The initial aim of this work was to analyse the early and substantial efforts made by Martin Heidegger to deconstruct a type of philosophy that is based on the principle of identity. The final objective is to overcome Heidegger’s early phenomenology and to propose the so-called phenomenology of forces and philosophy of the powerless potentiality-of-being.

Heidegger demonstrates in his early works that the principle of identity includes a crucial implicit assumption, which concerns the role of the human being in thinking and in the question of being. This assumption transforms each philosophy of identity into a (philosophical) anthropology which, according to Heidegger, represents a deadlock for philosophical thinking. For this reason, the question of identity always resonates with the question of personal identity, and the implacability of the latter highlights the key difficulty of philosophies of identity per se; that is why an alternative to this type of thought should be found.

The principle of identity states that for each entity A that we have in mind ‘A=A’, or ‘A is A’.¹ The meaning of this principle is defined by a field of thought that works with reality in the form of entities, which, on the one hand, are (have being), and, on the other hand, are always necessarily thinkable (graspable and denotable by thought). If, then, thought works with an ontological field (of thinkable and of graspable beings), it means that each entity is thought in its being and is, as such, one, singular, and in a sense, identical with itself. Moreover, and this is what Heidegger emphasizes, the essential feature that characterizes every philosophy of identity is the exclusive status of the human being in contrast to other thinkable beings. If we apply this assertion of the concept of identity to ourselves, i.e., those who think this concept (and who believe in it), then the following holds: if we think ourselves, we are ourselves. And as we, who think, designate ourselves in principle as human beings, it is possible to understand this conclusion in a general form: the human being exists as a thinking being; it exists by means of thinking. To be a human means to necessarily and sufficiently think (one’s own) being. It is obvious that the

human being is always already itself in such a way that it thinks itself as itself. This assertion does not hold necessarily for any other being, which must be thought by a human being. The obvious consequence of human exclusivity in all thought based on the principle of identity is the implicit and essential difference between the human and inhuman being and the anthropological character of that philosophy (the question of being is answered by the answer to the question of human being). Heidegger wished to rework this tendency. To do this, he chose René Descartes as his main opponent. Heidegger criticizes Descartes for interpreting the human being as a substance consisting of fixed *hypokeimenon* with secondary, nonessential changing attributes and calls this substance a subject. In the eyes of Heidegger, this was the first step of modern philosophy towards its anthropologisation and towards the reification of the human being.² Although Heidegger still needs to begin his philosophical inquiry into the human being, he accepts it only with regard to its priority, but not in its primordial form. He calls the human being Da-sein—as the place where being appears. As Da-sein, human being has a reality that consists in the potentiality-of-being, that is, the possibilities to be, in contrast to other beings that exist only as things at hand (*Vorhandenheit*). Da-sein is characterized by intentionality in opposition to a psychology of consciousness or to a substantiality of an object. This thesis leads Heidegger out of the dominance of substantial reality over potentiality. It also represents a first step out of the realm of the principle of identity. By this, Heidegger implicitly initiates a deconstruction of identity thinking, while trying to find a thought based on the reality of possibilities without *hypokeimenon*.

However, what we intend to demonstrate in our project is that early-style Heidegger did not succeed in the deconstruction of a line of thought based on the principle of identity. First of all, this can be ascribed to the fact that he reduces Descartes’ philosophy in a very specific way and does not see that Descartes himself acknowledges the necessity to avoid reification of the human being, and indeed of substantial thinking in general. Heidegger fails to mention that it would be possible to think beyond the principle of identity in Descartes’ line of thought. Instead, Heidegger takes on his imaginary opponent, founding a narrative that is critical of modern

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