

„Gleichzeitige Nähe und Ferne: Jean-Paul Sartre und Emmanuel Lévinas im Dialog/ Proximité et distance en même temps : Jean-Paul Sartre et Emmanuel Lévinas en dialogue“

Description:

The relationship of Jean-Paul Sartre and Emmanuel Levinas could be described as a missed encounter. Although they were contemporaries, their meetings and references to each other are few and do not testify a comprehensive knowledge of the works of the other philosopher. At first sight this seems surprising, since both philosophers have a lot in common, for example a common phenomenological heritage, coupled with the attempt to go beyond phenomenology. Likewise, there are many shared motifs in their philosophies, some of which bear structural proximity. For example, both demand an encounter with the other, instead of a derivation from the self or constitution through the ego, and both insist on his radical otherness. At second sight, however, their reflections seem to be marked by enormous contrasts, for example, Sartre's reflections on ethics, which ultimately remains unattainable, possessed an enormous distance to an ethics as the first philosophy in Lévinas. Even the encounter with the other could not end more differently for both philosophers: Thus, for Sartre, the gaze of the other implies the failure of every interpersonal relationship, whereas Lévinas sees in the face of the other the beginning of his ethics. As related as the motifs may seem, they are ultimately different in their respective execution. Both thinkers are characterized by a simultaneous thematic proximity and distance that is rarely peculiar to two philosophers. The scientific aim of the conference is therefore to examine the philosophical relationship between Sartre and Lévinas and thus to facilitate a dialogue in which the proximity and distance of their respective theories can be sharpened. The explication of the different answers given by both authors to thematically related questions reveals a tension between the two philosophies themselves. This tension is not necessarily to be read as pure contradiction. Possibly, it allows the individual phenomena to which both philosophers devoted themselves to be viewed in a new light, so that complementarities become visible. It offers the opportunity to catch up on a dialogue that Lévinas and Sartre should have conducted but never did.

Organization: Marius Sitsch

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Anmeldung bei/Inscription avec: mariussitsch@hotmail.de

Beteiligte Institutionen/ Institutions participantes: Institute for German and French philosophy, Faculty of Humanities of Charles University (FHS UK), Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences (AS CR), Deutsche Gesellschaft für französischsprachige Philosophie e.V./ Société de Philosophie de Langue Française en Allemagne e.V., SIF – Středoevropský institut pro filosofii/ Central European Institute for Philosophy

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