beings has taken place? The pandemic has converged with the influx of social networks, the collapse of personal relationships and forced confinements that have redirected our gaze to two voids: ourselves and our homes (Han, 2021).

The filth of illness and the silence of death burst into our world of hygiene and noise. The hygiene of fashion, of waxed and tanned skins, of bodies equalised by cosmetic surgeries. This hygiene is now covered by a mask that hides the face and its make-up, veiled by skins covered with latex and prophylactic hydroalcoholic gels. The indistinct bodies are camouflaged by protective barriers against the virus, which is nothing more than a form of death. Some people think they can forget the irruption of mute chaos in our world and in our lives. However, there are chaos and pains, chapters in human history, that are impossible to forget. The appearance of death has not created an opening to the mystery, but has led to the human face being pushed into loneliness. Numbers, the desire for