

PHENOMENOLOGY FROM ROBBE-GRILLET
TO JULIO CORTÁZAR:
AN ESSAY ON THE POETICS OF PRESENCE

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One of the most appealing aspects of comparative literature is its capacity to accommodate the undecided. Those who love scholarship but hesitate in their intellectual endeavors between different forms of art, national literatures, or disciplines, are welcome in the field of comparativism. And certainly some of the undecided are those who oscillate between the areas of philosophical and literary inquiry. A particularly meaningful declaration of unconditional affection to both philosophy and literature is found in Martha Nussbaum's *Love's Knowledge* (1990):

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Literary form is not separable from philosophical content, but is, itself, a part of content—an integral part, then, of the search for and the statement of truth. But this suggests, too, that there may be some views of the world and how one should live in it—views, especially, that emphasize the world's surprising variety, its complexity and mysteriousness, its flawed and imperfect beauty—that cannot be fully and adequately stated in the language of conventional philosophical prose, a style remarkably flat and lacking in wonder—but only in a language and in forms themselves more attentive to particulars. (iii)

Nussbaum's fragment interests us here, above all, for its equation of philosophy and literature as statements of truth. Since truth is necessarily a matter of epistemology, and since philosophy and literature are, according to Nussbaum, statements of truth, both disciplines must find their starting point in the specific discipline of cognitive inquiry, namely, epistemology.

My goal in this essay is to bring a very specific form of epistemology to bear upon a set of works of literature from both the European and the Latin American traditions. This bearing will disclose not only the intrinsic relation existing between philosophy and the literary texts at hand, but also a line of continuity extending between instances of European and Latin American literature at the level of what Nussbaum

calls *content*. The specific epistemology that I have in mind is the one generally subsumed under the term phenomenology, a sort of a philosophical stance that defies definition as a school, trend, or discipline, and that demands qualification within our text.

PHENOMENOLOGY AND LITERATURE: A CROSS-ATLANTIC PERSPECTIVE

272 In terms of its literary import, phenomenology has frequently been linked to the French *nouveau roman*; however, something akin to the search for essences outlined by the Husserlian method can also be found in Spanish-American literature. Taking select examples of Julio Cortázar's short prose as paradigm cases, I aim to show how phenomenology and its specific epistemology traveled from the European tradition to arrive at the heart of some Spanish-American texts.¹ I will start with a discussion of some of the key concepts of Edmund Husserl's philosophy in relation to phenomenology as a descriptive method. From a comparison of Husserl's work with select fragments of Alain Robbe-Grillet's novels, showing the latter's implication for phenomenology as a mode of literary writing, I will move into a consideration of Martin Heidegger's development of the Husserlian epistemological inquiry into existential phenomenology. I will then proceed to an analysis of selected pieces of Julio Cortázar's short fiction, read in the context of Heidegger's text. This will demonstrate how both the philosophical and the literary texts in question render reality from a similar cognitive perspective, arriving at a mutually corresponding truth. This idea of truth is cognitively bound to Husserlian phenomenology, in the case of Robbe-Grillet, and to Heideggerian existential phenomenology, in the case of Cortázar. My premise is that this type of reading of philosophy and literature in a comparative key heightens the experience of the texts at hand, elucidating the concepts of reality and truth as represented in the authors under discussion. In sum, Husserl's and Heidegger's epistemologies will operate as analytical tools to unfold the common phenomenological-literary procedures of Robbe-Grillet and Cortázar.

Julio Florencio Cortázar was born in Brussels, in 1914. He returned to Argentina with his family only after the First World War was over. In 1950, at the age of thirty-six, he moved to Paris, the city that, at the time, represented the heart of Western culture. It was there that the author would find the powerful and memorable expressions of the *nouvelle vague*, with its discourse of spontaneity and improvisation so precisely rendered in the films of Claude Chabrol and Jean-Luc Godard, and in the culture collage of the avant-garde, notably in the theater of the absurd, with its mixing of surrealism and existentialism. Paris was also the cradle of the *nouveau roman* of Alain Robbe-Grillet and Nathalie Sarraute, writers that searched for new approaches to literature, and who would become Cortázar's standards to be surpassed.

In his article “Cortázar and Postmodernity: New Interpretive Liabilities,” Neil Larsen contends that Cortázar attempted “to produce a *nouveau roman* that would be the envy of his French contemporaries” (61). Larsen’s assertion certainly calls for an in-depth comparative analysis of Cortázar’s text and the *nouveau roman*, with a focus on phenomenology as Cortázar’s and the *nouveau roman*’s common ground. The scholarly literature on phenomenology and the works of Cortázar strongly emphasize comparative readings of the Latin-American author and those of French philosophers Gaston Bachelard and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Like Martin Heidegger, whose philosophy is posited here as Cortázar’s phenomenological/epistemological ground, Bachelard and Merleau-Ponty are generally regarded as successors to the original Husserlian phenomenological method. Both of them inherited Husserl’s criticism of Auguste Comte’s positivism and adopted a phenomenological line of inquiry into the philosophy of science that resounded strongly within the realm of French thought.

The focus on the relation between Merleau-Ponty and Cortázar appears in two foundational articles by Louise Parkinson Zamora: “Deciphering the Wounds: The Politics of Torture and Julio Cortázar’s Literature of Embodiment” (1994) and “Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Cortázar’s Phenomenological Fictions” (1996). The first article focuses on Cortázar’s short story “Press Clippings,” which appears in the book *We Love Glenda So Much and Other Stories* (published originally in Spanish in 1980). Zamora points to Cortázar’s “discovery” of Merleau-Ponty while struggling to write his *Rayuela* (1963), which forms the basis of her assertion that “Merleau-Ponty’s conception of the lived body parallels Cortázar’s repeated rejection of what he considers the Western dichotomizing of subject and object” (“Deciphering” 102). Zamora reworks such dichotomizing in the second article, in which she notes that, “like Merleau-Ponty, Cortázar rejects the Cartesian privileging of the consciousness, dramatizing instead the fantastical resources of the lived body” (“Merleau-Ponty” 224). Zamora’s study of Cortázar and phenomenology thus focuses on Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of science and of the biology of the human body, a perspective that differs substantially from my examination of Cortázar’s text in relation to the existential phenomenology of Martin Heidegger.

More recently, comparative readings of Cortázar’s fiction and Bachelard’s philosophy have appeared in Brazilian criticism, a scholarly environment that has produced a large body of work on the Argentine author in the past few years. Here, Karina de Castilhos Lucena’s “Una fenomenologia da imaginação através do espaço” (2007) [A Phenomenology of Imagination Through Space] and Antonio Manoel dos Santos Silva’s “Espaços conhecidos mas estranhos: corpo, casa, rua, labirintos em Rubião, Cortázar e J. Veiga” (2011) [Spaces Known but Estranged: Body, House, Street, Labyrinths in Rubião, Cortázar and J. Veiga] are particularly noteworthy. Castilhos Lucena’s article analyzes Cortázar’s short story “Casa Tomada” (1946), connecting the fantastic space of the literary work with Bachelard’s philosophy presented in his *The Poetics of Space* (1958). Santos Silva’s article focuses on the same work

of Bachelard in comparison with Cortázar's *Bestiario* (1951). The seminal work on Cortázar and phenomenology, however, goes back to Mario Valdés's *Shadows in the Cave: A Phenomenological Approach to Criticism, Based on Hispanic Texts* (1982), in which Cortázar's *Rayuela* (1963) is analyzed from the perspective of a phenomenology of reception developed by Valdés, who perceives Cortázar's text as an experience realized in the reader's mind.

Since none of the abovementioned scholarly works attempts a direct comparative reading of Cortázar's texts and Husserlian/Heideggerian phenomenology, this article aims to contribute to the reading of Cortázar's oeuvre in the form of an essay on philosophy and literature that goes back to the foundations of Bachelard's and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenologies, that is, to the Husserlian and Heideggerian texts. While the relation between the Argentine author's work, on the one hand, and of phenomenology construed broadly as an epistemological approach, on the other, has been addressed in previous scholarship, my intention here is to show the possibilities of defining Cortázar's writings from the point of view of the Husserlian phenomenological method of description applied to the writing of literature. To this end, I will employ the works of Alain Robbe-Grillet as a comparative textual tool that will help bridge the European and the Latin-American traditions in terms of their relation to phenomenology at the philosophical and literary levels.

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The phenomenological import of Robbe-Grillet's fiction appears to be common knowledge in light of the large body of scholarship produced about his works in the past three or four decades. Victor Carrabino's *The Phenomenological Novel of Alain Robbe-Grillet* (1974) is a foundational work, which addresses some of the misconceptions about phenomenological tenets that appeared in Stephen Heath's *The Nouveau-Roman: A Study in the Practice of Writing* (1972). Heath approached Robbe-Grillet's writings as grounded in a sort of natural attitude close to scientificism. Re-evaluation of Robbe-Grillet's phenomenology appeared subsequently in works such as Elizabeth Ann Newton's *Phenomenology in the Works of Robbe-Grillet* (2003), in which the phenomenological reduction is construed as part of Robbe-Grillet's formal strategy for challenging literary and culturally-accepted views and expectations. More recently, in her article "Against Pre-Established Meanings: Revisiting Robbe-Grillet's Relation to Phenomenology" (2010) Hanna Meretoja contends that "what crucially links Robbe-Grillet to phenomenology is the critique of the essentialist, substantial views of the self and of pre-established, naturalized meanings, as well as the affirmation of the primacy of the flow of consciousness in which both the world and the self are constituted simultaneously" (128). It is important to emphasize here that, although Meretoja's view is largely valid, her perception of phenomenology as a critique of the essentialist view of the self is problematic in that it grants certitude to a very debatable aspect of the discipline. To be more precise, whether or not phenomenology criticizes an essentialist view of the self is a question open for discussion, and to construe it as such is certainly to generalize a large and complex body of texts that includes the majority of the works of Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger,

Sartre, Bachelard, and others. Most of all, it amounts to a departure from Husserlian phenomenology, which in its criticism of the natural attitude of the modern sciences did not call for the sort of critique of the self that is largely welcomed by a great many literary theorists.²

My perspective is not to assume that the phenomenological import of Robbe-Grillet's and Cortázar's texts amounts to a variation on the postmodern critique of the self, but to show that their texts repeat in literary form some of the methodological tenets presented in Husserl's text under the rubric of argumentative philosophy. In other words, I work from the assumption that what links Robbe-Grillet's and Cortázar's texts together is their similarity in content and in epistemological approaches in relation to Husserl's and Heidegger's texts. Of particular importance are questions of epistemology *per se*, and of the way they underlie the textual rendering of reality effected by both novelists, providing a comparative reading of philosophy and literature that leaves aside the questions of how their phenomenological writing might favor an alleged revolution of the self.

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An understanding of the relation between phenomenology and literature can be addressed in two basic ways. In the first, phenomenology appears as a theoretical tool applied to an inquiry into the text's most fundamental functions. Such an approach will bracket all elements foreign to the text itself (such as author, historical context, social significance, generic classification) in order to arrive at an interpretation of this text, or, relying on the directives of the Husserlian method itself, to describe its essence. This approach has also been applied to examine the essential features of literature as a whole, arriving at a hermeneutics of the art form. This is the approach used by Valdés in his above-mentioned work. The second approach, the one adopted here, considers how certain literary texts appear to be products of an application of the phenomenological method to literary writing, how they seem to discover the essences of that which they address (that is, reality as such), and how they relate to the basic philosophical tenets of phenomenology as a speculative discipline. Although the first and second approaches may overlap in some cases, the capacity of the phenomenological method to render in literary form the most immediate manifestation of things, or, to use Heideggerian terminology, to disclose the Being of beings, is what interests us primarily.

Construed as a method for literary writing, phenomenology explores the relation between that which manifests itself in consciousness and the possibility of its expression through language. Since, for phenomenology, consciousness is what makes the world knowable, consciousness itself forms the basis of phenomenological investigation. In devising the phenomenological method, Husserl starts at a foundational epistemology that investigates consciousness and its relational nature. Working through a critique of all knowledge biased by the accomplishments of the positive sciences, he argues for the validity of common lived experience as opposed to notions of truth determined by mathematized theoretical constructs. After questioning all that is taken for granted as unquestionably verifiable, Husserl retreats to the things them-

selves: nothing other than reality as it appears in consciousness, that is, phenomena.

Husserl's enterprise constituted a reaction to modern rationalism and empiricism, as expressions of subject and object, where the world is knowable as an entity that exists independently of the thinking subject. From this attitude derives, according to Husserl, the mathematization representative of Western thought,³ which started with the works of Galileo, in which mathematical truths are thought of as invariably valid, in spite of the mind that thinks them. In Husserl's view, modern philosophy wrongly construes consciousness as a faculty for being conscious, rather than an act of being conscious (Magliola 4). As perceptions, thoughts, and sensations are always perceptions, thoughts and sensations *of* something, consciousness exists only while already in possession of its object. Husserl then defines *phenomenon* as reality as it appears in consciousness, following that phenomena (and reality) cannot derive from a separation, but from the very encounter, between subject and object.

276 To Husserl, therefore, all knowledge derives necessarily from an act of consciousness. In its essential *intentionality*, consciousness is based upon acts of perception. Husserl's analysis of *intentional acts* is particularly significant to our inquiry into phenomenology and literature. The philosopher observes that each act of perception seizes the perceived object only in a limited fashion. For example, while standing in front of a building and directing my attention to it, I can perceive at first only its façade: the rear and the sides are yet unknown to me. Even by moving towards its surroundings, I still get nothing but partial views of that to which I point my eyes. Although I realize that the building does not exhaust itself in each partial perception, its entirety is not accessible to me in a single moment of sight. To each one of these partial perceptions, Husserl gives the designation of *noesis*, while the total seized insight is called *noema*.⁴ *Noesis* and *noema* play fundamental roles in Husserl's phenomenological method: they form the fundamental aspects of the individualized states of consciousness that amount to the substratum of reality as such. Partial perceptions (*noesis*) work as the primary elements of description. The possibility of their being rendered through language allows the Husserlian method to unfold into a descriptive approach to reality that is thoroughly literary. This will become more evident in the following discussion of the Husserlian phenomenological reduction.

In Husserl's system, the linguistic expression of noetic perceptions amounts to an unveiling of the essence of (conscious) phenomena. Presented as the core of the phenomenological method, noetic perceptions are the most basic constituents of phenomenal reality, operating as the way through which essences become accessible to the intellect. In order to arrive at such essences, or at the very *noesis*, Husserl's phenomenological method prescribes the elimination from the field of inquiry of all that is contingent and accidental to the phenomenon taken as the object of analysis. To such operation, Husserl gives the name *phenomenological reduction*. In Husserl's words:

The method of phenomenological reduction (to the pure "phenomenon," the purely psychical) accordingly consists (1) in the methodical and rigorously consistent epoché

of every objective positing in the psychic sphere, both of the individual phenomenon and of the whole psychic field in general; and (2) in the methodically practiced seizing and describing of the multiple “appearances” as appearances of their objective units and these units as of component meanings accruing to them each time in their appearances. With this is shown a twofold direction—the *noetic* and *noematic* of phenomenological description. Phenomenological experience in the methodological form of the phenomenological reduction is the only genuine “inner experience” in the sense meant by any well-grounded science of psychology. (*Essential Husserl* 325)

As the phenomenological reduction proceeds to the bracketing of all that is contingent to the phenomenon in question, and as it does so by “seizing and describing” the phenomenon’s “multiple appearances”, the reduction itself amounts to the rendering of individual *noetic* perceptions, which in turn form the basis for the disclosure of the essence of phenomena, an endeavor to be realized by means of the description of *noesis*.

Turning to the realm of the literary, we can now observe the opening paragraph of Robbe-Grillet’s *La jalousie* (1957) and see how it provides an example of a linguistic rendering of what Husserl calls *noesis*:

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Now the shadow of the column—the column which supports the southwest corner of the roof—divides the corresponding corner of the veranda into two equal parts. This veranda is a wide, covered gallery surrounding the house on three sides. Since its width is the same for the central portion as for the sides, the line of shadow cast by the column extends precisely to the corner of the house; but it stops there, for only the veranda flagstones are reached by the sun, which is still too high in the sky. The wooden walls of the house—that is, its front and west gable-end—are still protected from the sun by the roof (common to the house proper and the terrace). So at this moment the shadow of the outer edge of the roof coincides exactly with the right angle formed by the terrace and the two vertical surfaces of the corner of the house. (*Two Novels* 39)⁵

Here, the reader finds no indications of what the house looks like as a whole. No information is given about its architectural style, age, size, or location. The total picture of the house can only be assessed by summing up the individual flashes of perception that appear in the narrator’s visual field at each moment. In the same vein, no subjective data is stated. Nothing is told about how it feels to be in the house, or about any memories or sentiments the narrator may have in relation to it. Although his perceptions imply subjectivity, and his glances at the house apprehend it objectively, the subjective and the objective no longer appear as useful categories, since all that is left is what appears immediately in consciousness. This is what Husserl conceptualizes as the pure phenomenon.

Noetic descriptions such as the ones presented in Robbe-Grillet’s text, as well as the *noematic* perceptions to which they amount, are said to convey no depth. According to Roland Barthes:

For Robbe-Grillet the object has no being beyond *phenomenon*: it is not ambiguous, not allegorical, not even opaque, for opacity somehow implies a corresponding transparency, a dualism in nature. The scrupulousness with which Robbe-Grillet describes an object has

nothing to do with such doctrinal matters: instead, he establishes the existence of an object so that once its appearance is described it will be quite drained, consumed, used up. (13)

278 Robbe-Grillet's description of various *noeses* does away with psychologism. Such absence of the psychological can be regarded as the literary counterpart of Husserl's critique of psychology as a positivist science. In Husserl's view, both phenomenology and psychology are concerned with the same basic issue: consciousness. However, while psychology occupies itself with consciousness as an empirical being, that is, as a being whose impressions of the world are taken for granted as unquestionably verifiable, phenomenology is concerned with pure consciousness. In other words, psychology remains in what Husserl calls the natural attitude, that is, the empiricist attitude of the positive sciences⁶ (which, in his view, must be avoided if one is to arrive at the essence of the object in question). Phenomenology, in contrast, analyzes the very possibilities of consciousness itself, working, in Husserl's words, on "the uncovering of the *a priori* set of types without which 'I,' 'we,' 'consciousness,' 'the objectivity of consciousness,' and therewith mental being as such would be inconceivable" (qtd. in Kockelmans 145).⁷

A descriptive or phenomenological psychology would, then, provide the necessary basis to any empirical psychology. By disclosing the essence of consciousness, phenomenological psychology defines itself as an eidetic egological science that, as all phenomenology, relies methodologically on the phenomenological reduction. As Joseph Kockelmans notes:

In order to realize a pure phenomenological experience of my conscious life, in order to make this consciousness in its pure and unique being the universal theme of my research, I must put in between brackets as nonpsychical the general thesis of our natural attitude, according to which the real world about me is at all times known as a fact-world that has its being out there. In doing so, the thesis of the natural attitude is still experienced as lived, but I make no use of it any more in order exclusively to focus attention on the psychical as such. (120)

The phenomenological reduction discovers the field of the purely psychical, and as such comprises the only way to genuine inner experience. Nevertheless, as consciousness is always consciousness of something, inner experience will always entail the synthesis of subject and object. It is in this sense that Robbe-Grillet's descriptions are said to remain "on the surface." Subject and object are united in phenomena, and nothing can or should be said beyond them. In other words, repeating the Husserlian critique of the ungroundedness of psychology, Robbe-Grillet limits his field of observation and description to that which manifests itself in consciousness, and, as a result, produces a rigorous portrait of inner experience in noetic form. Psychologisms are deliberately avoided, and realism is replaced by the real. In the author's words:

Instead of this universe of "signification" (psychological, social, functional), we must try, then, to construct a world both more solid and more immediate. Let it be first of all by their presence that objects and gestures establish themselves, and let this presence

continue to prevail over whatever explanatory theory that may try to enclose them in a system of references, whether emotional, sociological, Freudian or metaphysical. (*For a New Novel* 21)

Robbe-Grillet's phenomenological/literary approach to disclosing sense data textually reveals objects and gestures in their "presence" rather than in the ultimately ungrounded assertion or intuition of their possible signification. Such presence is constructed narratively through the use of the present tense. Each *noesis* is depicted by a momentary resting in a single visual field, exhausting it descriptively as a phenomenon: once the experience is completely seized and revealed through language, the narration goes on to the next *noetic* unity. A succession of "nows" is created as the most immediate and effective mode of presentation of a chain of *noetic* experiences. Even when apparently contradictory, *noeses* remain valid as self-contained narrative units:

I am alone here now, under cover. Outside it is raining, outside you walk through the rain with your head down nevertheless, a few yards ahead, at a few yards of wet asphalt; outside it is cold, the wind blows between the bare black branches; the wind blows through the leaves, rocking whole boughs, rocking them, rocking, their shadows swaying across the white roughcast walls. Outside the sun is shining, there is no tree, no bush to cast a shadow, and you walk under the sun shielding your eyes with one hand while you stare ahead, only a few yards in front of you, at a few yards of dusty asphalt where the wind makes patterns of parallel lines, forks, and spirals. (*Two Novels* 141)⁸

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The opening paragraph of *Dans le labyrinthe* (1959) presents an apparently contradictory assertion about natural phenomena occurring outside of where the narrator finds himself. Nevertheless, nothing illogical or contradictory should be inferred from the text, for no specific meaning is to be derived from pure sense data. As Robbe-Grillet affirms:

If something resists this systematic appropriation of the visual, if an element of the world breaks the glass, without finding any place in the interpretative screen, we can always make use of our convenient category of "the absurd" in order to absorb this awkward residue. But the world is neither significant nor absurd. It is quite simply. (*For a New Novel* 19)

In a way very different from the Beckettian stream-of-consciousness rendering of the minds of schizophrenic characters, or from the portrayal of the meaninglessness of existence through the abandonment of rational discourse characteristic of the theater of the absurd, Robbe-Grillet's text presents that which shows itself in consciousness as belonging to the realm of truth regardless of its possible relational meanings. Construed as a realm independent of its flagrant unintelligibility or contradictory nature, truth is, from a phenomenological standpoint, the essence of all there is.

In this regard, and keeping within the phenomenological tradition, it is important to recall Heidegger's aesthetics and its assertion of the equivalence between art and truth. As Joseph Magliola points out, "truth for Heidegger is not *veritas*, or a

correspondence between subject and object, but *aletheia*, the ‘unconcealment’ of Being” (65). Such unconcealment can only take place in and through art. As Simon Glendinning notes, for Heidegger “the work of the work of art, or more precisely what he calls ‘great art,’ is nothing short of a ‘happening of truth,’ a ‘happening’ which is conceived not in the sense of the taking place of an adequate image or representation of beings or things, but an original opening-up or revealing of beings as such” (Glendinning 109).

If the eidetic quality of each *noetic* experience described in Robbe-Grillet’s fragment determines its belonging to the realm of truth independently of the overall contradiction evident in the text, it becomes clear that the “true” has a much more profound meaning than the one offered by its identification with the Latin word *veritas*. The two “nows” in the text are each equally valid as a bringing forth of the real, that is, as a disclosure of phenomena and of truth. It is important to note that the capacity of language to disclose phenomena is at the very basis of Heidegger’s theory of art. Relying on the Greek notion of *poiesis* as a “bringing forth” or “unconcealment,” and asserting that “all art is essentially poetry” (*Poetry* 72), Heidegger identifies art with language as that which brings forth the very world of human experience. According to him, “language alone brings what is, as something that is, into the Open for the first time” (*Poetry* 73).

While language has a foundational capacity, its immediate derivative art/poetry is that which achieves “the disclosure of the ‘open region’ within which beings appear, that is, the disclosure of the ‘truth of beings’” (Glendinning 112). Like truth, art, when authentically understood, is also *aletheia*, or unconcealment. Art, however, is also “mankind ‘dwelling’—dwelling in the Presencing which is Being” (Magliola 66). According to Heidegger:

Poetry is not an aimless imagining of whimsicalities and not a flight of mere notions and fancies into the realm of the unreal. What poetry, as illuminating projection, unfolds of unconcealedness and projects ahead into the design of the figure, is the Open which poetry lets happen, and indeed in such a way that only now, in the midst of beings, the Open brings beings to shine and ring out. (*Poetry* 72)

Robbe-Grillet’s passage demonstrates the capacity of language to seize the real, the immediate, and the undeniable, as pure sense data. In this sense, it discovers truth as unconcealment, showing that all that is, is primarily in consciousness. It follows that the poetic can only be produced by consciousness, as with all other things. Consciousness, then, is the locus at which all things achieve their “presencing,” which is, ultimately, being as such. In this sense, Robbe-Grillet’s phenomenological descriptions of pure sense data can be defined as what I call a “poetics of presence.” They disclose being as presence in the Open, that is, in all its immediacy and poetic truth.

To return to the Husserlian investigation of consciousness, we should note that it provides the foundation to an understanding of existence. For Husserl, “perception is the primordial existence-positing act and therefore constitutes the fundament of acts of any other kind” (Kockelmans 332). Recalling the origins of existentialism in

Kierkegaard as a reflection on human action, it becomes easy to perceive how Husserl's method enters the existentialist tradition. As phenomenology is directly applied to them, all assertions about human existence will appear grounded by epistemological validations. The nature of perception will determine the fundamental structures of human existence: temporality, regionalization of consciousness, and non-conceptual knowing (Magliola 57). From this point of view, Husserl's epistemology serves as a foundation for Heidegger's ontology, which, based on the relation between essence and existence, brings human action again to the forefront of philosophical inquiry. As Magliola observes, "Whereas Husserl brackets the question of existence so that he can better isolate the essence of the intentional act, Heidegger, radicalizing the Husserlian definition of consciousness, declares consciousness should be grasped not as a static but as a dynamic action, and indeed, as existence itself" (5).

The move from Husserl to Heidegger can be regarded as the move from pure consciousness to emotion-consciousness. It is true that, before Heidegger, Husserl had already mentioned the capacity of phenomenology to apprehend psychological phenomena. Through phenomenological psychology, it would be possible to bring to light the eidetically necessary typical form, or *eidōs*, of psychic phenomena such as perception, imagination, emotion, and so on. Nevertheless, it is Heidegger, not Husserl, who carries out a thorough investigation of such phenomena. In that sense, Heidegger's undertaking (especially the one carried out in *Sein und Zeit*, 1927) could very well be regarded as applied phenomenological psychology.

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What interests us here is an examination of the literary counterpart of the philosophical move from Husserl to Heidegger. As we shall see, while Robbe-Grillet's phenomenological descriptions of immediate sense data discover pure consciousness and disclose phenomena in their truth and eidetic quality, Cortázar's phenomenological descriptions of human emotion and action arrive precisely at the *eidōs* of psychic phenomena. In other words, the philosophical move from Husserl to Heidegger, that is, the move from pure to emotion-consciousness, is equivalent to the literary move from Robbe-Grillet to Cortázar.

Heidegger defined phenomenology as "the way of access to and the demonstrative manner of determination of, what is to become the theme of ontology" (*Being and Time* 31). Asserting that "ontology is possible only as phenomenology", Heidegger opens his *Sein und Zeit* (*Being and Time*) with a search for the essences of material objects. Although Husserlian terms such as *bracketing* and *reduction* rarely appear in the text, Heidegger proceeds to their actual application to locate the essence of specific objects in their utilitarian nature. In questioning what would be the essence of a hammer, for example, Heidegger suggests that its ontological significance dwells in its very utility as piece of equipment, that is, in its *handyness*. In that sense, the hammer's essence depends thoroughly on its relation with the world of humans. Repeating the same question now in regard to human beings, Heidegger concludes that the essence of such beings lies in their very existence. But if existence is based primarily on action, applying the phenomenological method to humans will result

in the discovery of their essence in their relation to the world around them. The individual encounters him- or herself as always already existing in the world. His or her constitution will be inherent to what Heidegger calls *thrownness*, that is, the fact of always already being in the world.

The individual thrown into the world is called by Heidegger “*Dasein*,” or “being-there.” But *Dasein* applies only to human beings who are able to confront their existence. They presuppose what Heidegger calls *taking care*, that is, the ability to interact intentionally with the objects in the world amidst which they exist. In that sense, *Dasein* implies the Husserlian notion of the faculty of perception and intentional consciousness as the existence-positing act. This existence-positing act opens the way to an existential-phenomenological inquiry that is the very gist of the turn from Husserl to Heidegger.

282 Drawing on the above discussion of Husserl and Heidegger, I examine the phenomenological-descriptive nature of Cortázar’s text and its relation to existential phenomenology in the Heideggerian mode. In the recent article “Existence, Nothingness, and the Quest for Being: Sartrean Existentialism and Julio Cortázar’s Early Short Fiction” (2009), Mark D. Harris discusses Cortázar’s early interest in Sartrean existentialism, as demonstrated by a review of a translation of Sartre’s *La nausée* (1938) written by the Argentine novelist in 1948 (Harris 6). Harris analyzes Cortázar’s short story “Axolotl” (1956) through a comparative reading with Sartre’s *La nausée* that focuses primarily on the novel’s main character, Antoine Roquentin. Although Harris’s assessment of Cortázar’s existentialism is well grounded, and the analysis presented in his essay is validated by a sound comparative effort, his approach does not bring the philosophical dimension to his discussion of Cortázarian existentialism. Cortázar’s phenomenological descriptive method of literary writing is key to understanding his relation to existentialist philosophy. I thus propose a comparative reading that engages philosophy and literature more directly through the texts of Heidegger and Cortázar and that explores the nature of Cortázar’s existential phenomenology as it appears in literary form.⁹ An important point to keep in mind is that the majority of Cortázar’s texts cited below, with the noticeable exception of *Historias de cronopios y famas* (*Cronopios and Famas*, 1962) and “La autopista del sur” (“The Southern Thruway”, 1966), have received scant academic attention. In fact, these texts occupy a somewhat marginal place within Cortázar’s oeuvre, as they seem to resist critical analysis. The following comparative reading with Heidegger’s philosophy, then, should also serve the purpose of bringing these texts to light.

Drawing on Heidegger’s terminology, we can observe that a poetic rendering of *Dasein* in its irredeemable obligation to deal with his own world, as stated in Heidegger’s abovementioned notion of *taking care*, can be discerned in the following paragraph from Cortázar’s *Historias de cronopios y famas* (1962):

The task of everyday softening of the tiles, the task of opening space in the muggy mass that calls itself the world, every morning encountering the paving stone of a repulsive name, with the dog-like satisfaction that all should be in its right place, the same

woman at the side, the same shoes, the same flavor of the same toothpaste, the same sadness of the nearby houses, of the dirty board in the windows with its letters “*Hotel de Belgique*”. (my translation)¹⁰

Here, Cortázar’s narrative repeats Heidegger’s rendering of *Dasein*. Cortázar’s *Dasein* finds himself surrounded by a world that is always his/her own. The same shoes are *his* shoes; the same toothpaste is *his* toothpaste; the same sadness, in its necessary subjectivity, is always *his* sadness. Besides being his own, the world to which *Dasein* finds himself always already belonging invites care as a necessary existential dimension. The paragraph opens with a list of unavoidable tasks that, ultimately, define *Dasein*’s very humanity. Such humanity is implicit in *taking care* as that which brings *Dasein* to light as being-in-the-world. In other words, it is through *taking care* that *Dasein* discovers himself as thrown into the world.

Heidegger further poses the question of what the world is:

Is “world” indeed a character of being of Da-sein? And then does every Da-sein “initially” have its own world? Doesn’t “world” thus become something “subjective”? Then how is a “common” world still possible “in” which we, after all, *are*? If we pose the question of “world,” *which* world is meant? Neither this nor that world, but rather the *worldliness of world in general*. (*Being and Time* 60)

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The world is, then, a characteristic of *Dasein* itself. It is an ontological concept that underlies the structure of being-in-the-world. Just as Heidegger defines it as something unavoidably inherent to *Dasein*, Cortázar calls the world a “muggy mass,” something gluey from which a flight would be impossible. This gluey mass also presupposes a specific space. The spatial content of *Dasein* is defined by the position in which its tools are found in its surrounding space. Heidegger writes that “the study of the spatiality of Da-sein and the spatial definiteness of the world takes its point of departure from an analysis of the innerworldly things at hand in space” (*Being and Time* 94). In the same vein, Cortázar positions his narrator in relation to its surrounding world, that is, the objects at hand that define the very spatiality to which it finds itself always already belonging.

In his text, Cortázar emphasizes how important it is that “all should be in its right place.” Similarly, Heidegger observes such a necessity from an ontological perspective:

Useful things have their *place*, or else they “lie around,” which is fundamentally different from merely occurring in a random spatial position. The actual place is defined as the place of this useful thing [...] in terms of a totality of the interconnected places of the context of useful things at hand in the surrounding world. Place and the multiplicity of places must not be interpreted as the where of a random objective presence of things. Place is always the definite “over there” and the “there” of a useful thing *belonging there*. (*Being and Time* 95)

In Cortázar’s text, by encountering his/her things in their definite “there,” that is, by encountering him/herself in his/her peculiar constitutive spatiality, the narrator is remitted to a specific psychological state. There is a “dog-like satisfaction that all should be in its place” (Cortázar 409). Such satisfaction shows that by encounter-

ing its objects in their appropriate spatiality, *Dasein* experiences a sense of security. To Cortázar, nevertheless, such a sense of security is overtly irrational. The satisfaction produced by the assurance of proper spatiality is a “dog-like satisfaction,” a sense of security based on instinctual gratification rather than on logical assessment. Cortázar, then, questions the validity of such a mood produced upon the encounter with ordered reality. To Cortázar, in his *everydayness*, the narrator tends to live under a false sense of security. But since such specific spatiality is inherent to his very ontological constitution, to question it becomes a very difficult task:

How it hurts to deny a teaspoon, deny a door, deny all that the habit licks until it turns into something satisfactorily soft. How much simpler it is to just accept the easy plea of the spoon, and employ it to stir the morning coffee. (my translation)¹¹

284 Here, Cortázar’s *Dasein* is prey to habit, or to the necessity of leading a functional life. Each object defined in its relation to *Dasein* finds by its turn the latter’s very humanity. Although ontologically constituted by its spatiality, Cortázar’s *Dasein* finds itself at odds with its surrounding world in a painful struggle for authenticity. While *Dasein* is defined by its existence in a world of functional objects, its intentionality allows it to project from the surrounding world and to arrive at a state of independence. The same does not occur with objects, which acquire their meaning only when in direct contact with *Dasein*:

A gentleman takes the bus after buying the newspaper and putting it under his arm. Thirty minutes later he comes down with the same newspaper under the same arm. But it is no longer the same newspaper; now it is just a mound of printed pages that the gentleman abandons on a bench.

Not very long after being left on the bench, the mound of printed pages becomes again a newspaper, so that a young man sees it, reads it, and leaves it turned into a mound of printed pages. (my translation)¹²

Here, the newspaper exists as such only while inhabiting *Dasein*’s world. In other words, the ontological nature of the newspaper resides in its *handyness*. But Cortázar does not only disclose the beings of material objects. As previously mentioned, he repeats the Husserlian/Heideggerian move from pure consciousness to emotion-consciousness and turns his attention to immaterial objects and states of mind. In the short piece “Instrucciones para llorar” (“Instructions on How to Cry”), for instance, the author arrives at a phenomenology of weeping:

The average or ordinary weep consists of a general contraction of the face and of a shuddering sound followed by tears and mucus [...]. Children will cry with their sleeves against their faces, and preferably in the corner of the room. Average length of the weep, three minutes. (my translation)¹³

Through the application of the descriptive method, Cortázar defines, spatializes and temporalizes the act of weeping, bringing it to light as a phenomenon. The eidetic nature of the act is disclosed in a poetic fashion, although not a traditional one. The act of weeping, especially when observed in its spatiality and temporality, only

acquires meaning in relation to *Dasein*, to the being that is temporal and spatial in its very essence. Children cry in the corner of the room, in a place that defines itself according to human existence; the average length of the weep is determined by its relation to human temporality.

Weeping will always be a product of what Heidegger calls *mood*, another element that is ontologically constitutive of *Dasein*:

Both the undisturbed equanimity and the inhibited discontent of everyday heedfulness, the way we slide over from one to another or slip into bad moods, are by no means nothing ontologically although these phenomena remain unnoticed as what is supposedly the most indifferent and fleeting in *Da-sein*. The fact that moods can be spoiled and changed only means that *Da-sein* is always already in a mood. (*Being and Time* 126)

As weeping presupposes a mood, Cortázar writes: “In order to weep, point your imagination in the direction of yourself” (409). In this sense, weeping can be produced intentionally through the pointing of *Dasein*’s consciousness towards itself and its mood. Cortázar refers to two existential situations capable of producing the mood that will bring *Dasein* to weep:

[In order to weep], think of a wild duck covered by ants, or of these gulfs in the Magellan Strait *where nobody ever appears*. (my translation; italics in the original)¹⁴

Death and solitude are elements that, brought to consciousness through symbolization, throw *Dasein* into the mood that will produce weeping. More than mere abstract notions, the two elements appear in *Dasein*’s consciousness as very clear mental pictures. These eidetic images are capable not only of bringing *Dasein* into a certain mood, but also of apprehending death and solitude in their most fundamental manifestations. Produced pictorially by intentional acts of consciousness and rendered through language and description, death and solitude are revealed as phenomena pertaining only to the world of *Dasein*. In the mental picture of a wild duck covered with ants, death is seen as simply something that manifests itself in consciousness; in the image of an ample, empty landscape, absence is apprehended intuitively and in relation to an emotionally charged space.

We can recognize the phenomenological descriptive method of Cortázar’s text as capable of disclosing in pre-logical fashion (that is, immediately) the essence of phenomena such as death and solitude.¹⁵ As we have seen with the ontological rendering of the newspaper as an entity dependent on a concrete relation with *Dasein*, phenomenological descriptions of material objects are also common in Cortázar’s work, for example, in “Instrucciones para subir una escalera” (“Instructions on How to Climb a Staircase”):

No one will have failed to notice that the floor will frequently fold itself in such a way that one portion of it ascends at a right angle from the ground’s flat surface while the next places itself parallel with it just to give way to a new perpendicular, a behavior that repeats itself in spiral or broken-line patterns at variable heights. By kneeling and placing the left hand in one of the vertical portions, and the right in the corresponding horizon-

tal, one will be in momentary possession of a step. (my translation)¹⁶

In its similarity to the fragment of Robbe-Grillet's *La jalousie* (1957) cited above, Cortázar's text is characterized by a lack of depth. His description of the stair step tells us nothing contingent to it. We learn nothing about its color, building materials, height, texture or peculiar form. The step is revealed through description in its most essential quality, as a phenomenon. Still, it can be regarded as intrinsically related to the world of *Dasein* in its particular spatiality and function. As Heidegger points out:

To describe the "world" phenomenologically means to show and determine the being of beings objectively present in the world conceptually and categorically. Beings within the world are things, natural things and "valuable" things. Their thingliness becomes a problem (*Being and Time* 59).

If "Instrucciones para subir una escalera" involves *Dasein*'s spatiality, its temporal nature appears in "Preámbulo a las instrucciones para dar cuerda a un reloj" (286 "Preamble to the Instructions for Winding Up a Watch"):

[When you are given a watch] you are given a new, fragile and precarious piece of yourself, something that is yours but is not your body, something that you must attach with a chain to your body as a desperate little arm hanging from your wrist. (my translation)¹⁷

As a "fragile...piece of yourself," the watch becomes inseparable from *Dasein*, which will never be able to escape its basic temporality. Heidegger calls such time-bound nature *originary temporality*, which is the temporal structure of *Dasein*'s existence, defined by Heidegger as *care*. While Heidegger emphasizes that *taking care* is grounded in originary temporality, Cortázar links the watch as material object to care as a governing factor in *Dasein*'s existence:

[When you are given a watch] you are given the necessity of winding up its spring every day, the obligation of winding it up so that it keeps being a watch; you are given the obsession of showing up at the right time in front of the shop windows of jewelry stores, in radio announcements, in the telephone service. (my translation)¹⁸

As the ground for his own projections, care entails spatiality and temporality as the structural foundations of the being of *Dasein*. But while compliance with time and space is required of such inherently temporal and spatial beings, Cortázar once again presents these categories as confining, as something that determines *Dasein*'s behavior in an authoritarian way.¹⁹ The contradiction seems to be based on *Dasein*'s very intentionality. As Heidegger explains in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (1975):

When we give the concise name "existence" to the *Dasein*'s mode of being, this is to say that the *Dasein* exists and is not extant like a thing. A distinguishing feature between the existent and the extant is found precisely in intentionality. "The *Dasein* exists" means, among other things, that the *Dasein* is in such a way that in being it comports toward what is extant but not toward it as toward something subjective. A window, a chair, in general anything extant in the broadest sense, does not exist, because it cannot comport toward extant entities in the manner of intentional self-directedness toward them. An extant being is simply one among others also extant. (64)

Even as intentionality is precisely what makes *Dasein* into an existing entity (differentiating its being from that of a mere extant thing), Cortázar seems dissatisfied with it, given the narrator's inability to transcend his confinement in the categories of time and space in which his being is grounded. The fact that intentionality itself is only possible while grounded in temporality and spatiality creates a contradiction when these categories are perceived as something to be overcome. Much of Cortázar's wrangles with inauthentic behavior spring from such contradictions: while capable of self-reflection, intentional consciousness is also capable of questioning its very ontological foundations. In that sense, the very ground for *Dasein*'s projection may appear as a limiting agent to its everyday *taking care*.

As we have seen, the reflexivity of intentional consciousness is capable of throwing *Dasein* into certain moods. The seizing of these moods through language as they appear immediately in consciousness, that is, as phenomena, is the focal point of the shift from Husserlian pure consciousness to Heideggerian emotion-consciousness. With that in mind, I will examine one of Cortázar's texts in which a specific mood appears precisely as *Dasein*'s encounter with itself, revealing in the process another instance of the author's phenomenological approach to emotion-consciousness.

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In "La autopista del sur" ("The Southern Thruway"), a short story that appears in the volume *Todos los fuegos el fuego* (*All Fires, the Fire*, 1966), Cortázar describes a traffic jam on a highway going from the French countryside to the city of Paris.²⁰ The characters, designated by the brand names of their cars, find themselves in the absurd situation of having to survive the jam, which appears to last several months. In their eagerness to survive, the drivers unite and start helping each other, creating emotional bonds with one another. The protagonist, identified as "The engineer with the 404," begins a love relationship with a woman called "The girl of the Dauphine." After a while, he finds out that she is pregnant.

At the end of the story, when the traffic jam starts to break off and the cars begin to move again, the protagonist discovers the fragility of the ties created between the drivers during the extended time of the congestion. As the cars distance themselves from one another, "The engineer with the 404" discovers himself immersed in a sentiment of anxiety:

The 404 still hoped that the forward and backward movement of the rows of cars would have allowed him to reach the Dauphine once again, but each minute would convince him more and more that it was useless, that the group was irrevocably dispersed, that never again would be re-enacted the routine encounters, the minimal rituals, the war councils in Taunus's car, the caresses from the Dauphine in late-night peace, the laughs of the children playing with their cars, the image of the nun touching the beads of her rosary. (my translation)²¹

As the drivers return to being mere strangers, the protagonist experiences anxiety as a mood in which *Dasein* is thrown into solitude, that is, into an encounter with itself. As Heidegger explains, "Angst individuates Da-sein to its ownmost being-in-the-world which, as understanding, projects itself essentially upon possibilities" (*Being*

and *Time* 176). As the mood proper to the fundamental attunement of *Dasein* with itself, *Angst* appears as the pivot of the movement to individuation:

Angst individualizes and thus discloses Da-sein as “solus ipse.” This existential “solip-sism,” however, is so far from transposing an isolated subject-thing into the harmless vacuum of a worldless occurrence that it brings Da-sein in an extreme sense precisely before its world as world, and thus itself before itself as being-in-the-world. (*Being and Time* 176)

In Cortázar’s text, the protagonist’s sense of loss repeats *Dasein*’s process of individuation through *Angst*. Left in sheer solitude, he experiences the basic reflexive encounter with the self that throws him into a state of anxiety.²² Such a state leads him to yearn wistfully for a retrieval that is no longer possible:

288 Absurdly he held to the idea that at nine-thirty the food would be handed out, that it would be time to visit the sick, to check the situation of Taunnus with the peasant with the Ariane; and then the night, it would be the Dauphine coming up furtively to his car, the stars or the clouds, life. Yes, it had to be like that; it was not possible that it all had ended forever. (Cortázar 522)²³

Just as with the eidetic image of emptiness symbolizing solitude and provoking *Dasein*’s weep, Cortázar provides here a vivid picture of loneliness and anxiety through the use of descriptive language. Rather than simply talking about it directly, the author brings such phenomena to light in a purely intuitive fashion, without the attempt at logical elucidation that is proper for empirical psychology. As no somatization of states of mind appears in the narration, what is left to the reader is a picture of the character’s inner world, and, in this way, an access to its emotion-consciousness. The bringing of existential categories such as *Angst* and *Stimmung* (mood) to light emerges as a prerogative of the phenomenological/descriptive method. Rather than taking objective reality as a repository of meanings that run underneath its immediate manifestation, phenomenology seizes it at the surface and recreates it through language. The same occurs with psychic phenomena. In that sense, the capacity of phenomenology to recreate immediate experience points to the immanence of the text.

The notion of the text’s ability to create reality has an important precedent in the history of Spanish-American literature. The Spanish-American avant-garde movement founded by Chilean poet Vicente Huidobro in 1916 and suggestively called *creacionismo*, sought a kind of poetry capable of bringing phenomena to life through writing. Huidobro’s poem “Arte Poética” (“Ars Poetica”) synthesizes the program of *creacionismo*:

Why do you sing the rose, oh poets!
Make it flourish in the poem;
Only to us
Live all things under the Sun.

The Poet is a small god. (my translation)²⁴

Huidobro's creationist agenda recognized language as a medium capable of achieving the ontological establishment of the real, or of that which was to be "created" by the literary text. Understanding description in the broader sense of seizing phenomena and rendering them through language, Huidobro's *creacionismo*, as well as Cortázar's descriptive existentialism, repeat in literary form the phenomenological method established by Husserlian philosophy. Making the object flourish in the poem exemplifies the phenomenological project; and it is also an aesthetic principle that I have called the "poetics of presence."

The move from pure consciousness to emotion-consciousness encompasses two different stages in the belief in the capacity of language to create phenomena. As Terry Eagleton has noted, "to move from Husserl to Heidegger is to move from the terrain of pure intellect to a philosophy that meditates on what it feels like to be alive" (54). In a similar sense, we can perceive the philosophical movement from Husserl to Heidegger as parallel to the movement from Robbe-Grillet to Cortázar. While the former remains closer to the Husserlian apprehension of reality in its *noetic-noematic* form, the latter aligns himself with Heideggerian existential phenomenology, employing language in Heideggerian fashion, as "the very dimension in which human life moves" and as "that which brings the world to be in the first place" (Eagleton 55).

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Huidobro's *creacionismo* and Cortázar's phenomenological description, in their capacity to establish reality and truth through language, prove Heidegger's contention that art is the founder of the human world, or "the origin of world of the human." As Maurice Natanson asserts:

The philosophical concern with origin is perhaps the most basic aspect of phenomenology. We are not interested here in the ordinary meaning of history; neither are we concerned with some psychological retreat of consciousness to its biological sources. Instead, the turn to origin in phenomenology refers to the interior history of inwardness in the building up, the constitution, of intentionality. The ground for this constitution is that of transcendental subjectivity and, ultimately, the transcendental ego. (40)

Be it as an operation of Husserl's transcendental ego, as a mode of *Dasein's* encounter with its own world, or as intentional consciousness discovering the essence of psychic phenomena, what I have termed here a "poetics of presence" is, in its descriptive nature, both a poetics of origin and a poetics of truth. According to Heidegger:

Truth is the unconcealedness of that which is as something that is. Truth is the truth of Being. Beauty does not occur alongside and apart from this truth. When truth sets itself into the work, it appears. Appearance—as this being of truth in the work and as work—is beauty. (*Poetry* 80)

NOTES

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1. The relation between twentieth-century European and Latin American literature is discussed in Venegas's *Decolonizing Modernism*. Though Venegas's approach is not based on philosophical considerations, his portrayal of a link between Joyce, Borges and Cortázar, and his depiction of twentieth-century Western modernity as more than the compartmentalized version construed by Anglo-American criticism, take a direction similar to my approach in this article. The link between European and Latin American letters, and again between Cortázar and Joyce, is also examined in Sharkey's *Idling the Engine*, which focuses on Cortázar's *Rayuela* (1963) understood as an exercise in hermeneutics.
 2. Husserl's analysis of what he termed the "natural attitude" appears in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology: From the Lectures, Winter Semester, 1910-1911*. For a more general introduction to Husserlian phenomenology, see Husserl's five lectures delivered in 1907 at the Georg-August University of Göttingen and collected under the title *Die Idee der Phänomenologie (The Idea of Phenomenology)*.
 3. A good starting point for the understanding of the concept of "mathematization" is *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, translated by David Carr. Husserl's discussion of Galileo's mathematization of nature is as follows: "For Platonism, the real had a more or less perfect methexis in the ideal. This afforded ancient geometry possibilities of a primitive application to reality. [But] through Galileo's *mathematization of nature*, *nature itself* is idealized under the guidance of the new mathematics; nature itself becomes—to express it in a modern way—a mathematical manifold [*Mannigfaltigkeit*]. *What is the meaning of this mathematization of nature?* How do we reconstruct the train of thought which motivated it?" (23; italics in the original.)
 4. In this rendering of Husserl's ideas, I am indebted to Joseph Magliola. For an in-depth analysis of Husserl's concepts of *noesis* and *noema*, see Magliola 87-93 and Kockelmanns 118-127.
 5. "Maintenant l'ombre du pilier—le pilier qui soutient l'angle sud-ouest du toit—divise en deux parties égales l'angle correspondant de la terrasse. Cette terrasse est une large galerie couverte, entourant la maison sur trois de ses côtés. Comme sa largeur est la même dans la portion médiane et dans les branches latérales, le trait d'ombre projeté par le pilier arrive exactement au coin de la maison ; mais il s'arrête là, car seules les dalles de la terrasse sont atteintes par le soleil, qui se trouve encore trop haut dans le ciel. Les murs, en bois, de la maison—c'est-à-dire la façade et le pignon ouest—sont encore protégés de ses rayons par le toit (toit commun à la maison proprement dite et à la terrasse). Ainsi, à cet instant, l'ombre de l'extrême bord du toit coïncide exactement avec la ligne, en angle droit, que forment entre elles la terrasse et les deux faces verticales du coin de la maison" (*La Jalousie* 7).
 6. The expression "positive sciences" gained wide currency in Husserlian scholarship with the publication of Lee Hardy's translation of Husserl's *Die Idee der Phänomenologie* (1907) in 1999. In his introduction, Hardy remarks: "I have translated '*natürliche Wissenschaften*' as the 'positive sciences' rather than the 'natural sciences' or 'sciences of the natural sort.' I do so because the term 'natural sciences' calls to the mind of the English reader such sciences as physics, chemistry, and biology; whereas Husserl meant by this locution all the sciences insofar as they are based upon the assumption of the 'natural attitude,' the assumption of the existence of the world, the validity of transcendent experience—that is, all the sciences except the properly philosophical science of phenomenology, which seeks to assess the basic and pervasive assumption of the positive sciences without participating in it" (Husserl 12).
 7. Husserl's discussion of phenomenology and psychology can be found in *Phenomenological Psychology: Lectures, Summer Semester, 1925*.
 8. "Je suis seul ici, maintenant, bien à l'abri. Dehors il pleut, dehors on marche sous la pluie en courbant la tête, s'abritant les yeux d'une main tout en regardant quand même devant soi, quelques mètres d'asphalte mouillé ; dehors il fait froid, le vent souffle entre les branches noires dénudées ; le vent soufflé dans les feuilles, entraînant les rameaux entiers dans un balancement, dans un balancement, balancement, qui projette son ombre sur le crépi blanc des murs. Dehors il y a du soleil, il n'y a pas un arbre ni un arbuste pour donner de l'ombre, et l'on marche en plein soleil, s'abritant les yeux d'une main tout en regardant devant soi, à quelques mètres seulement devant soi, quelques mètres d'asphalte

poussiéreux où le vent dessine des parallèles, des fourches, des spirales” (*Dans le labyrinthe* 9).

9. My article “El concepto de inautenticidad en Heidegger y Cortázar” [The Concept of Inauthenticity in Heidegger and Cortázar] discusses Cortázar’s relation to Heidegger, especially his readings of and comments on the German philosopher, in interviews and critical writings.
10. “La tarea de ablandar el ladrillo todos los días, la tarea de abrirse paso en la masa pegajosa que se proclama mundo, cada mañana topar con el paralelepípedo de nombre repugnante, con la satisfacción perruna de que todo esté en su sitio, la misma mujer al lado, los mismo zapatos, el mismo sabor de la misma pasta dentífrica, la misma tristeza de las casas de enfrente, del sucio tablero de ventanas de tiempo con su letrero « Hotel de Belgique »” (Cortázar 407).
11. “Cómo duele negar una cucharita, negar una puerta, negar todo lo que el hábito lame hasta darle suavidad satisfactoria. Tanto más simple aceptar la fácil solicitud de la cuchara, emplearla para revolver el café” (Cortázar 407).
12. “Un señor toma el tranvía después de comprar el diario y ponérselo bajo el brazo. Media hora más tarde descende con el mismo diario bajo el mismo brazo. Pero ya no es el mismo diario, ahora es un montón de hojas impresas que el señor abandona en un banco de plaza. Apenas queda solo en el banco, el montón de hojas impresas se convierte otra vez en un diario, hasta que un muchacho lo ve, lo lee y lo deja convertido en un montón de hojas impresas” (Cortázar 445).
13. “El llanto medio u ordinario consiste en una contracción general del rostro y un sonido espasmódico acompañado de lágrimas y mocos, [...]. Los niños llorarán con la manca del saco contra la cara, y de preferencia en un rincón del cuarto. Duración media del llanto, tres minutos” (Cortázar 409).
14. “[Para llorar] piense en un pato cubierto de hormigas o en esos golfos del estrecho de Magallanes en los que *no entra nadie, nunca*” (Cortázar 409; italics in the original).
15. Celis discusses the theme of death in Cortázar’s writing in “Erotismo y Muerte; Georges Bataille y Julio Cortázar” (2002). Celis relates Cortázar’s and Georges Bataille’s texts through their dealings with the serial pictures of a Leng Tch’e, a Chinese form of execution marked by extreme cruelty. These pictures are also featured in the novel *Farabeuf* (1965) by the Mexican writer Salvador Elizondo, and appear in chapter 114 of Cortázar’s *Rayuela* (1963) (Celis 38).
16. “Nadie habrá dejado de observar que con frecuencia el suelo se pliega de manera tal que una parte sube en ángulo recto con el plano del suelo, y luego la parte siguiente se coloca paralela a este plano, para dar paso a una nueva perpendicular, conducta que se repite en espiral o en línea quebrada hasta alturas sumamente variables. Agachándose y poniendo la mano izquierda en una de las partes verticales, y la derecha en la horizontal correspondiente, se está en posesión momentánea de un peldaño o escalón” (Cortázar 416).
17. “[Cuando te regalan un reloj] te regalan un nuevo pedazo frágil y precario de ti mismo, algo que es tuyo pero no es tu cuerpo, que hay que atar a tu cuerpo con su correa como un bracito desesperado colgándose de tu muñeca” (Cortázar 417).
18. “[Cuando te regalan un reloj] Te regalan la necesidad de darle cuerda todos los días, la obligación de darle cuerda para que siga siendo un reloj; te regalan la obsesión de atender a la hora exacta en la vitrinas de las joyerías, en el anuncio por la radio, en el servicio telefónico” (Cortázar 417).
19. For a view that differentiates Latin American and European literature in representations of time, see Sieber’s “Fantastic Interpretations of Time in Juan Rulfo’s *Pedro Páramo*, Julio Cortázar’s *Rayuela* and José Lezama Lima’s *Paradiso: A Modern Continuity of the Baroque*.” Sieber asserts that New World literature of both the Northern and Southern hemispheres “manifests a difference from the Old World in the way that time is represented and perceived, and that difference can be summed up under the heading of a new kind of time: the modern phenomenon of simultaneity. Simultaneous time as a foundation for twentieth-century literary representation is a way for New-World inhabitants to redefine and re-vision human psychological experience in both its manifestation and its representation in the literary and the visual arts” (331). Sieber overlooks works such as Robbe-Grillet’s, in which

simultaneity is a strong feature. The novels of James Joyce, Beckett, and the theater of the absurd are other instances of European simultaneity in art and literature.

20. Of Cortázar's texts, this one has received the most critical attention. For example, Standish discusses the short story in *Understanding Julio Cortázar* (65-69); and Silva Costa analyzes Cortázar's text in relation to notions of performance, discursive fragmentation, and film in "Movimentos da performance and 'A auto estrada do sul' de Julio Cortázar". Cortázar's short story is known to have been a major influence on Jean-Luc Godard's film *Week End* (1967). Roberts also discusses the theme of performance in Cortázar's oeuvre in "Subverted Claims"; he argues that the capacity of jazz to do away with the divisions between composer and performer, work and representation, or ideation and expression, breaks down the "divides in humankind which Cortázar seeks in his writing" (733). Bridging the divide in humankind is certainly one aspect of Cortázar's phenomenological-existential unity of consciousness and its object, as seen in the fragments of his short fiction discussed above. Achieving unity with the other is a strong theme in Cortázar's *Rayuela* (1963), one that repeats Husserl and Heidegger's notions of intersubjectivity, but that, due to limitations of space, will not be analyzed here.
21. "El 404 había esperado todavía que el avance y el retroceso de las filas le permitiera alcanzar otra vez a Dauphine, pero cada minuto lo iba convenciendo de que era inútil, que el grupo se había disuelto irrevocablemente, que ya no volverían a repetirse los encuentros rutinarios, los mínimos rituales, los consejos de guerra en el auto de Taunus, las caricias de Dauphine en la paz de la madrugada, las risas de los niños jugando con sus autos, la imagen de la monja pasando las cuentas del rosario" (Cortázar 522).
22. For an analysis of Cortázar's depiction of *Angst* and its relation to the Heideggerian concept of authenticity, see my article "El concepto de inautenticidad en Heidegger y Cortázar."
23. "Absurdamente se aferró a la idea de que a las nueve y media se distribuirían los alimentos, habría que visitar a los enfermos, examinar la situación con Taunus y el campesino del Ariane; después sería la noche, sería Dauphine subiendo sigilosamente a su auto, las estrellas o las nubes, la vida. Sí, tenía que ser así, no era posible que eso hubiera terminado para siempre" (Cortázar 522).
24. Por qué cantáis la rosa, ¡oh Poetas!
Hacedla florecer en el poema;
Sólo para nosotros
Viven todas las cosas bajo el Sol.

El Poeta es un pequeño Dios. (Peña 139)

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