

## ŠPET'S "HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGY" PROJECT\*

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Over the past several decades, the figure of Gustav Špet (1879-1937) has grown unceasingly in prominence, and the significance of his work in contemporary philosophy has increased accordingly. Alongside this process has been another, just as relentless — that of the elaboration and enrichment of our conceptions of the philosopher's creative character, as well as of nature and essence of his philosophy. Špet's phenomenon was to become yet another of the major individual projects on the synthesis of the humanities that emerged during his time in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. From the point of view of historical fact, Špet's involvement with the phenomenological movement is limited to him being Husserl's student in Göttingen from 1912-1913, and to their subsequent written correspondence. *Appearance and Sense*, the monograph devoted to the problems of phenomenology, was published in 1914. The interweaving of phenomenology and hermeneutics that occurred in *Appearance and Sense* allowed Špet to reveal the very essence of phenomenology, the exact essence which, according to his words, Husserl was unable to unveil. And here he referred to hermeneutics in order to present phenomenology in a basic and essential way. In this text, hermeneutics and phenomenology are bound tightly together, and they intersect constantly. Following on from A. Savin, we endeavour to justify the thesis that hermeneutics, for Špet himself most likely a detailed commentary of his phenomenological research with no independent significance of its own, gained meaning only within the scope of his phenomenological program.

*Key words:* Hermeneutics, phenomenology, Gustav Špet, A. Savin, Husserl, phenomenological program, rigorous science.

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\* The article is written on the basis of the plenary report read on September 9, 2016 at the International Conference "Phenomenology and Practice: The 2nd Conference on *Traditions and Perspectives of the Phenomenological Movement in Central and Eastern Europe*" (September 8-10, 2016, Gdańsk, Poland).

## ШПЕТОВСКИЙ ПРОЕКТ «ГЕРМЕНЕВТИЧЕСКОЙ ФЕНОМЕНОЛОГИИ»\*

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Уже несколько десятилетий в современной философии происходит непрерывное укрупнение фигуры Густава Шпета и рост значения его творчества. Параллельно с данным процессом, и столь же непрерывно, происходит другой: процесс усложнения и обогащения представлений о творческом облике философа, о характере и существе его философии. Феномен Шпета — еще один большой индивидуальный проект синтеза гуманитарного знания, какие рождались в его время, в первой половине XX в. С точки зрения исторических фактов соприкосновение Г. Г. Шпета с феноменологическим движением ограничивается его обучением у Гуссерля в Гёттингене в 1912-193 гг. и последовавшей за этим перепиской. Посвященная проблемам феноменологии монография «Явление и смысл» была опубликована в 1914 г. В книге «Явление и смысл» переплетение феноменологии и герменевтики позволяет Шпету раскрыть сущность феноменологии (ту самую, которую, по его словам, Гуссерль не смог открыть). И здесь он обращается к герменевтике, чтобы представить феноменологию основным и существенным образом. Герменевтика и феноменология в этом тексте действительно тесно связаны и постоянно пересекаются. Вслед за А. Савиным мы пытаемся продемонстрировать тезис о том, что герменевтика для Шпета выступает, скорее, развернутым комментарием его феноменологических исследований, и имеет не самостоятельное значение, а лишь в рамках его феноменологической программы.

*Ключевые слова:* Герменевтика, феноменология, Г. Г. Шпет, А. Савин, Гуссерль, феноменологическая программа, строгая наука.

For several decades the figure of Gustav Špet (1879-1937) has been unceasingly becoming more and more prominent with the significance of his work in contemporary philosophy increasing. Alongside with this process, there has been another one, just as unceasing, going on. The one of the elaboration and enrichment of notions of the philosopher's creative character as well as nature and essence of his philosophy. For a long time these notions remained quite plain. Špet's grandson, Michael K. Polivanov, who also was his first biographer, when characterizing him as a philosopher, succinctly called him a "Russian Husserlian". This sacrosanct formula has found strong consensus among those familiar with Špet's name and legacy, including Russian philosophers living in exile, Soviet

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\* Статья написана на основе пленарного доклада, прочитанного 9-го сентября 2016 года на международной конференции «Феноменология и практика: II конференция о *Традициях и перспективах феноменологического движения в Центральной и Восточной Европе*», (8-10 сентября 2016 г., Гданьск, Польша).

and foreign experts on Russian thought, even those who once knew him personally and valued his philosophy, such as B. Asmus or P. Popov, along with his surviving students.

However, this agreed formula was abandoned more or less as soon as detailed research into the philosopher's work began. That Špet's early creative work (with *Appearance and Sense* (1914) as its major milestone) lies in the midway of phenomenology is, of course, undeniable, although even here there were some already noticeable deviations from the classical doctrine as presented in Husserl's *Logical Investigations* and *Ideas I*. His subsequent work, on the other hand, began to be actively associated with a whole panoply of other lines of thought: within it was found an independent experience of hermeneutics, the presentiments or even the structural basis of semiotics, structuralism, as well as profound and original elaborations on almost the entire gamut of the humanities, from logic to the philosophy of language, from psychology to aesthetics. A new stage in the formation of the perception of Špet's thought was the stage characterized by the absence of unity in perception of this thought, caused by a variety of subjects, as well as of the ideological content of his studies, the pluralism of their leading attitudes and the trends of elaboration. During this period, different and quite divergent evaluations of Špet's philosophy coexisted in literature. Its essence and the main substance were found in phenomenology, hermeneutics, logic, psychology, linguistics... But now this stage has also passed. The way to a new consensus, to a mature perception of Špet's thought was outlined through acknowledging that the main contribution made by his thought can evidently not be held by any single area or discipline of the humanities (Dennes, Mikhailov, Molchanov, Motroshilova, Nemet, Pruzhinin, Savin, Tepp, Khan, Shmid, & Shchedrina, 2014).

Špet's phenomenon was to become yet another of the major individual projects on the synthesis of the humanities that emerged during his time in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. S. Horuzhy states that in the heart of his project lay an epistemic core, formed by Špet himself through enhancing the phenomenological attitude (*Einstellung*) with the hermeneutic one, beholding with comprehension (*Einsicht*) (cf., "Beholding has comprehension involved" (Shpet, 1992, 35), "It is not enough for philosophy just to see 'eidos' in the reflection on consciousness, it also should be comprehended, which is achieved in the act of its determination (judgment)" (Shpet, 1917, 57)). S. Horuzhy, for instance, believes that the two cognitive paradigms have formed a flexible combination, in which each may come to the foreground depending on the area of its application, i.e., the

phenomenological attitude would be ascendant in a description of phenomena of consciousness, while the hermeneutic attitude would take precedence in a description of social phenomena (which were prevalent in the philosopher's later works).

At that, while the first one could only be inherently Husserlian (however, with serious amendments made, considering Špet's imminent criticism of Husserl), the second one was the original, structured by Špet himself on the basis of his work on the major reconstruction of the hermeneutic discourse. (Horuzhy, 2010, 130)

Špet sensitively captured the motion of the hermeneutic perspective towards its transformation into a new philosophical direction with its own logic and its own research methods. Špet's endeavours made a significant contribution to the elaboration of hermeneutics.

Until he was officially rehabilitated in 1956, there was practically no mention of Špet's name in print in Russia, although it "was not possible to restore the memory of him in the public consciousness, which had been subjugated by the inertia and fear of the Stalin era". There is just a single cautious mention by Spiegelberg in his lengthy work on the history of the phenomenological movement (1960), which reads, "Špet seems to be the best expert on Husserl's phenomenology and its best conveyor". At the time, Špet was generally referred to as an author of works on the history of Russian philosophy rather than an original interpreter of phenomenology in the context of the hermeneutic approach (Scanlan, 1970). As for Western Europe and the United States, the situation began to change slowly after sixteen scholars made presentations on various aspects of Špet's oeuvre at a conference dedicated to his works held in Germany in June 1986. Since that time, interest in Špet's work remains healthy, while the flow of research literature devoted to him has been increasing.

From the point of view of historical fact, Špet's involvement with the phenomenological movement is limited to him being Husserl's student in Göttingen from 1912-1913, and to their subsequent written correspondence. *Appearance and Sense*, the monograph devoted to the problems of phenomenology, was published in 1914. Špet completed this work in Göttingen on October 3 (16), 1913. At the time, Špet maintained very intense communication with Husserl (they used to meet almost every day), and other phenomenologists (M. Scheler, J. Hering). His communication with Husserl and the Göttingen phenomenologists, as well as his reading of *Ideas I* (1913), undoubtedly influenced Gustav Špet's intellectual journey. *Appearance and Sense*

— the book which, incidentally, Špet dedicated to Husserl, sending him an autographed copy — became rightful evidence of this fact. Later, Husserl sent the book to Jan Patočka who, in his turn, donated it to Husserl's archive in Louvain, Belgium. There is not, however, sufficient evidence to allow us to talk of G. Špet's influence on the phenomenological movement in its historical elaboration.

On December 14, 1913 Špet states in his letter to Husserl:

Phenomenology is not just the basis of theoretical sciences (logical, ontological, even empirical) but it is also the basis of any practical and axiological knowledge in the broadest sense and, moreover, the basis of "life" and "the philosophical life" in whole. [...] Could it be that within the phenomenological attitude, we are not going also to describe and analyze experiences (*Erlebnisse*), alike the experiences of St. Theresa or J. Boehme, or conversations of St. Thomas with God?" (Špet, Husserl', 1996, 125)

Shortly after this letter, he launched his own hermeneutic-phenomenological project, forming its base in a way that would allow the possibilities of description to be spread on new social and cultural realms of being, so that the scope of reality, the scope of problems accessible for analysis, would not be narrowed, but expanded to their fullest extent. And even though he did not concern himself with solving the tasks set out in this letter, nor did he think that it should be withdrawn.

The "historical problem", i.e., the problem of historical knowledge, of historical science as a science, which Špet was working on from 1912 to 1913, served as the philosophical context for *Appearance and Sense*. Judging by his letters, at this time he was working on the second volume of the *History as a Problem of Logic*, i.e., on a chapter on methodology of history in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and chapters on Dilthey, Sigwart, Wundt and Rickert. These very authors appeared in *Appearance and Sense* along with Husserl, and in many respects set the tone for Špet's statement. The problem of social being posed in *Appearance and Sense* has emerged not by accident but because Špet was searching for an answer to the question, "In what way is historical knowledge possible?", particularly as he was working at the time on his thesis entitled *History as a Problem of Logic. Critical and Methodological Research. Part One. Materials* (1916). There he stated that the historical problem demands its own semiotic and hermeneutic epistemology. These ideas to a large extent set the direction for Špet's thought as implemented in *Appearance and Sense*, but he did not want to express them in a positive form, "keeping the Pythagorean silence" and giving no

“endings” in his books, following the advice given to him by Shestov. And only in the seventh chapter, “Sense and Comprehension”, was the question of sense, and the question of comprehending of social being, eventually expressed in positive form, and Husserl was asked these very questions. This separate chapter, which in fact set a vector for Špet’s subsequent philosophical movement, gained its logical crystallization in his later work *The Internal Form of the Word* (1927). This work, although it applies different material and in different language, actually poses the same questions as those outlined in *Appearance and Sense*.

And yet, *Appearance and Sense* should be considered Gustav Špet’s major work not only for the reason of it being his first book, but also because it provided the basis and the keys to comprehending all his other works. Moreover, published in 1914, *Appearance and Sense* became the first Russian language text in which Špet analytically and critically delivered the contents of the first volume of Husserl’s *Ideas I* (1913). *Inter alia*, it is significant and interesting because it represents one of the first reactions to the programmatic work of transcendental phenomenology, i.e., the first volume of *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, which Husserl published only a year earlier. Yet the genuine distinctive feature of this text resides in the fact that it goes much further than reconstruction and criticism of Husserl’s project, offering, albeit in very general terms, its own version of its inner transformation, the transformation aimed at consistent and absolute accomplishment of the basic principles of phenomenological philosophy. Here we should acknowledge the special nature of the then extant historical stage in the elaboration of the phenomenological movement, which may be termed pre-institutional. Phenomenological philosophy, despite the great scope of the research work done, still remained at the stage of general programmes and elaboration of basic methodological principles. It had not yet gained the influence in contemporary philosophizing, which it was to acquire in the coming decades. This circumstance ensured a particular freedom in reception and criticism, of which Špet took full advantage. Moreover the fruitfulness of Špet’s interpretation of Husserl was facilitated by his position as an “outsider”, a researcher not shackled by institutional constraints, disciplinary frameworks or personal circumstances. However, the fact that the book was written in Russian turned out to be a serious obstacle to the reception of Špet’s theoretical innovations in the context of the “phenomenological movement”, which subsequently became international. Subsequent historical events, along with the tragic fate of Špet

himself (he was arrested in 1935, exiled, and executed in 1937) were to make this obstacle altogether insurmountable.

The interweaving of phenomenology and hermeneutics that occurred in *Appearance and Sense* allowed Špet to reveal the very essence of phenomenology, the exact essence which, according to his words, Husserl was unable to unveil. And here he referred to hermeneutics in order to present phenomenology in a basic and essential way. In this text, hermeneutics and phenomenology are bound tightly together, and they intersect constantly. But this sentence is not self-evident, it demands clarification.

Before 1914 (the year in which *Appearance and Sense* was published), Špet was of the belief that the formation of a true positive philosophy had already been accomplished by E. Husserl. There remained just a few “corrections” to be done to his phenomenology to arrive at a “basic science of philosophy”, basic both for philosophy in general and for all concrete sciences. But even during his work on *Appearance and Sense*, Špet began to have his doubts over not only the impeccability of the methodological techniques of phenomenology, but also the absolute clarity of all methods of research. These doubts were primarily associated with the problems of the comprehension of sense, and the structure of comprehensive activity. So he undertook a systematic research into the problems of hermeneutics, and expounded the results of this research in his book *Hermeneutics and Its Problems*, completing in 1918 a manuscript which, due to circumstances beyond the author’s power, has never been published.

At various times, scholars have put forward contradictory theses of, on the one hand, the constancy of all Špet’s work, i.e., of the bond uniting all Špet’s works, and, on the other, that of a “turning point” which occurred in the elaboration of Špet’s oeuvre (for instance, the thesis of the so-called “hermeneutic turn”, which resulted in the hermeneutical period succeeding the phenomenological one).

In January 2014, a roundtable was organized by the Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences dedicated to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first publication of *Appearance and Sense* with the theme “G. Špet’s *Appearance and Sense*. The Book and Its Significance for the Intellectual Culture of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century”.

Maryse Dennes, who has translated *Appearance and Sense* into French, specifically noted:

It was precisely in *Appearance and Sense* that Špet referred to hermeneutics, in order to expand the phenomenological approach in its entirety. Špet's interest in hermeneutics was rooted in his desire to contemplate the essence of phenomenology. That is exactly why he turned to Dilthey's works on the process of time. It does not imply that a new period in his work started from that very moment. It simply means that, in referring to Dilthey, Špet continued to elaborate the approach which he had already outlined analyzing Husserl's *Ideas I* but, this time, he aimed to reveal the essence of hermeneutics. The same thing happened when Špet turned to the ideas of Humboldt elaborating the problematics of the internal form of the word. Yet, as I see it, Špet could be already considered hermeneut through his *Appearance and Sense*, due to the fact that, in trying to comprehend the essence of phenomenology and putting forward the problem of the structure of the word and the expression he, if I may say so, demanded the hermeneutic effort from his reader as well. (Dennes et al., 2014)

Ann Khan, an editor of the Hungarian translation of Špet's *Appearance and Sense*, mentioned a kind of “*hermeneutical correction*” to Husserl's phenomenology made by Špet:

An early phenomenological stage of Špet's philosophical elaborating presented in his book *Appearance and Sense* (1914), and in the article *Consciousness and Its Owner* (1916), indicates that the philosopher was not content with just an attempt at instilling Husserl's phenomenological thinking into Russian philosophical tradition, but he has also implemented the experience of critically interpreting Husserl's teachings in accordance with the cultural demands of his era. It seems that the “hermeneutic correction” of Husserl's phenomenology was made by Špet exactly in the spirit of the existential and philosophical demands of the Russian cultural environment at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, contemporary to him. (Dennes et al., 2014)

Ulrich Schmid, who translated the introduction to *Appearance and Sense* into German echoed:

The merit of Špet resides in the expansion of Husserl's phenomenology, which he did by introducing the hermeneutic dimension. Cognition, according to Špet, always implies the comprehension of the text, which is not given simply by chance. Špet demanded, just as Husserl did, a strict philosophical method that would exclude all accidents in comprehension. Therefore he anticipated the ideas which, in time, were given their final expression by Hans-Georg Gadamer, “We must seek comprehension based on methodological awareness, not just exercising anticipations, but being aware of and controlling these anticipations in order to achieve genuine comprehending, coming from things” (Gadamer, 1986, 274). (Dennes et al., 2014)



There is an interesting problem behind all these estimations indicating, perhaps, some difference in metalanguages of talking of Špet. We will try to explain this thought.

In the context of the history of philosophy, the elaboration of Špet's thought is indeed often regarded as a transition from phenomenology to hermeneutics. Such a standpoint has become long established and, over 30 years of the thematic historic and philosophical elaboration of Špet's philosophy, traditional, acquiring those elements of obviousness, automatism and self-evident character which are inherent to any traditional standpoint. Today, I think that any specialist in this historic and philosophical area, if asked what they knew about Špet's philosophy, would answer that Špet was a Russian student of Husserl (the founder of phenomenology) who later experienced a "hermeneutic turn", abandoned phenomenology, and after that devoted himself to the elaboration of the original philosophy of language. It is noteworthy that the vast majority of experts on Špet's philosophy would give an answer essentially similar to this one.

O. Mazaeva, in her review on the history of the study of Špet's philosophical thought, based on major research material, has clearly demonstrated that the historic and philosophical research into the elaboration of Špet's thought has, since the very day it started until now, predominantly represented the research of Špet's philosophy of language based on contemplation of his hermeneutics. In her article "On the History of the Research of Špet's Legacy (Discussing Problems of Philosophy of Language)" written in 2010, Mazaeva stated:

Discussion of the problems of philosophy of language in G. Špet's work remained dominant at the conference in Lausanne (2005), Bordeaux (2007), and Tomsk (2008). The philosophy of language focuses variety of G. Špet's projects. During the period from 1914-1916, after his transition to hermeneutical problems, he turned to various aspects of the philosophy of language in his works. Špet devoted *Hermeneutics* (1918) to research into the problem of understanding starting from Origen to Dilthey and Georg Simmel, paying attention to innovations in the philosophical ideas of a number of philosophers, including T. Reed, who contributed to the elaboration of analytic philosophy. In *Hermeneutics*, we can distinguish an already present persistent motif of the "internal form of the word", which became the title for his work written 1927, and the leitmotif for the entire future oeuvre of the philosopher. (Mazaeva, 2010, 172-173)

O. Mazaeva is among those researchers who regard Špet's transition from phenomenology to hermeneutics as a historic and philosophical problem, but not

as a fact or a commonplace. In particular, she rightly believes that discussions of the correlations of hermeneutics and phenomenology, of consciousness and language in both contemporary philosophy and in studies of Špet's oeuvre, still remain unresolved. In this regard she states, "... phenomenology should hardly be considered as a 'transient and decreasing value' which can be dispensed with in due course, I think that not all of its resources have been exhausted or, perhaps, even detected" (Mazaeva, 2010, 173).

A. Savin, in his article "Phenomenological Interpreting of Špet's Hermeneutics" (Savin, 2015), states, and we will agree with him in that respect, that,

...the interpretation of the elaboration of Špet's thought as a transition from phenomenology to hermeneutics was conditioned by the history of the perception of his philosophy. It appears that such an interpretation was a result of the transfer of the history of perception over the history of elaboration of Špet's thought. (Savin, 2015, 343)

Savin explained this thesis in the following way: because Špet's philosophy became primarily the subject of issue-related studies conducted by philologists, in particular the Western slavists, his analysis of the word, considered from the perspective of linguistic problems (semiotics), was contemplated as the most interesting and significant. Accordingly, they regard Špet's *Hermeneutics and Its Problems* as the philosophical justification of philological (historical, legal) hermeneutics, and as for his phenomenological works, particularly *Appearance and Sense*, they are considered to be a preparatory period for this justification. When philosophers became involved in research into the elaboration of Špet's thought, they inherited the interpretation of the elaboration of Špet's thought as given by philologists. Such an explanation is supported both by objective chronology (*Appearance and Sense* (1914) preceded *Hermeneutics and Its Problems* (1918)), and by the elaboration of European philosophy in general within the scope of a "linguistic turn" from phenomenology to hermeneutics, from Husserl to Heidegger and Gadamer (Savin, 2015, 344).

On the basis of an actual chronological conjunction existing between the direction of the elaboration of Špet's philosophy and the general trend in European philosophy, Špet is routinely treated as a Russian harbinger of Heidegger's and Gadamer's hermeneutics, who emanated from phenomenology, just as they did, but who subsequently overcame it.

But does the semantic history coincide with the actual history and chronology? In the above-mentioned article, A. Savin posited that the hermeneutics, semiotics and philosophy of Špet's language acted as a detailed commentary, as a deepening and clarification of its phenomenological research, and, accordingly, that *the elaboration of the hermeneutic problematics, semiotics and language philosophy were of a dependent, although important, meaning within the scope of his phenomenological programme*. This argument is a very strong one. A. Savin states that *Hermeneutics and Its Problems* represents the analysis of the history of hermeneutics performed with phenomenological instruments and for phenomenological purposes (Savin, 2015).

We will try to justify the thesis of hermeneutics, more likely being for Špet a detailed commentary of his phenomenological research and having no independent significance, gaining meaning only within the scope of his phenomenological programme.

We think that the idea of a completely new fundamental science was the most inspiring for Špet in phenomenology. An extraordinary pathos permeates the opening pages of Špet's *Appearance and Sense*. The reader cannot help but notice the enthusiasm with which they were written. We think that the main theme and the enthusiasm which marked all opening pages of *Appearance and Sense* were prompted exactly by the idea of the fundamental science, proclaimed by Husserl. In Husserl's *Ideas* it sounded especially, remarkably distinct.

At that, curiously enough, Špet considered Husserl's idea of fundamental knowledge productive, he agreed with it. As for the line within which ideals of rigour and uniformity in the science language are fixed (Descartes — Bolzano — Brentano — Husserl), apparently this did not attract him. Obviously, Špet was sufficiently deeply immersed into the tradition of humanitarian-oriented thinking (Dilthey, Schleiermacher) by the time he read *Ideas*: the materials he prepared for the lectures of 1911-1912 quite clearly prove it. Dialectics and criticism are the elements absolutely essential for such thinking. It gave him some kind of "immunity" from some of Husserl's ideas, and a distance in relation to phenomenology. On top of that, Špet remained outside the context of the phenomenological discussions of that time, which was not a disadvantage for him. This very state of non-contextuality made it possible for the problems declared by Husserl to be rationalized to their fullest extent. Let's note that in his interpretation of this work, Špet appeared to be in a somewhat similar situation to the one in which Husserl himself started his path in philosophy. Being a logician and a mathematician in his approach to philosophical problems, the Husserl of 1880-

1890 was not entirely an “insider” in the midst of philosophers. But this situation gave him a certain freedom, and partly explained the freshness and novelty of his solutions.

So, what does militate against the common belief that Špet combined phenomenological and hermeneutical approaches in *Appearance and Sense*? “Špet resorted to hermeneutics in order to make use of phenomenology”, stated Maryse Dennes. But what was his *reason* for doing so, given that phenomenological analysis in itself does not indispensably require a hermeneutic approach? Otherwise, especially if we agree that the “interlacing of phenomenology and hermeneutics” helped Špet in disclosing the essence of phenomenology, we would have to admit that Husserl, for some reason, did not see this possibility. What does relying upon hermeneutics in order “to expand the phenomenological attitude to its fullest extent” mean?

There are many attempts to justify the “hermeneuticness” of phenomenology in Špet’s interpretation by starting with quoting the opening lines of his work. The theme repeatedly attracts the attention of the aforementioned Maryse Dennes:

Even in the introduction the author referred to phenomenology from the standpoint of hermeneutics by asking questions about comprehending and interpretation, “to gain insight into the very sense of phenomenology, the way it becomes detected, primarily in its posing the questions, and, to a lesser extent in its solving them” (Špet, 2005, 43). [...] Therefore we can conclude that the introduction of phenomenology is possible through the hermeneutic approach: it is necessary to exist in phenomenology in order to explain the phenomenological events, and only giving them explanations makes it possible to gain insight into phenomenology. (Dennes, 2009, 84-85)

Of course, Husserl himself sometimes uses the words “comprehending” or “interpretation”, and it is possible also to come across such words as “interpreting” and “explication” in his texts. At one point he even uses the following peculiar metaphor, “to read our experience of the world by syllables”. Repeatedly, especially in later years, he would also speak of “understanding the genuine sense” of his phenomenology. However, this use of words has no special “hermeneutic experience” behind it. It seems at the very least strange to start talking of “hermeneutics” straight after encountering the words “understanding”, “reading” or “interpretation”, of “phenomenology” whenever the word “descriptions” is heard and of “anthropology” at mentioning the word “man”, states I. Mikhailov (Dennes et al., 2014).

However, the real problem for Špetology lies precisely in the idea of the conjunction of phenomenology and hermeneutics. What else is there to indicate the real existence of a problem? Let us suppose that Špet has found some conjunction between the phenomenological and hermeneutical methods, although in both cases the way they should be comprehended is not yet quite clear. However, providing that we are talking of the real synthesis, if there was any possibility of conjunction of two philosophical methods found, why did Špet make no use of it? V. Molchanov rightly draws attention to the fact that subsequently Špet became engaged in completely different matters, abandoning, as it seems, phenomenological problematics. This becomes evident, amongst other things, through the topics he discussed, i.e., neither reduction, nor the problem of the absoluteness of consciousness, nor noesis, nor noema, etc. figure among them anymore. But what definitely remained was the idea of the fundamental science, moreover, such basic science which could be non-theoretical, preceding any theory. However, Husserl has treated these provisions as related to the “preparatory” body; they were just preceding the actual phenomenological theory. But it was exactly the consistent reflection on this idea which gained a hermeneutic character (Dennes et al., 2014).

It could also be put in such words: Špet was looking for a “point of conjunction” between his former philosophical beliefs and those which he discovered in Husserl’s *Ideas I*. Or, to put it another way: Špet was looking for a possible point of transition, presumably to a system, an even more radical one, of knowledge neo-grounding. It was during this time of searching for a point of conjunction between the various philosophical methods that he came to the “hermeneutic approach”.

The discourse on the synthesis of hermeneutic and phenomenological methods became entrenched in contemporary literature partly through the work of P. Ricœur. Ricœur repeatedly regarded it as an “inoculation” of the phenomenological method with the hermeneutic problematic (Riker, 2002, 33). Since that time, the practice of talking of “hermeneutic phenomenology” has become established (and it has headlined the article rather in a critical sense).

Špet, like many others, pursued some of his specific aims, so he regarded Husserl’s *Ideas I* in the context of these aims. Like Heidegger, Špet wanted much more from phenomenology than the version proposed by Husserl could offer. Both philosophers wished to create a philosophy that was even more fundamental, and even more transparent in its structure. But eventually, they obtained different results.

So what does this all imply? It points to the fact that we face “hermeneutic” transformation of phenomenology in very special and exceptional cases, when we deal with even more radical philosophical problems. Any fundamentalist project acquires hermeneutical features wherever there is an attempt to implement it in the most consistent way. If a philosopher is aware of the impossibility of axiomatic or dogmatic constructing of the knowledge foundation, each time he has to come to “reality” of a very special kind, one which co-determines the philosophical search at his every step. We have learned from the history of thought of Western Europe about the three “types” of such “reality”, i.e., historical, linguistic and religious. Consistently relying on each of them has always given a powerful impetus to the elaboration of hermeneutics, i.e., the religious one in the Middle Ages, the contemplation of historical and historicity at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the 20<sup>th</sup> century rediscovered the reality of language. It was the latter which became a motive for a motion towards hermeneutics, already noticeable in Špet’s *Appearance and Sense*. At that he discovered the ways leading to it from within the phenomenological problematics, observing closely the link between “intuition” and “comprehension”. It is among the central problems of *Appearance and Sense*. He understands that without specifying the correlation of these elements, his fundamental project will not be accomplished. Consistent implementation of the fundamentalist project necessarily leads to hermeneutics. In this sense, his turning to the problem of history in his later works was also quite natural. Yet as we will repeat, in this case we are referring not to the conjunction or the synthesis of phenomenology and hermeneutics and not to the “hermeneutic turn”. Hermeneutics here, if you will, has the role of a “way” for clarifying the phenomenological programme, i.e., phenomenology does not get overcome by means of hermeneutics, on the contrary, hermeneutics is applied for the phenomenological purposes.

Therefore, in *Appearance and Sense*, Špet was engaged in the preparation of his project of universal justification of knowledge. In later years he elaborated it through different problematic material, applying a different philosophical language.

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