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Heidegger's Phenomenology: 1919-1929

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HEIDEGGER'S PHENOMENOLOGY: 1919-1929

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

in

The Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies

by

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To my parents, Mark and Esther Giavotella – for their unconditional love and support.

To my brother, Dominic Giavotella – for his endless fellowship and mirth.

And to my wife, Andrea Conque Giavotella – for her infinite authentic solicitude.

Preface: 100 Years of Heidegger

Today, scholars and students alike are now enjoying the novel privilege of having access to the final volumes published of the *Gesamtausgabe*, with all but a few available in English – to say nothing of the many other languages into which the original German was translated. However, alongside this, we must also acknowledge another feature of Heidegger’s works present in our time. For, indeed, the first text used thematically in this project, *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (GA 58), consists of a lecture presented by Heidegger precisely one hundred years ago. Thus, we are called to reflect on the impact of this thinker and the weight of his contributions that inform our understanding about philosophy and human being as they begin to reach their centenary status.

It is therefore essential to then acknowledge the vast amount of academic work that has amassed over the last century, as it provides invaluable insight into Heidegger’s thought at every level of understanding. It is from these resources that a work such as this is made possible. Thus, it is my hope that as each coming year celebrates the centennial presentation or publication of Heidegger’s works, the thought and discourse fostered by this remarkable thinker, in fulfillment of his ever-imparted call for another new beginning of philosophy, will continue on for another hundred years in study and research. I offer this work in such celebration.

In a final word, as I am in tremendous debt to these scholars who have presented their work, and in doing so made this project possible, I owe this immediately to all of my professors and to the members of my committee. It is to you all that I hold the most profound gratitude for your care throughout my many years of study, and I further offer this work as a small token of my appreciation in admiration and friendship.

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Abstract

In this work, I show Martin Heidegger's development of the phenomenological method from 1919 to 1929 as his main approach to all philosophical inquiry. In Chapter 1: Phenomenology as the Hermeneutics of Factual Life, I first show how Heidegger begins his philosophical career in 1919 with lectures that describe phenomenology as an 'original science' that seeks to study the structural character of life in itself. Through the four sub-sections of Chapter 1, I show how Heidegger continues to formulate distinct stages of phenomenological methodology through these early lectures that aid in his task to continue the explication of life through the specific character of facticity. In this manner, the phenomenological method appears in these early lectures of the 1920's to progress from the original science of life in itself to what Heidegger calls the hermeneutics of facticity – a critical method of interpretation aimed at exposing the structures of facticity as the being of life and the being of human *Dasein*. Here, I likewise show how Heidegger's understanding of phenomenology changes through these lectures, providing radically new shifts and insights to his approach to philosophy that uncover the ontological task of phenomenology.

Following these lectures, I then show in what sense Heidegger's understanding of phenomenology becomes properly thematized in its ontological import in Chapter 2: Phenomenology as the Method of Ontology. Here, I begin with the 1927 publication of Heidegger's masterwork *Sein und Zeit* where the question of the meaning of being and the being of *Dasein* become critical matters of phenomenological investigation. It is here that I show in what sense *Sein und Zeit* marks a new stage in Heidegger's phenomenological thinking as developed through his previous lectures. In this manner, through the four sub-sections of Chapter 2, I likewise show how Heidegger proceeds from the analysis of the being of *Dasein* to the

problematization of a purely ontological thinking of being itself through various lectures following *Sein und Zeit*. Here, through a radicalization of metaphysics as the study 'beyond beings,' Heidegger provides a new understanding of phenomenology as the path to the thinking of being in its pure possibility.

Introduction

The works of German philosopher Martin Heidegger have long been regarded as critical contributions to the history of philosophy. However, upon first encountering Heidegger, one may be in search of insights into being and the nature of human existence, and thus seek an understanding of ‘his philosophy’ as a traditional collection of ideas, or in an even more dangerous capacity, as answers. However, as I will show in this work, and in a manner I contend to be in support of Heidegger’s own intentions, what remains at stake is not to approach Heidegger in this regard as just any thinker who seems to proffer wisdom. Rather, Heidegger’s work is consistently in service of a formulation of ‘how’ to think – the development of an approach to all philosophy – that is, the rigorous and powerful method of phenomenology.

Indeed, as his philosophical career began giving lectures on phenomenology under its founder, Edmund Husserl, Heidegger appears to immediately task himself with understanding the method and aim of phenomenology as his approach to encountering all philosophical matters. Thus, from his first lecture concerning the basic problems of phenomenology in 1919 until his inaugural lecture address upon gaining the retired Husserl’s professorship in 1929, each lecture and publication provides a new, radical revision of the method of phenomenology expressed through remarkable demonstrations that grasp philosophical matters with a new understanding – matters ranging from life experience, to history, to human existence, and indeed to nothing at all.

To provide an understanding of the essential relation to phenomenology that exists in Heidegger’s thought, I will here present my research tracking Heidegger’s understanding and development of the phenomenological method through its various manifestations as it appears from 1919 to 1929. Through this, the role of phenomenology to Heidegger’s thought shall be

made precisely clear, as it provides the possibility for the thought behind his most famous works on the meaning of being and of human existence through *Dasein*. To accomplish this, I will present my research in two chapters, each with four sub-sections. My presentation will proceed in the following manner:

In Chapter 1: Phenomenology as the Hermeneutics of Factual Life, I will present Heidegger's initial understanding of phenomenology as the 'original science of factual life' and its development through his early lectures on its way to a method of ontological analysis. Here, I will show how Heidegger's early lectures provide a critical stage of progression for phenomenology as he attends to four essential stages of method: description, destruction, reduction, and interpretation or hermeneutics. To express these matters, I will present Heidegger's formulation of the phenomenological method in the following four sub-sections.

In "Description and 'Taking-Notice,'" I will discuss phenomenological description as it appears in the 1919/20 Winter semester lecture, *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (GA 58). Here, I will show that phenomenological description is understood as a 'taking-notice' of life experience to explicate the phenomenon of life in itself – a transition from individual first-person life experience to the character of life as such as it presents itself through experience. In "Destruction and Formal Indication," I will discuss phenomenological destruction and formal indication as it appears in the 1920 Summer semester lecture *Phänomenologie der Anschauung und des Ausdrucks* (GA 59) and the 1920/21 Winter, 1921 Summer semester lectures in *Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens* (GA 60). Here, I will show that phenomenological destruction is first understood as the address of historical tradition that enables philosophy to start afresh and begin its original work unclouded by the answers already provided by the history of philosophy. Following this, I will show that phenomenological destruction is secondly

understood as a four-step process whereby a concept is isolated and its original meaning, given only partially at first, is then brought-out so that it can be understood in a new light. For this, I will show to what end formal indication appears as a pre-stage of phenomenological destruction as a mode of understanding a phenomenon provisionally by its relational aspects in experience.

In “Hermeneutics,” I will discuss hermeneutic interpretation as it appears in the 1921/22 Winter semester lecture *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles: Einführung in die Phänomenologische Forschung* (GA 61) and the 1922 Summer semester lecture *Ontologie – Hermeneutik der Faktizität* (GA 63). Here, I will show that hermeneutics is a type of phenomenological interpretation that seeks to investigate the meaning of phenomena as it presents itself in some encounter, and from which its being can be exposed and understood. Further, I will show how this provides Heidegger with a prime access to the being of human being through *Dasein*, cementing phenomenology as a method of ontology. Lastly, in “Phenomenology as *Such*,” I will discuss the appearance of phenomenology in the 1923/24 Winter semester lecture *Einführung in die phänomenologische Forschung* (GA 17) and the 1925 Summer semester lecture *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* (GA 20). Here, I will show Heidegger’s new understanding of phenomenology as expressed through the Ancient Greek concepts of φαίνόμενον and λόγος, signifying a specific mode of encountering entities that clears a path through which their being can be revealed. Further, I will express how this new understanding of phenomenology provides Heidegger with a path of access to ontology.

In Chapter 2: Phenomenology as the Method of Ontology, I will show how Heidegger arrives at a thinking of ontology through phenomenology, and further, as phenomenology provides him with a greater understanding of ontology through a rethinking of metaphysics. Here, I will show how phenomenology appears in Heidegger’s famous 1927 publication *Sein und*

Zeit (GA 2) as the method of investigation and interpretation from which the meaning of being can be accessed through an analysis of the being of Dasein. Following this text, I will then show how Heidegger's understanding of phenomenology as the method of ontology progresses to open a path to the thinking of being in its pure possibility, or 'beyond beings' as expressed by metaphysics. To accomplish this, I will present Heidegger's formulation of the phenomenological method of ontology in four sub-sections.

In "Investigation and Interpretation," I will discuss phenomenological investigation and interpretation as it appears in the 1927 publication *Sein und Zeit* (GA 2). Here, I will show that phenomenological investigation and interpretation is the way in which an entity is disclosed in some manner of appearance and thus revealed in some manner of being. Further, as it relates to Dasein, the entity in question for an access to being itself, I will show in what sense Dasein is the subject of phenomenological investigation and interpretation as Heidegger conducts an analysis of its everyday mode of appearance, being-in-the-world [*In-der-Welt-sein*] and subsequently interpreted with regards to the primordial phenomena of care [*Sorge*] and time [*Zeit*] which allow its being to become manifest. In "Reduction, Construction, Destruction," I will discuss phenomenological reduction, construction, and destruction as it appears in the 1927 Summer semester lecture *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (GA 24). Here, I will show in what sense these constitute Heidegger's new methodological formulation of phenomenology as the path to ontology. I will further show specifically in what sense each stage of the method – reduction, construction, and destruction, respectively – operate in leading away from the appearance of an individual being and towards being itself.

In "Interpretations of Kant," I will discuss Heidegger's phenomenological interpretation of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* as it appears in the 1927/28 Winter semester lecture

Phänomenologische Interpretationen von Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft (GA 25). Here, I will provide Heidegger's understanding of the aims of phenomenological interpretation, similar to its manifestation in GA 2. Alongside this, I will present Heidegger's interpretation of the *Critique*, through which he arrives at a new understanding of phenomenology and its task of the thinking of being in its pure possibility through metaphysics. Lastly, in "Metaphysics," I will discuss Heidegger's further development of the phenomenological method towards metaphysics as it appears in the 1929 Spring inaugural lecture *Was ist Metaphysik?* (GA 9). Here, I will present Heidegger's understanding of the essential role of the nothing [*das Nichts*] with respect to the possibility of any ontological thinking. From this, I will show to what extent the nothing informs Heidegger's new understanding of metaphysics through the phenomenality of the nothing in its self-unfolding character.

Prior to the presentation of this research, it is worth putting forth a word on the scope of this work. It is apparent both from the objectives of the work and from the depth of the subject matter that this project could no doubt appear in a work of doubled length or more on the texts included herein alone. For, overall, the aim of this project – to show Heidegger's development of the phenomenological method and its essential role in his approach to philosophy – is one which can and indeed needs be further applied to the rest of the materials within the *Gesamtausgabe*, as it is clearly present throughout his career up to the very end.¹ To complete this fully is nothing short of an impossible task that one can only hope to achieve in part throughout careful attention and rigorous work in the course of a single lifetime. For it indeed concerns the entire life's work of one man and indeed, as I contend, his work on a single mode of thinking.

¹ See Martin Heidegger, "Mein Weg in die Phänomenologie," in *Zur Sache des Denkens*, (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1969), 91-102, "My Way to Phenomenology," in *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 74-82, hereafter referenced as GA 14.

The intense absorption and investment that was required to effectively read these texts has foremost been the greatest challenge and indeed the greatest reward of this project, as through both my own enchantment and Heidegger's unique modes of presentation I have battled constantly to remain in control of the subject matter. Yet, what has appeared as a result of this engagement I feel is both accurate and honorific of the original content, presented with the deepest respect and admiration. Thus, it has been my most honest attempt to provide the essential material to illustrate the progression of Heidegger's thinking as it moves through phenomenology, and the dynamism of the phenomenological method itself, beginning with the early lectures of his career and continuing on to breach his most famous published work *Sein und Zeit* and beyond. To this end, I have at every chance indicated as many possible references for further discussion and provided sufficient explanations when necessary within my footnotes, cited in German/English pagination. For indeed, it appears as Heidegger's foremost task to present the possibilities of a special way of thinking – to understand the phenomenological method as a mode of encountering, as opposed to systems of “levers and switchgears...,”² and to invite the occasion of this unique encounter of thought to become more persistent.

² Martin Heidegger, *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1993), 22, *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Scott Campbell, (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 16, hereafter referenced as GA 58.

Chapter 1: Phenomenology as The Hermeneutics of Factual Life

My task in this chapter is to illustrate Heidegger's beginnings as a phenomenological thinker, guided by his first formulations of phenomenology as a method to philosophy. By examining key texts from early in Heidegger's career, it will be made clear in what manner phenomenology as a method provides Heidegger with an access to the subject matter of philosophy, which Heidegger first delineates as 'the original science of factual life in itself [*Ursprungswissenschaft vom Leben an sich*].'³ As such, phenomenology is presented as a radically new philosophical study of life in itself, one that aims to expose the essential structures of factual life through phenomenological investigations of life experience. Through each text, Heidegger presents the growing method of phenomenology each time in a more robust fashion than the last as his careful attention to the method itself produces more precise phenomenological demonstrations. For Heidegger, these explications of factual life in itself begin to indicate the potential for phenomenology as a method of philosophical thinking to provide a direct access to life in its very being through a hermeneutic of the facticity [*Faktizität*] of factual life [*faktischen Lebens*] – the phenomenological exemplar for explicating the lived experience of human existence.⁴ These initial indications towards phenomenology as a path to ontological thinking appear as early as 1919/20 in *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (GA 58) and indeed serve as a horizon for phenomenological philosophy that emerges out of factual life in itself.⁵ In this manner, through phenomenology Heidegger begins to articulate a philosophical study of the

³ GA 58: 65/51, (my brackets).

⁴ For further discussion on facticity, see François Raffoul, "Factual Life and the Need for Philosophy," in *Rethinking Facticity*, ed. François Raffoul and Eric Sean Nelson, (Albany: SUNY, 2008), 69-85.

⁵ GA 58: 148/114, 156/120.

“being of life”⁶ and ultimately the being of human existence as the “*being-there of Dasein*”⁷ through ontology.

Phenomenology thus receives its merit as a radically new method of philosophical thinking in its original access to the phenomenological and ontological structures of life. However, as Heidegger indicates in GA 58: “the most burning, most original, and ultimate basic problem of phenomenology...is *it itself* for itself.”⁸ Thus, before phenomenology can begin its positive work, it must first take itself up in an address of its own history. To this extent, in each work presented in this project Heidegger expresses emphatic impressions on the task of phenomenology and philosophy to gain such genuine and original insight into philosophical questioning that first articulates and rethinks the tradition of philosophy as the historical progression of thought. At the same time, and in various degrees, the progression of these introductions for the most part follows a concrete presentation of the historical context surrounding the subject-matter of the lecture, accompanied by Heidegger’s direct indication of the faults of the tradition in the misunderstanding and mistreatment of philosophical problems

⁶ Martin Heidegger, *Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens*, (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1995), 241, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 181, hereafter referenced as GA 60.

⁷ Martin Heidegger, *Ontologie - Hermeneutik der Faktizität* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1988), 29, *Ontology – The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, trans. John van Buren (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 24, hereafter referenced as GA 63. The term *Dasein*, literally translated as ‘there-being,’ emerges in Heidegger’s work from its traditional German usage as a neutral word to express existence and its related phenomenological usage to indicate an intentional position from which lived experience is had. As the texts progress, Heidegger begins to thematize *Dasein* as a proper entity, one which becomes his favored term to express the human being in its mode of existence. *Dasein* is thus, even in its ontological formulation, at all ends a term that describes a basic phenomenological situation of human lived experience.

⁸ GA 58: 1/2.

spanning back to the Ancient Greeks. In this manner, as Heidegger writes: “There is no *iurare in verba magistri* [swearing to the words of a master]”⁹ in phenomenological philosophy.

Indeed, as it serves phenomenology as a method to philosophy, this ‘destruction’ [*Destruktion*] of the tradition of philosophy remains an essential starting point for Heidegger into the 1920’s as it provides a historical context of ideas through which the original questions of philosophy may be rescued by phenomenology.¹⁰ And indeed, as the phenomenological method becomes Heidegger’s path to ontology, as it will be shown in the next chapter, destruction remains a critical concept for the critique of the history of philosophy that is proper to a new encounter with being and human being through *Dasein*. With respect to this matter of access to philosophical problems from the tradition, Heidegger even takes the situation of the university itself as a facet of the historical context of thinking. In this manner, philosophy as the pursuit of the history of philosophy, alongside what Heidegger calls ‘university-philosophy,’ is thus distinguished from genuine and original philosophizing.¹¹ In a word, Heidegger brings this matter to the fore by asking: “[Can] a philosophizing still be genuine and original if it entrusts the situation of its basic experience to an accidental institution that arose historically and has

⁹ GA 58: 6/5.

¹⁰ A list of historical destructions in each text featured here is as follows: GA 58: History of Phenomenology and Philosophy, 1-24/1-17; GA 59: Problem of History, 60-86/46-69, Problem of Lived Experience e.g. Natorp, 92-148/73-114, e.g. Dilthey, 149-174/128-142; GA 60: Philosophy of Religion e.g. Ernst Troelsch, 19-26/14-19, Interpretations of Augustine, 159-164/115-119; GA 61: Reception of Aristotle, 4-9/5-10, Method of Philosophy, 11-26/11-22; GA 63: Traditional Concept of Hermeneutics, 8-14/6-10, History of Phenomenology, 67-77/53-60, Traditional Concept of Man, 21-29/17-24, Misunderstandings of Subject-Object Relation, 81-83/62-64; GA 17: Consciousness and Being e.g. Husserl, 41-107/32-77, 269-290/208-221, Consciousness and Being e.g. Descartes, 108-269/79-207. GA 20: Philosophy as Scientific Philosophy e.g. Brentano and Husserl, 22-33/18-26, Major Breakthroughs in Phenomenology, 43-103/27-75, Historical Development of Phenomenology e.g. Aristotle and Husserl, 103-122/75-89, Method and Aims of Phenomenology e.g. Husserl, 123-202/90-150.

¹¹ Martin Heidegger, *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles: Einführung in die Phänomenologische Forschung*, (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klosterman, 1985), 46-49, 62-73 *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle: Initiation into Phenomenological Research*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 36-37, 47-55, hereafter referenced as GA 61.

perhaps now reached the end of its existence?”¹² The task of philosophy as a phenomenological endeavor thus receives its most vital charge prior to any methodological demonstration - it must begin self-critically if it is to begin at all with any certainty towards its access to life and to being in an ordinary retrieval of thought.

Heidegger’s phenomenological path to philosophy as it is characterized by these early texts exhibits a mode of thinking that is in constant change as it proceeds as directed from an intimate encounter with the ‘things themselves.’¹³ Thus, from a deeply reflective approach to philosophy, Heidegger achieves much through the phenomenology of factual life as it leads his thinking towards ontological considerations on the being of Dasein – the being-there of human being. To illustrate Heidegger’s progression of phenomenology from original science of factual life to the hermeneutics of facticity, I will present the development of the phenomenological method in the following way.

In “Description and ‘Taking-Notice,’” I will present the first formulation of the phenomenological method as a mode of explicating life in itself through descriptions of factual life experience as presented in *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (GA 58). In doing so, it shall be made clear in what manner Heidegger’s early thought is understood as one that emerges from life itself, and with an “attitude which is constantly checking and revising”¹⁴ of philosophical tradition, remains riveted to it. Following these matters, in “Destruction and Formal Indication,” I shall present Heidegger’s critical path to securing original

¹² GA 61: 68/52.

¹³ See GA 58: 24/17 for Heidegger’s use of “*an den Sachen*” in reference to Husserl’s famous phrase, “*Wir wollen auf die ‘Sachen selbst’ zurückgehen* [We must go back to the things themselves].” Edmund Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen*, (Max Niemeyer, 1913), *Erste Teil, Zweiter Band*, 6, “Logical Investigations,” trans. J. N. Findlay, (New York: Routledge, 1982) Part 1, Vol 2, 168.

¹⁴ GA 58: 25/21.

phenomenological access to philosophical problems veiled and distorted from the tradition as presented in *Phänomenologie der Anschauung und des Ausdrucks* (GA 59) and *Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens* (GA 60). It will be shown from these texts in what manner ‘destruction’ is to be understood as a method of phenomenology, alongside its relation to ‘formal indication,’ and its importance in these early stages of Heidegger’s thinking. Here, destruction first appears through Heidegger’s critique of philosophical tradition, allowing an original encounter with the origin of concepts to be made possible.

In “Hermeneutics,” I shall present the phenomenological method of hermeneutics as a mode of critical interpretation that provides Heidegger an immediate path to the ontological possibilities of the phenomenology of facticity as expressed in *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles: Einführung in die Phänomenologische Forschung* (GA 61), and *Ontologie - Hermeneutik der Faktizität* (GA 63). These two sections provide decisive presentations of Heidegger’s development of the phenomenological method towards ontology via analyses of the being of factual life through Dasein. Following these explicit presentations of the phenomenological method, I shall then in “Phenomenology as Such” present Heidegger’s formal considerations on phenomenology from *Einführung in die phänomenologische Forschung* (GA 17) and *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* (GA 20) as it reaches a mature definition with respect to this progression of method, leading further towards a clear engagement with Dasein and the question of being (*Seinsfrage*) through phenomenology. In the end, these matters will further serve to prepare for the following chapter, “Phenomenology as the Method of Ontology.” Thus, it shall be revealed overall that the essential question of the being of Dasein,

as it characterizes Heidegger's ontological thinking, is one that can only begin to be articulated, let alone answered, through phenomenology and the hermeneutics of factual life.¹⁵

Description and 'Taking-Notice'

I begin then in the Winter semester of 1919/20 with Heidegger's first major lecture course on phenomenology, *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (GA 58). Here, Heidegger presents his early considerations on the method of phenomenology as 'the original science of factual life' – a mode of philosophical thinking that seeks to establish the study of life as the origin of all philosophical problems. In this manner, by providing vivid descriptions of his everyday, trivial activities and guiding the audience through a radical shift in outlook towards such experiences, Heidegger articulates in what manner the method of phenomenology opens a path of access to life through its manifestations in experience as life 'in itself.'¹⁶ As Heidegger writes: "We go along in the factual life-experiences and see if, in them and just in them, an original articulation of life indicates itself."¹⁷ Thus, by his demonstrations of phenomenological description in the 'taking-notice' [*Kenntnisnahme*] of life's appearance through personal experience, Heidegger further extracts the phenomenal character of life in itself by establishing an absolute context of activities beyond any individual perspective. Phenomenology, in this early formulation of method, hereby seeks to render the structures of life in itself apparent through a descriptive recounting of one's own experiences in factual life in such a manner as to render from one's personal life, life in itself – to use Heidegger's terms, to render the 'esoteric

¹⁵ For further discussion see John van Buren, *The Young Heidegger: Rumor of the Hidden King*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.); Scott Campbell, *Heidegger's Early Philosophy of Life: Facticity, Being, and Language*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012.); *Reading Heidegger from the Start: Essays in His Earliest Thought*, ed. Theodore Kisiel and John van Buren, (Albany: SUNY, 1994).

¹⁶ See GA 58: 32-34/26-27 for further discussion on everydayness.

¹⁷ GA 58: 157/121.

disposition' of factual life as an 'exoteric determination' of life in itself through phenomenological description.¹⁸ Thus, from a "critical destruction of this [self-world]"¹⁹ the phenomenon of life in itself can appear and be explicated through an overall 'reduction' of its essential phenomenal structure.²⁰

Continuing to express the role of phenomenological description for the task of an original science of factual life, Heidegger explains: "Life – my life, your life, their life, our life...we want to get to know in its most general typicality and, indeed, in such a way that we remain in it, looking around in it *in its way* [*in seiner Weise*]..."²¹ From this comment, Heidegger thus begins his explication of life in itself with an impression upon following and responding to life exactly as it gives itself, a task achieved through phenomenological description. In this manner, Heidegger directs us further: "We will look for ourselves at 'life in itself' and then see if we find in it a particular character, one that matter-of-factly demands a clear-cut, conceptual, and meaningful circumscription...which is both coming from the things themselves and is taken from them..."²² Having presented this, the proper mode of access to life in itself, Heidegger then proceeds to demonstrate phenomenological descriptions of everyday trivial activities in his own life from out of which life in itself is to appear in its phenomenal character.

¹⁸ GA 58: 6/5.

¹⁹ GA 58: 139/107.

²⁰ It is worth noting that Heidegger is attentive to the relation in the phenomenological method of reduction, construction, destruction as early as 1919 (see GA 58: 121/95, 123/96, 147/113, 151/116) though it does not become a thematic process of the method until 1927. See Martin Heidegger, *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1975), 26-32, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 18-23, hereafter referenced as GA 24.

²¹ GA 58: 30/25.

²² *Ibid.*

For the first description, Heidegger begins with the experience of a visit – details of his own life from which the reflection on experience can be grasped as such. His description is as follows: “[Looking] at books together, viewing pictures, drinking tea, smoking cigarettes; thereupon, taking a walk together; the weather brightens up, the sun comes through, the sun sets, it is becoming brisk...”²³ From this occasion, Heidegger impresses once more that what is decisive for phenomenology is not the specific details themselves indicating his personal activities, but rather that from these what is given overall is “a context of experience in which I am fully engrossed.”²⁴ Thus, these seeming trivialities become of extreme phenomenological importance for the explication of life in itself, as the context of experience presents a path of access to its phenomenal character. To thus access life in itself, the critical element of phenomenological description must be employed. As Heidegger states, an essential change in attitude takes place through phenomenological description which he terms ‘taking-notice’ [*Kenntnisnahme*], more commonly understood as perusal. In this manner, through the recollection of events one is given access to the context of one’s life experiences in a thematic way from which life in itself may be glimpsed.²⁵ Heidegger expresses this essential shift in attitude through the character of ‘taking-notice’ in the following manner, itself a description:²⁶

²³ GA 58: 115/90

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ This is indicative of the relation between the two words for experience *Erlebnis*, as eventful or ‘lived’ experience, and *Erfahren*, as ‘mere’ experience or cognizance. There is a long history in phenomenology, especially in Husserl’s *Ideen* of the emphatic differentiation between the two as indicative of a phenomenological shift in the natural attitude that conditions the experiences themselves for further explication. However, in this part of the text, Heidegger remains with the usage of *Erfahren* as it conveys a non-objectifying character in its relation to ‘taking-notice’ or perusal [*Kenntnisnahme*] (see translator’s forward, GA 58: x).

²⁶ In this manner, phenomenological description plays a similar role in both Heidegger and Husserl as it is invoked in order to demonstrate the phenomenological method itself, indeed through a sub-demonstration of the operation of reflection upon experience. See Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*, (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1913), 48-56, “*Ideas towards a Pure Phenomenology and*

“In the evening I am asked: What did you do this afternoon? – and I recount the visit and the stroll; or in the evening I contemplate it for myself, I let it drift past me, or I write down what happened to me in my diary – overall: I take-notice of it by recounting, orally or in writing, or contemplatively.”²⁷ Thus, the factual experience itself does not change in content. Rather, through recounting and indeed reliving the experiences as experiences of factual life, the attitude towards such events is modified. The experiences themselves are exalted from disconnected trivialities to events of factual life under a thematic context.²⁸

Turning towards the access of life in itself through the context of experience, Heidegger thus proceeds with the following phenomenological description:

After the lecture I come out of the university building; over there I see an acquaintance greeting me; I return the greeting; passing by the Colosseum I hear music; it occurs to me that I want to go to the theater this evening, that I want to attend to this and that, that I cannot come in too late; in the meantime it occurs to me that in a portion of the lecture, I did not bring out the formulation in such a way that it adequately rendered what was being examined; walking on, I live in that which I still want to attend to from beforehand; in the course of this, I see people and go into a cigar store on the street corner, buy myself Swiss stogies, listen to the gentleman behind the store-counter animatedly recount the last football match; what he is recounting interests me, how he is recounting it does not; as I pack up, I only see how he becomes more and more animated and excited about the brilliant performance of a halfback.²⁹

From this description, Heidegger seeks what is precisely at stake concerning the phenomenological explication of life from the context of experience. Through the shift in attitude towards the content of life through ‘taking-notice,’ an essential discovery of the ‘how’ of factual

Phenomenological Philosophy,” trans. W. R. Boyce Gibson, (New York: Humanities Press, 1969), 91-96, hereafter referenced as *Ideen*.

²⁷ GA 58: 115/91.

²⁸ See GA 58: 116-122/91-95 for a discussion on ‘taking-notice’ as a counter-measure to absorption in factual life experience. Heidegger’s here echoes Husserl’s understanding of the ‘incompleteness of experience’ and the necessity for reflection in phenomenology, *Ideen*, 82/127, at GA 58: 116/91: “When I perceive, I do not remember; and when I remember, I do not perceive.”

²⁹ GA 58: 103/82.

life become accessible. In this manner, as Heidegger writes: “The idea of phenomenology is: the original science of life...What is to be researched, rather, is life *as arising*, as emerging out of an origin.”³⁰ Thus, the phenomenological method of description firstly grants an access to the context of life’s content without the strict emphasis on one’s own personal relations. In this manner, a ‘destruction’ [*Destruktion*] of personal context takes place from which the remaining absolute context of life experience can undergo a reduction towards the character of life in itself. As Heidegger writes: “[Life] as arising out of it can be deepened, which is ultimately possible only in this way: that life is itself *taken back into the origin* in its whole facticity...The idea is of such an *absolute* science of life, not of this or that factual, individual life.”³¹

In explicating the phenomenon of life as it appears as the absolute context of life experience as such, Heidegger returns to the previous description to amplify what is self-evident of life in the experience. In response, he thus states: “You, he, she, we always live in a *direction* [*Richtung*]...usually in such a way that we are not even explicitly aware of the direction. I can explicitly place myself into it, but it can also come upon me or sneak up on me or simply be there, yet in such a way that...a direction *explicitly* [*ausdrücklich*] engrosses us....”³² He continues: “One has particular *convictions* [*Überzeugungen*] and *ideas* [*Ideen*] of and about that which encounters me in life...One is thrown this way and that by *oppositions* [*Gegensätzen*]...One gets wrapped up in something, is caught up [*gefangen*] in something (or ensnared) [*be-fangen*]...one is happy about life...[then] once again it’s agony.”³³ These are not

³⁰ GA 58: 81/65.

³¹ GA 58: 86-87/69.

³² GA 58: 32/26.

³³ GA 58: 32-33/27, (my brackets).

mere general statements, nor are they private reflections from Heidegger's own intimate life experience. Rather, as phenomenological descriptions, they are indications of the appearance of life in itself in the 'how' of its manifestation. Thus, Heidegger delimits the phenomenal character of life in itself: "[It] has a basic aspect, this life, which we will designate as its '*self-sufficiency* [*Selbstgenügsamkeit*]....'"³⁴ He continues: "Self-sufficient...its intentional structure [has] a basic directedness in each case and always into a world...This 'form' is the mode of life's own direction, which it even takes right where it wants to fulfill and satisfy itself. Structurally, it does not need to come out of itself...."³⁵ Life, full of its own comings and goings, thus pulls us along in it through this essential directedness as it needs nothing else to be itself.

Following this explication of the self-sufficiency of life in itself, another aspect of its phenomenal structure becomes apparent. As Heidegger writes:

Thus, all kinds of things, which lie in the circle of each one of us, and in the circle that is always going along with life streaming forth: our *environing world* [*Umwelt*] – landscapes, regions, cities and coasts; our *with-world* [*Mitwelt*] – parents, siblings, acquaintances, superiors, teachers, students, officials, strangers...our *self-world* [*Selbstwelt*] ...my personal rhythm.³⁶

In this manner life's self-sufficiency which comes into view through the phenomenological method of 'taking-notice' through description, appearing from one's own factual life experience in a personal context of meaningfulness, is further manifest in its worldly character. It is thus not only the sheer vitality of life's directedness that draws our activities in its flow, such that we are seldom aware of it ourselves, but the very character of the 'in which' that factual life occurs means that *what* and *wherein* we are directed towards life are the manifold worlds of life in itself.

³⁴ GA 58: 30/25.

³⁵ GA 58: 31/25.

³⁶ GA 58: 33/27, (my brackets).

As Heidegger writes: “Our life is our world, which we seldom see, but rather always... ‘are by it’: ‘captivated,’ ‘repelled,’ ‘enjoying,’ ‘renouncing.’ ‘We are always somehow encountering.’ Our life is the world... And our life is only lived *as life* insofar as it lives in a world.”³⁷

Thus, the critical matter of the phenomenology of factual life becomes apparent: Through these investigations which have brought the self-sufficient and worldly characters of life in itself into view through ‘taking-notice,’ the first formulation of the phenomenological method has been presented in its expression and demonstration as phenomenological description. In this manner, through an essential shift in attitude towards one’s own experiences, an absolute context is laid open for further work upon extracting life in itself as a basic phenomenon. This initial state of phenomenology is an essential point of departure for the following texts to be presented as outgrowths of this basic position.

Though the thematic demonstration of phenomenological description shortly falls away, the structural relations that lie as its ground remain in Heidegger’s phenomenological thinking as an essential approach to philosophy and factual life.³⁸ Following the matters presented in this text, Heidegger continues to develop the phenomenological method to expand the power of phenomenological destruction briefly indicated here.³⁹ Indeed, following its appearance in GA 58, phenomenological destruction takes on a very specific meaning and method for Heidegger in the lectures to follow, *Phänomenologie der Anschauung und des Ausdrucks* (GA 59) and

³⁷ GA 58: 33-34/27.

³⁸ See GA 63: 90-92/69-70 for further demonstration of phenomenological descriptions. For further discussion, see Martin Heidegger, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*, (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1979), 103-110, *History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena*, trans. Theodore Kisiel, (Bloomington: Indian University Press, 1992), 75-80, hereafter referenced as GA 20.

³⁹ See GA 58: 22/17,120-122/ 94-95, 160/115, 156/120, 160/123, 163-134/125-126 for Heidegger’s mention of destruction in 1919/20.

Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens (GA 60). Here, Heidegger presents individual stages of phenomenological destruction through demonstrations to isolate phenomena and prepare the way to an original encounter with them – beyond the initial dual-meaning of destruction whereby phenomenology makes its ‘fresh start’ and the personal context of factual life experience is destroyed to reach the phenomenon of life in itself.

Thus, in GA 59 Heidegger presents and demonstrates the four steps of phenomenological destruction that overall aim at extracting the original problems of philosophy as they arise out of factual life, and as such have been misshapen by the history of philosophy. In this manner, what emerges from the process of phenomenological destruction is an original understanding of the ‘problem-situation’ for philosophy, one that point towards a new direction in thought – the concrete historical Dasein in its factual existence. Following this, Heidegger then employs phenomenological destruction as he approaches the task of radically rethinking the philosophy of religion through phenomenological interpretations of religious experience detailed by Paul and Augustine. Here, Heidegger appears to utilize the newly discovered method of destruction but focuses his explicit remarks on the method of formal indication and its relation to phenomenological destruction.

Despite its mention throughout GA 59,⁴⁰ formal indication here receives explicit attention as Heidegger expresses it as a precursor to destruction, one attends to the specific relational element of phenomena to experience, what Heidegger calls the “‘how’ I stand with regard to things....”⁴¹ Here, one attends to a phenomenon as it is initially understood by a provisional

⁴⁰ See Martin Heidegger, *Phänomenologie der Anschauung und des Ausdrucks*, (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1993) 75, 85-86, 97, 112, 172, *Phenomenology of Intuition and Expression*, trans. Tracy Colony, (New York: Continuum, 2010), 57, 65-66, 77, 87, 132, hereafter referenced as GA 59.

⁴¹ GA 60: 12/9.

fore-having or pre-understanding from which a primary access to the original content of phenomena may be achieved.⁴² In this manner, through phenomenological destruction and formal indication, the philosophy of religion provides an essential ground for the rethinking philosophical tradition and the further explication of concrete historical Dasein through phenomenological interpretations expressing fundamental characteristics of the being of factual life, opening the way for further ontological explications.

Destruction and Formal Indication

In *Phänomenologie der Anschauung und des Ausdrucks* (GA 59), Heidegger introduces destruction as a phenomenological method that arises out of a necessity for philosophy to free itself from the constraints of history given by the philosophical tradition. Here, Heidegger identifies that it is thus from lived experience itself, not from any historical situation, that philosophy must make its way towards its original problematic ground. In this manner, as Heidegger expresses, philosophy as phenomenology must thus think itself anew – and it is precisely from this “wanting-to-become-free from an un-genuine, non-primordially appropriated tradition”⁴³ that destruction is employed. Methodologically, destruction is first understood and employed as an address of history itself, as Heidegger indicates: “The past newly grows towards every living present...The fundamental sense of intellectual history...is pre-delineated [*vorgezeichnet*] by the living preconception that leads and guides all understanding.”⁴⁴ Thus, in order that phenomenological philosophy begin as a rethinking of traditional philosophy, and

⁴² For further discussion, see Daniel O. Dahlstrom, “Heidegger’s Method: Philosophical Concepts as Formal Indications,” in *Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. 47, No. 4, (Philosophy Education Society, 1994), 775-795.

⁴³ GA 59: 5/3.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

remain a study of ‘basic problems,’ this methodological destruction of history must be properly expressed and demonstrated.

It is thus from this initial historical destruction that the second aspect of destruction is then employed – the four-stage isolation and pursuit of an original encounter with phenomena. To accomplish this, Heidegger first addresses the positive sense of destruction as a revelatory method of phenomenology regarding history:

Phenomenological destruction – as a fundamental part of phenomenological philosophizing – is therefore not without direction; it does not fortuitously take up meanings of words in order to explain them by means of other taken up meanings. It is not mere shattering but a ‘directed’ destruction [*Abbau*]. It leads into the situation of the pursuit of the pre-delineations, of the enactment of the preconception and thereby of the fundamental experience.⁴⁵

As directed by such destruction, Heidegger proceeds with the phenomenological task of addressing the problem situation of philosophy exemplified by problems of the *a priori* and life experience – from which the phenomenological destruction will be conducted through the respectively designated phenomena of history and factual life experience. Through a destruction of these two problems, Heidegger thus seeks to identify the issues within the tradition of philosophy that hinder a phenomenological thinking of factual life and bar a proper and original access to the understanding of lived experience as a source for philosophical questioning. In the initiation of this task, Heidegger presents the four stages of phenomenological destruction in the following way: “1. initial specification of the ambiguity, 2. first bringing-out, 3. pursuit of the pre-delineations, 4. understanding of the preconception.”⁴⁶

⁴⁵ GA 59: 35/25.

⁴⁶ GA 59: 41/29.

To address the first problem of the *a priori*, Heidegger begins a phenomenological destruction of the phenomenon of history. In the demonstration of the destruction, Heidegger carries out each step as previously listed in a rigorous manner. He thus begins with the first step, the initial ‘specification of ambiguity,’ by presenting six different meanings of history, “meanings that all, however, point back to a unitary sense-complex...”⁴⁷ In this manner, Heidegger enumerates various significations that appear in the word-concept ‘history’ with the intention of following their direction towards an original meaning. However, as he remarks on the method: “One may be tempted to search for the common – that is, for what history means in general...One sees immediately that it does not work like this. One is automatically led to ask from where those different meanings each time attain their sense and where the primordial sense lies...that is, the ‘origin’ from which they grow.”⁴⁸

With this in mind, Heidegger presents the following phrases: “I. When I say: ‘My friend studies history...’ II. Someone...is given the advice: ‘Just orient yourself a bit in the history!...’ III. One speaks of ‘history-less...’ [having] no history...’ IV. Again...as life’s great instructor...V. One means something else when one says...“This person has a sad history...’ VI... ‘A very unpleasant story [*Geschichte*]...’⁴⁹ Following this, as the mere specification of ambiguity is not enough, Heidegger then moves on to the second stage of the destruction as the ‘first bringing-out of the pre-delineations’ still contained “within the ambit of the understanding in factual life experience...”⁵⁰ From these ambiguities, Heidegger presents the following pre-

⁴⁷ GA 59: 43/33. See GA 20: 99-102/72-75 for a later address of the understanding of the *a priori*.

⁴⁸ GA 59: 49/37.

⁴⁹ GA 59: 43-44/33-34. See François Raffoul, “Heidegger and the Aporia of History,” in *POLIGRAFI*, no. 16, (2011.) pp. 91-118 for discussion on Heidegger’s different usage of *Historie* and *Geschichte* for ‘history.’

⁵⁰ GA 59: 44/34.

delineations of history as: 1. The science of history, 2. A field of facts, 3. Tradition, 4. The instructor of life, 5. Personal historical past of factual life, 6. An incident which concerns me.⁵¹

The task of the destruction now turns towards the third stage, ‘pursuing the pre-delineations’ towards the explication of the overall sense-complex. At this stage, the pre-delineations appear more sharply defined, in part through the phenomenal explication of ‘having’ with respect to history. The six pre-delineations are presented by Heidegger as follows:

1. History as theoretical attitudinal complex, as a concretizing logic of a domain of subject matter. 2. History as that which is past...a whole of being as something that has become... 3. History as one’s own past in the correlate of the preserving and constantly self-renewing taking-along: tradition, 4. History as past which is not one’s own...self-worldly directed tendencies of Dasein in the correlate of the being-familiar that takes guidance from itself. 5. History as ownmost past in the correlate of ‘having’ that is motivated in only self-worldly directed tendencies. 6. History as occurring in the event character [*Ereignischarakter*] of factual life related to factual self-world, with-world and environing world.⁵²

As these significations are directed towards an essential unitary sense-complex, the process of phenomenological destruction must then turn towards an articulation of these significations towards an original preconception by way of relation. In this manner, Heidegger, then searches through the relations expressed by each sense-complex indicated in the pre-delineations of history for one relation which provides the grounds for a deeper phenomenological characterization. Heidegger thus determines this essential relation as that of ‘enactment,’ as the relations of history are understood “*by the manner in which it is had*, is experienced.”⁵³ In this manner, the six detailed pre-delineations are assessed according to the criteria set forth by the

⁵¹ GA 59: 44-48/34-37.

⁵² GA 59: 59/45-46.

⁵³ GA 59: 60/46.

characterization of enactment for the destruction to proceed towards the phenomenological origin correlating to ‘self-worldly Dasein.’⁵⁴

Heidegger thus presents the mark of criteria as follows: “*An enactment is primordial if...it requires...an always actual renewal in a self-worldly Dasein. It does so precisely in such a way that this renewal and the ‘necessity’...of renewal inherent in it co-constitutes this self-worldly existence.*”⁵⁵ What is at stake here is the indication of a pre-delineation of history which expresses an original preconception from the sense-complex, and at the same time presents itself as co-constitutive of Dasein itself – meaning, that in the experience of Dasein in its factual life, the enactment provides an experience of Dasein’s selfhood as something it ‘has.’ Thus, Heidegger reviews the sense-complexes indicated by the significations of history and discovers this exact character of ‘having’ that satisfies the criteria of enactment. In addressing the fifth sense-complex of history as ownmost past Heidegger expresses the following:

In case V. there is a sense of enactment that comes even closer to the primordial, so that here past is had as the ownmost one and this having, in fact, enacts itself in such a way that the ownmost past also loses the environing worldly character into which the self-worldly instances of meaningfulness constantly fall back.⁵⁶

Here, destruction appears yet again in terms of rendering an individual experience-context into an explicit experience-context as such,⁵⁷ however it is here expressed through the explication of enactment: “Case V. is situated closest to the primordial – and is still not the primordial itself – *pure* self-worldly meaningfulness.”⁵⁸ In this sense, the idea of an absolute context, a pure self-

⁵⁴ GA 59: 75/57.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ GA 59: 83-84/64

⁵⁷ Thus, the role of destruction for phenomenology in GA 58.

⁵⁸ GA 59: 84/64

worldly meaningfulness appears again as the original access to life phenomenologically. Yet, the sense of enactment given here clearly reaches the character sought in the destruction, as Heidegger writes: “The enactment is in each case and necessarily such that what has been self-worldly meaningful *arises* again in it...I seize my own past so that again and again it is had for the first time and that I myself am always affected anew by myself and ‘am’ in renewed enactment.”⁵⁹

The method of phenomenological destruction is thus a clear path of revision and indication to address the intimations given by a pre-understanding that traditional philosophy encapsulates in a veil of historical progression. As it concerns the destruction of the concept of history at hand, it thus reaches its end through this indication of the primordially of the sense-complex given by the pre-delineation of history as enacted in the ownmost past of historical Dasein. As these considerations bring Heidegger’s task further along in explicating the original preconception, we are indeed as Heidegger indicates ‘on the way’ to a phenomenological reduction which takes as its goal primordially. In this manner, the phenomenological destruction of history has provided access into the primordial ground of the problem itself, which Heidegger articulates as “the human being in its concrete, individual historical Dasein.”⁶⁰ In this manner, Heidegger’s demonstration of the method of deconstruction provides another concrete step in the progression of phenomenology, one that remains motivated by a basic tendency of rethinking philosophy out of its muddled history as it emerges out of life itself and establishing a method through which phenomena themselves can be recovered and revealed. As it concerns the positive destruction in this text, Heidegger indeed continues on to address the problem of lived

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ GA 59: 86/66.

experience through destructions of Natorp and Dilthey in their life-philosophies to explicate the essential problem of experience in factual life. Through these two destructions, Heidegger continues to delimit the essential problematic of Dasein, as he finds in the two philosophers that “[actual] Dasein does not come to its primordial due. [It] does not become a possible problem.”⁶¹

Following this indication, Heidegger imparts that it is the task of philosophy, through phenomenology, to thus maintain its hold and its view on factual Dasein in its concreteness to prepare the way for a proper understanding of both the phenomenon of history and the historical character of each Dasein. In a flourish, Heidegger thus proclaims: “Philosophy is pervaded by a fundamental experience and must form itself in it in terms of content. Therefore *there are no philosophical disciplines* (such as logic, ethics, aesthetics, philosophy of religion).”⁶² Rather, factual experience as the subject-matter of philosophy necessitates that concrete Dasein in its factual experience be taken phenomenologically as the primary charge. At the end of GA 59, Heidegger presents a last word on philosophy and phenomenology to reinforce this essential progression towards factual experience which explicates Dasein above all. “Philosophy has the task of preserving the facticity of life and strengthening the facticity of Dasein. Philosophy as factual life experience requires a motive in which the worry about factual life experience itself remains. We call this philosophical *fundamental experience* [*Grunderfahrung*].”⁶³ As Heidegger thus expresses the state of philosophy in its relation to life itself, he once more impresses that the essential path of access to this entire philosophical domain is at all ends possible only insofar as philosophy proceeds phenomenologically. He writes: “It is the task of *phenomenology* to put

⁶¹ GA 59: 170/130.

⁶² GA 59: 172/131, (my emphasis).

⁶³ GA 59: 174/133, (my brackets).

itself into that tendency towards the actual primordial Dasein and to always from anew throw the torch into...philosophy.”⁶⁴

Heidegger directly carries over the task of phenomenological destruction and the essential problem of explicating the facticity of Dasein in *Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens* (GA 60). As the text is comprised of two major parts,⁶⁵ the 1920/21 Winter semester lecture “Introduction to Philosophy of Religion” and the 1921 Summer semester lecture “Augustine and Neo-Platonism,” Heidegger’s aims are readily apparent in its two basic manifestations. In “Introduction to Philosophy of Religion,” Heidegger seeks to open a new path to theological understanding outside of traditional philosophy of religion through phenomenological interpretations of Paul’s letters to the Galatians and Thessalonians.⁶⁶ Here, the essence of phenomenological interpretation is to understand the texts in question as expressions of factual experience from which life itself can be explicated. In looking to Paul for phenomenological explications of factual life with respect to history, Heidegger also seeks to indeed begin on a phenomenologically-oriented context, as Paul “has come to Christianity not through a historical tradition, but through an original experience.”⁶⁷ In this manner, Heidegger continues to be guided by phenomenological destruction as he isolates key phenomena relevant to the lived experience of Paul’s relation to whom he is engaging in proclamation. To accomplish this, Heidegger presents the method of formal indication – a preliminary expression of the relations of

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, (my emphasis).

⁶⁵ There is indeed a third part, an outline to a lecture that was never delivered, “The Philosophical Foundations of Medieval Mysticism.”

⁶⁶ In this text, Heidegger also begins to radically distinguish philosophy from its previous appearance as a science, though this distinction appears in previous texts. See GA 58: 65-81/53-64, GA 59: 9-29/6-21, GA 60: 1-12/1-13. However, upon reaching a proper ontological understanding of phenomenology by GA 63, its character as a science returns.

⁶⁷ GA 60: 69/49.

significance in a concept that is heavily tied to destruction. Thus, through phenomenological destruction and formal indication, Heidegger begins to extract essential characteristics of factual life through the experiences of Paul that provide articulations for the factual situation of life in terms of being [*Sein*], providing a critical basis for his following interpretations of factual life in its own being through Augustine.

The progression of phenomenological destruction to GA 60 is apparent in the very introduction of the work as Heidegger remarks on the necessity to understand the three essential concepts at work in the lecture, “‘introduction,’ ‘phenomenology,’ ...and ‘religion.’”⁶⁸ The path to understanding these, Heidegger writes, will be accessed through phenomenological destruction: “We will begin with the clarification of the meaning of words, but we will refer immediately to the connections among objects indicated in these meanings such that these connections will be put into question.”⁶⁹ Although Heidegger does not continue to demonstrate a destruction of the concepts themselves to the same degree as in GA 59, he nevertheless indicates the route towards this understanding. Taking the concept of ‘introduction’ as his theme, Heidegger thus presents an initial destruction through the indication of ambiguities. He thus lists the significations of ‘introduction’ as: “a) the delimitation of the material domain...b) the doctrine of the methodological treatment of the material domain...determination (*Feststellung*) of the concept...c) the historical consideration of the previous attempts to pose and resolve scientific tasks.”⁷⁰

⁶⁸ GA 60: 5/4.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ GA 60: 5/4-5.

Following these introductory matters, Heidegger moves towards a preparation of the first phenomenological interpretation of Paul. To accomplish this, Heidegger secures a core phenomenon from which the relation between Paul's lived experience and factual life itself may be understood, and precisely *as* a relation. This phenomenon Heidegger indicates is the concept of history, as it readily appears prominent in Paul's expressions of his experience. Thus, a destruction of the phenomenon of history must first take place to clearly elicit a significance that will further indicate the essential relation between experience and life in the phenomenological interpretation of Paul. As the relation itself is what is primarily at stake, Heidegger looks to the method of formal indication to inform the overall destruction, as a formal indication of the phenomenon of history will clearly delimit its position with respect to experience and factual life. In this manner, the phenomenon of history will be formally indicated, and thus properly understood in its own significance. To explain this process, Heidegger states: "The usual sense of the historical [*das Historische*] says it is the temporally-becoming, and as such, past... This sense of 'historical' is so general... that nothing would be lost if it were applied, without further qualification, to factual life experience."⁷¹ Thus, rather than generally expressed in a manner that neglects the precise articulation of ambiguities in the method of destruction, the concept of history will be expressed in a *formal* manner as a relational indication.⁷²

Heidegger thus brings formal indication to bear as a proper stage of phenomenological method as it draws-out from an initial access a pre-given understanding of the relational significations in the concept of history, and in doing so it precisely "brings no preconceived

⁷¹ GA 60: 55/38.

⁷² See GA 60: 55-65/38-45 for Heidegger's further discussion on the distinction between general and formal indication.

opinion”⁷³ to the extraction of meaning. To address history by way of formal indication, Heidegger thus begins:

Each experience – as *experiencing*, and what is *experienced* – can be ‘taken in the phenomenon,’ that is to say, one can ask: 1. After the original ‘*what*,’ that is experienced therein (content). 2. After the original ‘*how*,’ in which it is experienced (relation). 3 After the original ‘*how*,’ in which the relational meaning is *enacted* (*enactment*).⁷⁴

Phenomenology, as “the ‘*λόγος*’ of the phenomena”⁷⁵ in explicating the ‘how’ of the content of factual lived experienced, thus indicates the relational element here between history and factual life. Thus, this relational element of the manner of experiencing – the “‘how’ I stand with regard to things”⁷⁶ – is what the formal indication seeks to make explicit through what in destruction is called the ‘initial drawing-out of the pre-delineations’. As it regards history, Heidegger writes: “If the historical is taken as the formally indicated, it is not thereby asserted that the most general determination of the ‘historical’ as a ‘becoming in time’ delineates a final sense...Rather, the problem of time must be grasped in the way we originally experience temporality in factual experience....”⁷⁷

As a destruction of the phenomenon of history through formal indication only serves the greater task of illustrating the relation between experience and factual life through phenomenological interpretations of Paul, Heidegger departs from these explicit considerations on formal indication.⁷⁸ In this manner, Heidegger now employs the previous formal indication of

⁷³ GA 60: 55/38. This statement bears heavy similarity to the character of phenomenology in Husserl as ‘prior to all theory’ (*Ideen*, 52/95).

⁷⁴ GA 60: 62-63/43.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ GA 60: 12/9.

⁷⁷ GA 60: 64-65/44.

⁷⁸ For further discussion on formal indication, see GA 61: 26-36/22-28, 140-155/104-115; and GA 63: 78-80/61-62.

history to precisely view the relation between Paul's experience and factual life inasmuch as history serves as the primary expression of relation. Heidegger thus proceeds to identify the essential phenomenon of 'proclamation' as the "immediate life-relation of the world of self of Paul to the surrounding world and to the communal world of the community...."⁷⁹ Proclamation as the locus of Paul's factual experience thus provides a proper ground to view such relation through a phenomenological interpretation of Paul's letter to the Thessalonians. Here, the preparations of the formal indication of history reach their completion, as the essential situation of Paul in his experience of proclamation to the Thessalonians is the experience of their 'having-become.' Through this, the phenomenological interpretation thus reaches an ontological discussion concerning factual life through the expression of Paul's letter to the Thessalonians. As Heidegger writes: "Having-become is not, in life, [just] any incident you like. Rather, it is incessantly co-experienced, and indeed such that their Being [*Sein*] now is their having-become [*Gewordensein*]."⁸⁰ The essential relation of Paul's experience to factual life itself, given by the situation of proclamation, is thus his experience of the Thessalonians in their 'having-become.' In a word, "Their having-become is their Being now."⁸¹

It is thus through these phenomenological interpretations that Heidegger begins to articulate the investigation of factual life in terms of being, thus introducing an approach to ontology through phenomenology. Indeed, these ontological matters provide Heidegger with a critical lens for his phenomenological interpretations of Augustine in the following 1921 Summer semester lecture of GA 60 where the original problem of a concrete historical Dasein as

⁷⁹ GA 60: 80/55.

⁸⁰ GA 60: 94/66. See GA 60: 75-105/52-74 for further discussion on phenomenological interpretation itself and the characterizations of factual life produced through the explication of Paul's factual experience.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

expressed in GA 59 can be provisionally attended to. Here, in “Augustine and Neo-Platonism,” Heidegger continues in this fashion to actualize the potential for phenomenological interpretations to produce characterizations of the being life seen in the previous work on Paul. From these interpretations, Heidegger thus conducts a phenomenological investigation on the essential manifestations of life itself given in factual experience. In this manner, from the experiences of Augustine, Heidegger highlights an essential character of factual life expressed as the ‘having-of-oneself’ that brings to vision “the concrete ‘worldly’ experiential complex of enactment”⁸² of life experience. Through further interpretations of Augustine guided by the elucidation of the ‘having-of-oneself’ Heidegger presents a wealth of phenomenological explications characterizing the factual situation of existence thematized as “*Dasein*, the self the being-real of life....”⁸³ In this manner, factual life in itself ultimately reaches a thematic articulation, of the ontological situation of facticity that now presents itself as the essential task of explication. This, Heidegger expresses as “a certain *How* of the being of life”⁸⁴ that is manifest in factual life experience as the object of phenomenology.

In this manner, Heidegger’s path becomes clear as he continues phenomenological interpretations towards ontological characterizations of factual life in the Winter 1921/22 lecture *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles* (GA 61). Here, taking Aristotle as his guide, Heidegger proceeds to explicate the essential categories of *Dasein*’s factual life in a progression of the work thus far on explicating the phenomenon of life in itself. Following this text, both the

⁸² GA 60: 243/182.

⁸³ GA 60: 228/170. See GA 60: 52-54/35-37 (§10: “*The Concern of Factual Dasein*”), GA 60: 193-246/141-184 for further discussion of ‘tendency-to-secure,’ ‘concern,’ ‘curiosity,’ and ‘absorption’ that will become critical existential determinations of *Dasein* in its being in *Sein und Zeit* (GA 2).

⁸⁴ GA 60: 242/181.

process of phenomenological interpretations and their ontological import become explicit themes for Heidegger in the presentation of a new formulation of phenomenology through the method of hermeneutic interpretation. Thus, in *Ontologie – Hermeneutik der Faktizität* (GA 63) Heidegger presents the essential problematic of explicating the being of human existence as Dasein through phenomenology, opening the path towards ontology.

Hermeneutics

In the 1921/22 Winter semester lecture *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles: Einführung in die Phänomenologische Forschung*,⁸⁵ Heidegger begins by delimiting the essential task of the work to form a “concrete philosophical problematic...[of] Aristotelian philosophy”⁸⁶ through phenomenological interpretations of Aristotle that constitute a state of original concrete philosophizing out of factual life in itself. In this manner, Heidegger proceeds towards a greater task of clearly delimiting the relation between philosophy and ontology through phenomenological explications of life. In turn, through the thematization of the factual life of Dasein expressed in terms of Aristotle’s categories, Heidegger reaches a new development of the phenomenological method as he discovers a mature form of phenomenological interpretation through hermeneutics.

To begin these phenomenological interpretations of Aristotle on the way to ontology, Heidegger first conducts two phenomenological explications that extract the sense of ‘philosophizing’ and ‘life’ from their given pre-conceptions. In this manner, Heidegger first

⁸⁵ It is worth noting that in the following 1922 Summer semester, Heidegger delivered a similar lecture titled *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles: Anzeige der hermeneutischen Situation*, (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2005), hereafter referenced as GA 62. This change in subtitle from “Introduction to Phenomenological Research” to “Indication of the Hermeneutical Situation” expresses the thematic shift of Heidegger’s treatment of factual life ontologically via hermeneutics developed in GA 61.

⁸⁶ GA 61: 13/12.

attends to an understanding of what it means ‘to philosophize,’ as opposed to the pursuit of the history of philosophy, by examining its historical origin in factual life as expressed by Plato. Here, through presenting the meanings of φιλοσοφία [philosophy], φιλόσοφος [philosopher], φιλοσοφεῖν [to philosophize], and φιλοσοφία μουσική [musical philosophy].⁸⁷ Heidegger reaches the essential concept of ‘comportment’ [*Verhalten*] as a relational determination. As he writes: “This comportment is expressed in a special manner when we say that ‘studying philosophy’ must be a real ‘philosophizing,’ That means: what we relate to...is such that it determines, from its own character, the comportment toward it. The object gives the comportment a name....”⁸⁸ This sense of relation that philosophizing holds through comportment is exceptionally decisive, for as Heidegger finds, the essential comportment that philosophizing maintains in its relation to factual life is determined by a sense of being [*Sein*]. Thus: “The object [*Gehalt*] of the definition of philosophy is therefore determined as...comportment [*Verhalten*] to beings in terms of Being [*als Sein von Seiendem*].”⁸⁹

Following these considerations, Heidegger then boldly expresses what has become evident through this notion of comportment for philosophy – “Philosophy is ‘ontology,’ indeed, is radical ontology, and as such is phenomenological...The object of philosophy, being in their Being, co-determines from out of itself...the comportment.” In this manner, and through the second phenomenological explication of the signification of life as “existence, ‘being’ in and

⁸⁷ GA 61: 48-50/37-38.

⁸⁸ GA 61: 51/39.

⁸⁹ GA 61: 58/44, (my brackets). I have inserted the original German in brackets to indicate the linguistic relation between both object and comportment, *Gehalt* and *Verhalten*, and the two senses of being, *Sein* and *Seiendem* which the translator has rendered as ‘Being’ and ‘beings.’

through life...”⁹⁰ Heidegger arrives at a new articulation of the philosophical problem at hand in the phenomenological interpretation of Aristotle: “[To] bring to experience life, as factual life, in its objectivity and Being”⁹¹ and in doing so, “to take up the question of the objective and the *ontological character of ‘life.’* The Being of life as its ‘facticity.’”⁹²

Having clearly delimited the route ahead, Heidegger proceeds to explicate the essential categories of facticity through phenomenological investigations of life in itself. Though Aristotle is not invoked through phenomenological interpretations to the extent of Paul or Augustine, Heidegger nonetheless provides a robust account of factual life in its categories of world, caring [*Sorgen*], and ruinance [*Ruinanz*] as a clear progression in the positive philosophical discoveries of his phenomenological thinking.⁹³ In this manner, the ‘hermeneutical situation’ of factual life has been articulated through the philosophical link between phenomenology and ontology. Thus, in the following 1922 Summer semester *Ontologie – Hermeneutik der Faktizität* (GA 61), Heidegger then seeks a proper ontological understanding of life through a hermeneutics of human existence, Dasein, in its essential factual character as made possible through the initial considerations of GA 61. In this manner, phenomenology will achieve its full progression as a philosophical method of ontology through the hermeneutical method, granting Heidegger an access to Dasein through which an articulation can begin to emerge concerning its being.

⁹⁰ GA 61: 84/64.

⁹¹ GA 61: 116/86.

⁹² GA 61: 113/85.

⁹³ Heidegger addresses the categories of factual life in GA 61 as follows: World, 85-89/65-67; Caring, 89-99/67-75; Inclination, 100-102/75-77; Distance, 103-104/77-78; Sequestration, 105-108/78-81; The ‘Easy,’ 108-109/81-82; Retrospect and Prospect, 110-116/82-87; Relucence and Prestruction, 117-125/87-92; and Ruinance, 131-155/98-115. It is also worth noting that here, Heidegger’s address of ‘caring,’ *Sorgen* (root, *Sorge*), changes from its previous appearance as *Bekümmern*, ‘concern.’

Heidegger begins with a remark on the meaning of ontology as the task ahead concerns attending to the being of life as facticity. He thus presents ontology in terms of a “doctrine of being”⁹⁴ that from its root in the Ancient Greek word *ōv* [being] indicates “a questioning and defining which is directed to being as such.”⁹⁵ Relating to philosophy in terms of comportment towards beings themselves, if being is to be a possible theme, a proper methodological path is necessary. Thus, as Heidegger states, “it is only through phenomenology that the ontology corresponding to it is established on a secure basis and held on an orderly course in its treatment of problems.”⁹⁶ In this manner, proceeding from the considerations of GA 61, Heidegger thus delimits that ontology, as a phenomenological endeavor, must take its domain of study from being itself made possible through Dasein itself “from out of which and for the sake of which, philosophy ‘is.’”⁹⁷ The overall task of an ontological understanding of factual life must thus clearly proceed through a phenomenological investigation of Dasein, as Heidegger terms it, a hermeneutic of facticity. To express the structure and aim of this task, Heidegger provides preliminary remarks on the nature of the hermeneutical method and the meaning of facticity.

He begins: “‘*Facticity*’ is the designation we will use for the character of the being of ‘our’ ‘own’ *Dasein*.”⁹⁸ In this manner, as Heidegger expresses, what is decisive is not the individual character of Dasein’s being as our own, but rather that it indicates a primary awareness as a “how of being.”⁹⁹ Thus, it will be in addressing the critical ‘being-there’ [*Da-*

⁹⁴ GA 63: 1/1.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ GA 63: 2/2.

⁹⁷ GA 63: 3/2.

⁹⁸ GA 63: 7-8/5.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

sein] that the phenomenological hermeneutic will take its ontological charge. Heidegger continues on to explain the nature of hermeneutics in relation to the task at hand. Through a discussion of the origin of ἐρμηνευτική [hermeneutics] from its root ἐρμηνεύειν [interpreting] in its Ancient Greek usage, Heidegger determines four critical significations that point toward a unified meaning. In this manner, he states: “Hermeneutics is now no longer interpretation itself, but a doctrine about the conditions, the objects, the means, and the communication and practical application of interpretation.”¹⁰⁰ In this manner, hermeneutics as a phenomenological method will serve as the mode of access to Dasein itself as a ‘self-interpretation.’ Heidegger explains this in the following manner: “Hermeneutics has the task of making the Dasein which is in each case our own accessible to this Dasein itself with regard to the character of its being...”¹⁰¹ In this manner, the ontological task of explicating Dasein in its being hermeneutically will not amount to an interpretation of itself from without, but rather from an interpretation seated in a “*how of Dasein* itself.”¹⁰² Heidegger expounds upon this until arriving at a critical determination on the structure of the interpretation of hermeneutics as a self-interpretation of Dasein. As he writes: “[Interpretation], which is itself *part and parcel* of the ‘being *there* of Dasein...shares in the *character of Dasein’s being*....”¹⁰³ Thus, in this manner, interpretation belongs to the being of Dasein itself as a facet of human existence.

¹⁰⁰ GA 63: 13/10. See GA 63: 9-20/6-16 for Heidegger’s full discussion on the origin and structure of hermeneutics, especially through a presentation of λόγος [discourse] and ἀληθεύειν [being-true] as ‘revealing the unconcealed as such’ at GA 63: 11/8.

¹⁰¹ GA 63: 15/11.

¹⁰² GA 63: 15/12.

¹⁰³ GA 63: 16/13.

As the nature of the hermeneutic of facticity has itself been provisionally established with respect to Dasein, Heidegger proceeds to presentations on the structure of the interpretation itself. Here, as he writes: “Our theme is Dasein in its being-there for a while at the particular time. And our task: to bring this into view, have a look at it, and understand it in such a manner that in itself its basic characteristics of its being are able to be brought into relief.”¹⁰⁴ Thus, through hermeneutics, Dasein will be addressed as it shows itself in its being as being-there – that is to say, phenomenologically. Moving further ahead towards the concrete hermeneutic, Heidegger makes the following critical expression. As the interpretation will be conducted through the observation of Dasein as it readily presents itself in its ‘everydayness’ [*Alltäglichkeit*], its primary manner of appearance, “the Dasein of today is to be interrogated by interrogating today’s historical consciousness and philosophy...which is to be subjected to a destruction...”¹⁰⁵ In this manner, the being of Dasein will be explicated phenomenologically as it is self-evident in Dasein itself. However, as Heidegger clarifies, this self-evidence is precisely *not* what first appears. It must therefore be indicated how in everydayness, Dasein’s being is concealed from immediate view.¹⁰⁶ The hermeneutic of Dasein thus seeks to radically establish an access to its being, as Heidegger writes: “[Hermeneutics] calls itself interpretation, i.e., it does not merely depict matters in terms of the aspect under which they first appear...One must step away from the subject matter initially given and back to that onto which it is based.”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ GA 63: 47/37.

¹⁰⁵ GA 63: 48/38-39.

¹⁰⁶ See GA 63: 74/59 for an indication of the ‘fallenness’ of tradition, GA 63: 76/60 for an indication of the ‘self-veiling’ of being, and GA 63: 88-92/67-70 for phenomenological descriptions of everydayness that further illustrate this point.

¹⁰⁷ GA 63: 77/60. Here, Heidegger indicates a decisive move for phenomenology in reference to his earlier works and to Husserl by invoking the necessity for a modification of comportment in the approach to phenomenon. See

Thus, given this clarification, Heidegger proceeds with a discussion addressing the nature and structure of phenomenology itself with respect to the approaching hermeneutic of Dasein. Here, both ‘phenomenology’ and ‘phenomenon’ will be presented in a major determination from Heidegger that proves essential to the progression of the method. To accomplish this, Heidegger once again begins by sourcing the origins of phenomenology from the Ancient Greek φαίνόμενον [phenomenon] as it derives from φαίνεσθαι [showing itself]. In this manner, Heidegger provides an explication of the meaning of phenomenology based on this linguistic origination by first expressing: “A phenomenon is thus that which shows itself as something showing itself...[it] is a mode of being-an-object and indeed a distinctive one....”¹⁰⁸ Passing over the history of phenomenology in its determination of the significations of ‘phenomenon,’ Heidegger then states: “‘Phenomenon’ is thus not primarily a category, but initially has to do with the how of access, of grasping and bringing into true safekeeping. Phenomenology is therefore initially nothing more than a *mode of research*, namely: addressing something just as it shows itself and only to the extent that it shows itself.”¹⁰⁹

Having sufficiently prepared the way for the hermeneutics of facticity from which the being of Dasein is to be explicated, Heidegger puts these phenomenological considerations to work as he now attends to Dasein in its everyday being-there. In this manner, guided by the formal indication: “*the being-there of Dasein (factual life) is being in a world [Sein in einer Welt]*.”¹¹⁰ Heidegger delves into descriptions of everydayness from which several key

GA 2: 27-39/26-37 for Heidegger’s development of this concept as disclosure [*Erschliessen*] in his presentation of the phenomenological method of investigation.

¹⁰⁸ GA 63: 67/53.

¹⁰⁹ GA 63: 71/56.

¹¹⁰ GA 63: 80/62, (my brackets).

ontological determinations are extracted.¹¹¹ Heidegger thus provisionally explicates Dasein's being-there, factual life itself, through the mode of everydayness through hermeneutics, providing another critical demonstration of phenomenology in its progression towards a method of ontology.

Heidegger's presentation of this lecture in the 1923 Summer semester marks a decisive achievement in the progression of his phenomenological thinking as an approach to philosophy. The initiation of phenomenology as the path to ontology alongside the resulting determinations made in explicating the factual life of Dasein in its being-there provides an essential demonstration of the power of Heidegger as a phenomenologist and indeed announces a radical new direction for his philosophical work. Following this lecture, Heidegger presents two more lectures concerning the reworking of the definition of phenomenology as an outgrowth of his critiques of the tradition of philosophy on the way to a complete formulation of phenomenology as the method of ontology and the thinking of being through Dasein. Thus, in *Einführung in die phänomenologische Forschung* (GA 17) and *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* (GA 20), the formulation of a proper understanding of phenomenology in its ontological possibility is taken as Heidegger's major project, addressing key figures in the history of philosophy responsible for both the progression and mischaracterization of phenomenology and ontology. In his address of these mistakes in the tradition, Heidegger propels phenomenology ahead through new definitions that secure methodological access to the growing project of an existential ontology of the being of Dasein.

¹¹¹ Heidegger addresses the phenomenon of Dasein's everyday being-there in GA 63 as follows: World, 84-92/65-71, Significance, 93-96/71-74, Disclosedness, 97-98/74-76, Familiarity, 99-100/76-77, and Caring, 100-104/77-80.

Phenomenology as Such

Heidegger begins *Einführung in die phänomenologische Forschung* by expressing the objectives of the work as an address of phenomenology, as it originates in Aristotle's *De Anima* through a discussion of φαίνόμενον [phenomenon] and λόγος [discourse], and of Husserl's breakthroughs in the development of phenomenology. At heart, what these matters aim to secure is that phenomenology be properly formulated as a method of "*understanding life in itself in its genuine being and answering the question of its character of being.*"¹¹² Thus, Heidegger begins his analysis into the origin of phenomenology on the way to a proper understanding of its relation to being. He writes: "Phenomenology is put together from λόγος and φαίνόμενον. Φαίνόμενον means: something that shows itself. Φαίνομαι is the same as 'to show itself,' φαίνο the same as 'to bring something to the light of day.' The stem is φα; this is connected with φῶς which is the same as light, daylightness."¹¹³ What is decisive here, as Heidegger indicates, is that daylight is not something seen itself – rather, it provides the condition for other things to appear in it. Thus, Heidegger writes: "Aristotle discovered that daylightness is not a body...that it does not move, but is instead the heaven's actual manner of existing, allowing things to be seen, the day's being. Daylight is a *manner of presence*...."¹¹⁴

In this way, Aristotle is only speaking of daylight as it shows itself: "Daylight does not move. Only the sun moves, the presence of which is the daylight. Whoever says that daylight

¹¹² Martin Heidegger, *Einführung in die phänomenologische Forschung*, (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1994), 275, *Introduction to Phenomenological Research*, trans. Daniel O. Dahlstrom, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 211, hereafter referenced as GA 17.

¹¹³ GA 17: 6-7/4.

¹¹⁴ GA 17: 7-8/5.

moves is speaking *παρὰ τὰ φαινόμενα*, he is speaking past what shows itself.”¹¹⁵ From these considerations, Heidegger then extracts the precise relation between the phenomenon and being itself. In this manner: “*Φαινόμενον* is what shows itself of itself as existing; it is encountered by life insofar as life stands towards its world in such a way that it sees the world, perceives it at all in the *αἴσθησις* [perception].”¹¹⁶ It is thus delimited that phenomena serve as the basis for a study of beings in their primary manner of appearance, as Heidegger writes: “The expression *φαινόμενον* is accordingly not a conceptual category, but instead a manner of being, *how something is encountered* and, indeed, encountered in the *first* and, as such, *first legitimate way*.”¹¹⁷ He continues: “*Τὰ φαινόμενα* [that which shows itself] can be represented by *τὰ ὄντα* [that which exists]; it is what is always already here, what we encounter the moment we open our eyes. It does not need first to be disclosed, but is frequently covered up.”¹¹⁸

Heidegger then examines the counterpart term of phenomenology, *λόγος*. He begins: “*Φωνή* [phonē]...is a type of sound made into something animate, a noise made by something living...A sound is made when something in something knocks on something...The voice, however, is in with the being of something living...”¹¹⁹ To thus grasp *λόγος* by way of voice, it is thus in returning back to human being that its meaning is made clear. Here, it is precisely the worldly character of human existence that delimits the signification of the voice as *λόγος*. As Heidegger writes: “Insofar as a human being is in the world and *wants* something in the world

¹¹⁵ GA 17: 9/6.

¹¹⁶ GA 17: 11/8, (my brackets).

¹¹⁷ GA 17: 14/10.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, (my brackets).

¹¹⁹ GA 17: 14-15/10.

and wants it with himself, he speaks. He speaks insofar as something like a world is *uncovered* for him as a matter of concern and *he* is uncovered to himself in this ‘for him.’”¹²⁰ However, as Heidegger clarifies, the voice of the human being is no mere tool for speech. Rather, “Language is the being and becoming of the human being himself.”¹²¹ The λόγος is thus not simply a property – it is the expression of being itself through the voice. In this manner, the λόγος thus serves phenomenology as it presents what shows itself, exists, φαινόμενον. Heidegger presents this revelatory character of speech in the following manner:

We have determined φαινόμενον to be what shows itself as immediately existing (the world is meant). In relation to what exists in this way, talking has a special function. The λόγος ἀποφαντικός [revelatory speech] is the sort of talking with the world, by means of which the existing world is pointed out as existing. (Ἀποφαίνεσθαι is “letting something be seen from itself in its way of existing”).¹²²

These initial explications of phenomenology’s origins in φαινόμενον and λόγος provide a key direction towards an ontological conception of the methodology. Having prepared these matters, Heidegger then proceeds to address Husserl’s phenomenological developments ultimately aimed at indicating the lack of attention to being in his phenomenology.¹²³

As these matters serve to thus establish a further understanding of phenomenology, Heidegger proceeds in the 1925 Summer semester *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* (GA 20) to drastically expand on this critique of the development of phenomenology, resulting in further considerations on the phenomenological method itself and its relationship to ontology. Here, Heidegger begins by addressing the breakthroughs in phenomenology made by Husserl

¹²⁰ GA 17: 16/12.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² GA 17: 21/15, (my brackets). Heidegger indicates that this is not the only mode of discourse. For ‘deception,’ see GA 17: 25-41/18-31.

¹²³ See GA 17: 42-107/32-77, 270-290/208-221 for further discussion of Husserl.

and for the most part of the introductory matters discusses phenomenology using Husserl's terminology.¹²⁴ From these considerations Heidegger then presents another explicit discussion on the method of phenomenology, largely progressing from the linguistic origin found in Aristotle from GA 17. However, progressing from these initial considerations, Heidegger expresses an immensely rich formulation of phenomenology and the phenomenological method on the way to a critical review of the history of phenomenology from which the explication of Dasein in its basic constitution of 'being-in-the-world' [*In-der-Welt-sein*] may begin – bringing forth a new era in Heidegger's phenomenological thought. As he writes: "There is no ontology *alongside* phenomenology. Rather, *scientific ontology is nothing but phenomenology.*"¹²⁵

Heidegger begins with an expansion of his initial considerations on 'comportment' as an essential directedness towards the world as he finds this concept more robustly expressed through Husserl's concept of intentionality. Here, what is decisive for Heidegger is that intentionality, from *intentio* meaning literally "*directing-itself-toward*"¹²⁶ as the essential comportment in all lived experience does not simply grasp things perceptually, but rather it apprehends what appears as 'bodily presence' [*Leibhaftigkeit*].¹²⁷ As Heidegger writes, in this manner "the entity which presents itself as perceived has the feature of being *bodily-there* [*Leibhaft-da*]. Not only is it given as itself, but as itself in its bodily presence."¹²⁸ To illustrate

¹²⁴ See GA 20: 34-103/27-75 for further discussion on intentionality, categorial intuition, and the *a priori* as major discoveries in phenomenology.

¹²⁵ GA 20: 98/72.

¹²⁶ GA 20: 36/29.

¹²⁷ As much of this text is devoted to presenting the discoveries and indicating the issues in the development of phenomenology, for specific discussion on intentionality in Husserl see GA 20: 34-63/27-47.

¹²⁸ GA 20: 53-54/40-41.

this, Heidegger gives a phenomenological description of a perceived entity – a chair. His description is as follows:

*What do I see in my ‘natural’ perception in which I now live and dwell and am here in this room; what can I say about the chair? I would say that it stands in Room 24 next to the desk, and it is probably used by lecturers who prefer to sit while they lecture. It is not just any chair but a very particular one, the desk chair in Room 24 at Marburg University, perhaps somewhat worse for wear and poorly painted in the factory from which it evidently came.*¹²⁹

In this manner, the comportment towards the world manifest through perception thus grasps the chair as it is given, and as such, in its bodily presence. Thus, as Heidegger thus writes: “What is perceived in this ‘natural’ perception we shall designate as a thing of the environing world, or simply the *environmental thing*.”¹³⁰ In its particular bodily-givenness, the chair itself thus becomes a possible perceptual given as a thing of the environment.

As this concerns the definition of phenomenology, Heidegger proceeds with these matters to a discussion of what is at stake concerning this understanding of intentionality. As he writes: “Such a directly seeing apprehension and accentuation is traditionally called *description*. *Phenomenology’s mode of treatment is descriptive*. To be more exact, description is an *accentuating articulation of what is in itself intuited...the description is analytical*.”¹³¹ In this manner, from such direct ‘self-apprehension’ of what is given as description Heidegger states: “*Phenomenology is the analytic description of intentionality in its a priori*.”¹³² Having established an understanding of the relation within phenomenology, Heidegger proceeds to a proper

¹²⁹ GA 20: 48-49/37-38. See GA 63: 88-92/67-70 for Heidegger’s explanation and demonstration of accurate and inaccurate phenomenological descriptions.

¹³⁰ GA 20: 49/38.

¹³¹ GA 20: 107/78.

¹³² GA 20: 108/79.

discussion of its meaning. Here, phenomenology is once again traced back to its linguistic origins as found in Aristotle.¹³³ Thus from φαίνόμενον [that which shows itself] in its combined presentation with λόγος [discourse] in its revelatory character as ἀποφαίνεσθαι [letting the spoken be seen in itself],¹³⁴ ‘phenomenology’ then expresses itself as “*letting the manifest in itself be seen from itself*.”¹³⁵ This however, Heidegger indicates, says nothing more than “back to the matters themselves”¹³⁶ or defining phenomenology as “the *science of phenomena*.”¹³⁷ Thus, Heidegger reaches a critical consideration concerning the definition, and thus the procedure of phenomenology.

On this, he writes: “The term ‘phenomenon’ however says nothing about the being of the objects under study, but refers only to the *way they are encountered*.”¹³⁸ What is decisive for phenomenology is thus the ‘how’ of the encounter with respect to the appearance of phenomena. It is thus critical for phenomenology to begin by securing a proper access to phenomena, as Heidegger writes: “Admittedly, what can in itself be exhibited and is to be exhibited can nonetheless be *covered up*...*As research work, phenomenology is precisely the work of laying open and letting be seen*, understood as the methodologically dismantling of concealments.”¹³⁹ With this essential explication of phenomenology, Heidegger proceeds to address the development of phenomenology to precisely indicate the moments of error where an original

¹³³ See GA 20: 111-115/81-84 for further discussion.

¹³⁴ GA 20: 116/85.

¹³⁵ GA 20: 117/85.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ GA 20: 111/80.

¹³⁸ GA 20: 118/86.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

phenomenological understanding was missed or concealed.¹⁴⁰ Following this, Heidegger then moves towards the core work of GA 20, the phenomenological explication of the ontology of Dasein in its basic constitution of being-in-the-world [*In-der-Welt-sein*] and the exposition of the phenomenon of time through temporality as the horizon of Dasein's being.¹⁴¹ In this task, Heidegger produces a wealth of ontological determinations on the being of Dasein through being-in-the-world that serve to present the full power of phenomenology as a method to ontology through a provisional explication that will become the essential content for Heidegger's famous 1927 publication *Sein und Zeit* (GA 2).

¹⁴⁰ See GA 20: 123-182/90-131 for further discussion.

¹⁴¹ See GA 20: 346-442/251-320 for further discussion.

Chapter 2: Phenomenology as the Method of Ontology

My task in this chapter is to present Heidegger's development of the phenomenological method as it appears in his major works from 1927-1929. Through an examination of key texts from this time, it will be shown how phenomenology serves Heidegger as the method of ontology, one that seeks to disclose the being of beings towards an understanding of being itself through Dasein. In this manner, phenomenology is first presented as "the way of access to, and the demonstrative manner of determination...of ontology"¹ for Heidegger's initial project of the *Daseinanalytik* in his first major publication *Sein und Zeit* (GA 2) in the Spring of 1927, through which the question of being itself [*Seinsfrage*] can be addressed. Following this, in the 1927 Summer semester lecture course *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (GA 24), Heidegger begins to focus on the understanding of being [*Seinsverständnis*] that makes possible such a relation to being, indeed for the task of formulating four new basic problems of phenomenology. In this work, phenomenology is thus further presented as a three-fold method of ontology that begins with the appearance of beings and works towards being itself through the stages of reduction, construction, and destruction. From this direct methodological formulation, Heidegger begins to reconsider the object of phenomenology and ultimately repositions its essential task, stating: "*being is the proper and sole theme of philosophy...philosophy is not a science of beings but of being...ontology.*"²

¹ Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1953), 35, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, (Albany: SUNY Press, 2010), 35, hereafter referenced as GA 2. I have elected the use of Joan Stambaugh's 2010 translation of *Sein und Zeit* over John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson's. However, alongside the original German edition, the Macquarrie-Robinson translation was still referenced for comparison during research. I have continued my citations using the German/English pagination with Stambaugh's translation.

² GA 24: 15/11. For further discussion, see William Richardson, *Through Phenomenology to Thought*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003).

Heidegger then gains a new thematic understanding of the aim of phenomenology as the “radical grounding of the possibility of ontological knowledge”³ from the 1927/28 Winter semester lecture *Phänomenologische Interpretationen von Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (GA 25). From this task, he indicates two essential philosophical problematics: the possibility of ontological knowledge and the resulting problem of the ‘knowing comportment,’ the transcendence of Dasein, which makes possible any relation to being whatsoever. Finally, from these essential ontological problematics discovered through phenomenological interpretations of Kant’s *Critique*, Heidegger develops a direct means of addressing the possibility of the *Seinsverständnis* through an understanding of metaphysics from the Ancient Greek μετά τὰ φυσικά as “inquiry beyond or over beings”⁴ to being itself. Expressed in *Was ist Metaphysik?* (GA 9), his inaugural lecture upon succeeding Husserl as professor at Freiburg University, it is here that phenomenology reaches a critical stage of development from its original position in ontology as the method of the disclosure of being through beings. For here, as the approach to philosophy through metaphysics, phenomenology becomes the essential disclosure of the possibility of being through the unfolding [*Entfaltung*] and indeed self-unfolding of the nihilating character of the ‘nothing’ [*das Nichts*].⁵

As it has been made clear in the previous chapter, Heidegger’s development of phenomenology as the method of ontology indeed begins well before the publication of *Sein und*

³ Martin Heidegger, *Phänomenologische Interpretationen von Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1995), 431, *Phenomenological Interpretations of Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 292, hereafter referenced as GA 25.

⁴ Martin Heidegger, “Was ist Metaphysik?” in *Wegmarken*, (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1976), 118, “What is Metaphysics?” in *Pathmarks*, trans. David Farrell Krell, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 93, hereafter referenced as GA 9.

⁵ GA 9: 103/82.

Zeit in 1927, famous for Heidegger's address of being [*Sein*] through an analysis of human being [*Dasein*]. In fact, the early indications of this ontological direction of phenomenology appear as early as 1919⁶ while much of the first division of *Sein und Zeit* appears in the 1925 Summer lecture *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* (GA 20). However, as *Sein und Zeit* directly attest, it is this work itself that marks a critical stage of development for Heidegger's phenomenological method. It is thus worth providing clarificatory remarks on the nature of phenomenological method in *Sein und Zeit* regarding its position in this development and its renown as Heidegger's most famous work. Here, the method appears far less procedural as a result of a gradual progression throughout the preceding works and is rather guided by revelatory disclosure and hermeneutic interpretation as the nature of the works in this period reflect. Alongside this, *Sein und Zeit* is altogether different in its aim than earlier works that were for the most part concerned with presenting Heidegger's considerations and demonstrations on the structure of the method itself. In this manner, beginning in 1927 phenomenology becomes far more radically understood in terms of examination and explication, investigation and interpretation, specifically as Heidegger employs it through the *Daseinanalytik*. Thus, in *Sein und Zeit*, much of the phenomenological method is understood entirely by its formal expression as: "ἀποφαίνεσθαι τὰ φαινόμενα – to let what shows itself be seen from itself, just as it shows itself from itself."⁷

In this manner, the distinction between this stage of development with respect to the earlier formulation of the phenomenological method is made quite apparent: Beforehand, Heidegger would explicitly detail the methodological steps of phenomenological research to

⁶ See Chapter 1, fn. 3 for further discussion.

⁷ GA 2: 34/32.

examine and explicate phenomena in their essential character, whereas in this text a budding phenomenologist may be left to question how and by what means the being of beings are to be made manifest, where the ‘four senses of World [*Welt*],’⁸ originate, how the ‘care [*Sorge*] myth’ stands as source of interpretation for Dasein’s being,⁹ or how the temporality [*Zeitlichkeit*] of Dasein is explicated from descriptions of the ‘everyday concept of time.’¹⁰ The considerations presented in the first chapter make-way towards understanding these, as this is by no means a fault on Heidegger’s part. As the task at hand in GA 2 is to utilize the method as a specific mode of ontological research, the discussion of phenomenological method therein is thus only to delineate the manner of approach to the *Daseinanalytik*. However, as I aim to make clear, there is far more of the phenomenological method to be ascertained than from Heidegger’s remarks, as it is unequivocally and foundationally ingrained in Heidegger’s thinking as his very approach to philosophy itself. It is thus from paying close attention to his remarks and with a watchful eye towards his operations that phenomenology as a method to ontology comes into its own. For the critical reader must not approach *Sein und Zeit* as the presentation of ‘a philosophy’ which has its meaning altogether in the understanding of worldview [*Weltanschauung*] that phenomenology directly avoids in its research. Rather, to fully understand Heidegger and indeed “better than he understood himself...”¹¹ the ontological determinations of the structures of Dasein’s being must be approached as phenomenological considerations – a task that always requires the return to an understanding of phenomenology itself.

⁸ GA 2: 64-65/64-65.

⁹ GA 2: 197-198/190-191.

¹⁰ GA 2: 407-409/388-389.

¹¹ GA 25: 3/2.

Thus, to illustrate Heidegger's development of phenomenology as the method of ontology from the approach to the *Daseinanalytik* to the unfolding of being and the possibility of the *Seinsverständnis* through metaphysics, I will present this progression as follows:

In "Investigation and Interpretation," I will present Heidegger's ontological understanding of phenomenology as expressed in the 1927 publication *Sein und Zeit*. Here, it shall be made clear in what sense phenomenology appears as the method of the disclosure of the being of beings understood through the combined sense of φαίνόμενον [phenomenon] and λόγος [discourse], alongside Heidegger's employment of phenomenological investigation and interpretation in the *Daseinanalytik*. Following these matters, in "Reduction, Construction, Destruction," I will present Heidegger's reformulation of the phenomenological method of ontology as expressed in *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (GA 24). In this text, referring to the 1919/20 lecture of the same title, Heidegger seeks to explicate four basic problems of phenomenology from four traditional ontological theses through phenomenological interpretation. From this, I will show how Heidegger's presentation of the three-fold phenomenological method of reduction, construction, and destruction makes possible an access to the *Seinsverständnis* through investigation into the appearance of beings that moves towards being itself.

In "Interpretations of Kant," I will present Heidegger's essential considerations on the problem of ontological knowledge and the problem of the transcendence of Dasein, the 'knowing comportment' of the *Seinsverständnis* as expressed in *Phänomenologische Interpretationen von Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (GA 25). From these matters it will be shown how phenomenology achieves a direct access to the possibility of ontology through the *Seinsverständnis*, preparing the way for an understanding of metaphysics as the thinking of being

beyond beings. Finally, in “Metaphysics,” these considerations will be brought to bear as Heidegger addresses the meaning of metaphysics in the inaugural lecture *Was ist Metaphysik?* (GA 9). From this text it shall be made clear in what sense Heidegger’s understanding of metaphysics as μετά τά φυσικά, beyond beings, positions phenomenology as the essential method of ontology through the metaphysical unfolding of the nothing.

Investigation and Interpretation

I begin with *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger’s first major publication and indeed his first major display of the potential of phenomenology as an approach to philosophy and method to ontology. Here, Heidegger seeks an understanding of the being of Dasein, human being, through which an understanding of being itself can be made accessible. To accomplish this, Heidegger thus employs phenomenology as the method of ontology, which through investigation and interpretation of the being of Dasein, provides a manner of addressing traditional problematics of being [*Sein*], worldhood [*Weltlichkeit*], care [*Sorge*], and time [*Zeit*] in search of a new, authentic understanding of the being of Dasein and the meaning of being in general. To breach these matters and present Heidegger’s ontological understanding of phenomenology in *Sein und Zeit*, I will first present the appearance of phenomenology in Heidegger’s introductory remarks where phenomenology appears as employed by Heidegger as his direct approach to philosophy. In this manner, the structure of *Sein und Zeit* in its dual task of addressing the question of being [*Seinsfrage*] and *Daseinanalytik* will be exposed as fundamentally phenomenological itself.

Phenomenology first appears at-work as the method to ontology in GA 2 as Heidegger begins the text in his usual fashion by emphatically calling attention to the most fundamental for philosophy, the *Seinsfrage*, and explicitly citing three prejudices maintained by the tradition of

philosophy that serve to neglect its appearance as a serious theme.¹² Yet, as Heidegger expresses, before the question of the meaning of being can be attended to as such a basic problem of philosophy, and indeed through the analysis of the being of Dasein [*Daseinanalytik*], it first must be raised anew and properly understood. Thus, as Heidegger writes: “The question of the meaning of Being must be *formulated*. If it is a – or even *the* fundamental question, such questioning needs the suitable transparency.”¹³ Heidegger then proceeds to express the phenomenological structure of questioning itself, in order to present a proper understanding for the sake of formulating the question of the meaning of being. Heidegger thus states: “Every questioning is a seeking. Every seeking takes its lead beforehand from what is sought.”¹⁴ To further extract this phenomenon of questioning in its relation to what is questioned, Heidegger presents the three-fold structure of questioning centered on the German verb *fragen* [to question].

Here, through modifications in its prefix, questioning receives its coordinate relations to what is questioned as Heidegger writes: “As questioning about...questioning has *what it asks about* [*Gefragtes*]. All asking about...is in some way an inquiring of...Besides what is asked, what is *interrogated* [*Befragtes*] also belongs to questioning...As what is really intended, what is to be *ascertained* [*Erfragtes*] lies in what is questioned; here questioning arrives at its goal.”¹⁵ To import this phenomenal structure of questioning to the ontological task of formulating the question of the meaning of being, Heidegger thus writes:

What is *asked about* [*Gefragtes*] in the question to be elaborated is being, that which determines beings as beings...Hence, what is to be *ascertained* [*Erfragtes*], the meaning

¹² GA 2: 2-4/1-3. Here, Heidegger addresses three prejudices that have caused the question of being (*Seinsfrage*) to be forgotten – universality, indefinability, and self-evidence.

¹³ GA 2: 5/4.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.* Note: this structure of questioning appears in this same formulation before in GA 20: 194-198/144-147

of being, will require its own conceptualization...Insofar as being constitutes what is asked about, and insofar as being means the being of beings, beings themselves turn out to be what is *interrogated* [*Befragtes*] in the question of being. Beings are, so to speak, interrogated with regard to their being.¹⁶

In this manner, Heidegger expresses the essential character of questioning, anticipatory understanding,¹⁷ as that which will here direct the question of being through being itself, indeed as the being of some being. To further concretize these matters, Heidegger explains:

Thus to work out the question of being means to make a being – one who questions – transparent in its being. Asking this question, as a mode of *being* of a being is itself essentially determined by what is asked about in it – being. This being [*Seiende*], which we ourselves in each case are and which includes inquiry among the possibilities of its being, we formulate terminologically as *Dasein*.¹⁸

In this manner, what Heidegger expresses as the *Seinsverständnis* [understanding of being] is found to be an essential determination of *Dasein*'s very being.¹⁹ As he explains: [Dasein] is ontically distinguished by the fact that in its being this being is concerned *about* its very being [...*daß es diesem Seienden in seinem Sein um dieses Sein selbst geht*].²⁰ Indeed, it is this very ontological character of *Dasein* in its *Seinsverständnis* that prioritizes it for an access to being over other beings. However, as Heidegger expresses this distinction between *Dasein* and other beings, he at the same time provides a new essential and radical differentiation for

¹⁶ GA 2: 6/5.

¹⁷ Heidegger explains this further at GA 2: 5/4: "As seeking, questioning needs prior guidance from what it seeks. The meaning of being must therefore already be available to us in a certain way." Note: the character of availability expressed in anticipatory understanding is the principle function of the for-having which makes possible destruction and formal indication on the basis of *Dasein*'s *Seinsverständnis*. Heidegger expresses this at GA 2: 8/7: "'Presupposing' being has the character of taking a preliminary look at being in such a way that on the basis of this look being that are already given are tentatively articulated in their being. This guiding look at being grows out of the average understanding of being in which we are always already involved *and which ultimately belongs to the essential constitution of Dasein itself*."

¹⁸ GA 2: 7/6-7.

¹⁹ GA 2: 12/11 "Understanding of Being is itself a determination of being of *Dasein* [*Seinsverständnis ist selbst eine Seinsbestimmtheit des Daseins*].

²⁰ *Ibid.*

phenomenological ontology which will later be understood as ontological difference.²¹ In this manner, as being [*Sein*] and beings [*Seienden*] – the ontological [*ontologische*] and ontical [*ontisch*] – are thus distinguished, Heidegger provides an essential differentiation that delimits the route of phenomenology. Thus, as what remains decisive in *Sein und Zeit* is the phenomenology of human being through Dasein, the investigation is properly understood as a phenomenological investigation into the appearance of Dasein as a being [*Seiende*] from which its being [*Sein*] can be explicated and understood through phenomenological interpretation. In this manner, Dasein has a direct access to being itself through this ontological difference as Heidegger states: “The ontic distinction of Dasein lies in the fact that it *is* ontological.”²² Furthermore, as it serves the basis for this *Daseinanalytik*, Heidegger in this manner also distinguishes the task of an understanding of the being of beings from an understanding of being [*Seinsverständnis*] in general – what will soon after *Sein und Zeit* become the possibility of pure ontological knowledge.²³ Thus, from an understanding of ontological difference, Heidegger imparts: “Thus *fundamental ontology*, from which alone all other ontologies can originate, must be sought in the *existential analysis of Dasein*.”²⁴

From this initial display of phenomenology in *Sein und Zeit* – the traditional neglect of the *Seinsfrage*, the phenomenal structure of questioning, the priority of Dasein, and ontological difference – Heidegger then proceeds to address the manner of access to Dasein, outlining the

²¹ See GA 24: 22-23/17 for further discussion

²² GA 2: 12/11.

²³ This task is further outlined in GA 24 and 25, as addressed in the second and third sub-sections of this chapter.

²⁴ GA 2: 13/12. It is worth noting that through the existential component of the *Daseinanalytik*, what results through the ultimate considerations on authenticity [*Eigentlichkeit*] is a phenomenology that extracts authentic Dasein from its ownmost potentiality of being [*eigenstes Seinkönnen*]. Here, what is interesting is rather than destroying personal context as in GA 58, *Sein und Zeit* expresses a rendering of one’s context authentically as Dasein’s own.

nature of the *Daseinanalytik* and in doing so presenting the project of *Sein und Zeit* as a true work of phenomenology. Here, what is decisive is to choose the proper access to Dasein so that its relation to being will become manifest, self-evident with immediacy – to let Dasein ‘show-itself’ in its predominant mode of being, and in this manner to situate phenomenology as the approach to a fundamental ontology. As Heidegger writes: “The manner of access and interpretation must instead be chosen in such a way that this being can show itself to itself on its own terms. And furthermore, this manner should show that being as it is *initially and for the most part* – in its average *everydayness* [*durchschnittlichen Alltäglichkeit*].”²⁵ In this manner, as Heidegger has stated many times before, such an access does not come by first determining the investigation from without. As he writes: “Hence the first concern in the question of being must be an analysis of Dasein...Expressed negatively, no arbitrary idea of being and reality, no matter how ‘self-evident’ it is, may be brought to bear on this being in a dogmatically constructed way....”²⁶ Rather, as Heidegger has developed phenomenology as the specific method to be employed, it is from a direct examination and explication, or in Heidegger’s words, investigation and interpretation into Dasein exactly as it shows itself.²⁷

²⁵ GA 25: 16/16. Here, there is a similar altitudinal approach in the delimiting of the subject-matter of phenomenology as in Husserl’s *Ideen*. Yet, as this has been remarked in the previous chapter, it is worth noting that the essential nature of Heidegger’s employment of phenomenology has radically changed from its previous iteration concerned with the details of first-person factual life experience. However, the examination of Dasein that comprises GA 2 there are similar demonstrations given to isolate the structures of its being, albeit with far less detail.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Thus, the *Daseinanalytik* begins at a phenomenologically critical position itself, as Heidegger remarks at GA 2: 15/15: “True, Dasein is ontically not only what is near or even nearest – we ourselves are it, each of us. Nevertheless, or precisely for this reason, it is ontologically what is farthest.” Indeed, this further serves the determination of Dasein’s phenomenal character of mineness [*Jemeinigkeit*]. For further discussion, see François Raffoul, “The Ontology of Mineness,” in *Heidegger and the Subject*, (New York: Humanity Books, 1998), 208-249.

Thus, with such an approach, Heidegger expresses in what manner he shall proceed in *Sein und Zeit* phenomenologically as he states: “By looking at the fundamental constitution of the everydayness of Dasein we shall bring out in a preparatory way the being of this being.”²⁸ To accomplish this, Heidegger expresses that Dasein will be examined as it appears in such an average everyday mode of appearance – its primary mode of being and a fundamental structure of Dasein which he terms being-in-the-world [*In-der-Welt-sein*]. Indeed, it is this coordinate structure that will be analyzed and through which Heidegger will explicate the phenomenal characteristics of Dasein’s being such as mineness [*Jemeinigkeit*], equipmentality [*Zuhandenheit*], worldhood [*Weltlichkeit*], care [*Sorge*], death [*Tod*], time [*Zeit*], and authenticity [*Eigentlichkeit*].²⁹ However, before commencing with this task of investigation and interpretation of Dasein’s being-in-the-world, Heidegger provides two explicit methodological discussions that serve to characterize and guide the project of *Sein und Zeit*: the destruction of the history of ontology and the phenomenological method of investigation. I shall now present these explicit remarks by Heidegger that further serve to express phenomenology in its development as a method of ontology.

The concept of history and its specific role in phenomenological destruction has been already addressed directly in the previous chapter. However, it reaches a more radical and precise presentation in *Sein und Zeit* as Heidegger predicates his necessity for a fundamental ontology on the destruction of the history of ontology. In this manner, history is not only a phenomenon that serves to insight dogmatism in the tradition of philosophy, but as Heidegger

²⁸ GA 2: 17/17.

²⁹ This is not an exhaustive list of the phenomenal characters of Dasein’s being.

explains, it belongs as an essential element of the being of Dasein itself called historicity [*Geschichtlichkeit*]. As Heidegger writes:

In its factual being Dasein always is how and ‘what’ it already was. Whether explicitly or not, it *is* its past...In its manner of existing at any given time, and thus also with the understanding of being that belongs to it, Dasein grows into a customary interpretation of itself and grows up on that interpretation...This understanding discloses the possibilities of its being and regulates them. Its own past...does not *follow after* Dasein but rather always already goes ahead of it.³⁰

In this manner, through Dasein’s essential character of historicity, its own past which manifests itself through tradition reaches it emphatically in its average everydayness. Thus, there are several critical consequences pertaining to the effects of historicity on Dasein. As Heidegger explains: “Dasein not only has the inclination to be entangled in the world in which it is and to interpret itself in terms of that world by its reflected light; at the same time Dasein is also entangled in a tradition which it more or less explicitly grasps. This tradition deprives Dasein of its own leadership in questioning and choosing.”³¹ In its most vindictive effects, as Heidegger expresses, tradition serves to dominate Dasein’s ontological pursuits in its concern over its being and in another form through its pursuit of the meaning of being in general. Heidegger explains this in the following way: “The tradition that hereby gains dominance makes what it ‘transmits’ so little accessible that initially and for the most part it covers it over instead. What has been handed down is handed over to obviousness; it bars those original ‘wellsprings’ out of which the traditional categories and concept were in part genuinely drawn.”³²

Thus, if the question of the meaning of being is to be raised anew in its own light through the revival of philosophy’s original experience and basic problems, this tradition is what needs

³⁰ GA2: 20/19.

³¹ GA2: 21/20.

³² GA 2: 21/20-21.

be radically destroyed. As Heidegger writes: “We understand this task as the *destruction* of the traditional content of ancient ontology which is to be carried out along the *guidelines of the question of being*. This destruction is based upon the original experiences in which the first, and subsequently guiding, determinations of being were gained.”³³ Indeed, it is this manner that Heidegger presents destruction from its previous position in the development of the phenomenological method as he states: “Destruction does not relate itself in a negative way to the past: its critique concerns ‘today’ and the dominant way we treat the history of ontology...Destruction does not wish to bury the past in nullity; it has a *positive* intent.”³⁴

Following these matters, Heidegger then turns towards an address of ontology itself in the analysis of the question of being through the phenomenological method. Here, phenomenology is delimited as the essential path towards ontology which Heidegger explains through the presentation of a steadily-developing analysis of the term phenomenology from the Ancient Greek φαινόμενον [phenomenon] and λόγος [discourse]. Thus, to prepare for the *Daseinanalytik* which shall be conducted phenomenologically, Heidegger proceeds with this discussion to reach an essential understanding of phenomenological investigation through unconcealment and disclosure through ἀλήθεια, an Ancient Greek concept of truth.³⁵ Heidegger thus begins by expressing in what sense the treatment of the question of the meaning of being is to be phenomenological. As it follows his considerations on destruction of the tradition of ontology, Heidegger first delimits: “With this term the treatise dictates for itself neither a ‘standpoint’ nor a ‘direction,’ because phenomenology is neither of these...The expression ‘phenomenology’

³³ GA 2: 22/21-22.

³⁴ GA 2: 23/22. See Chapter 1: “Destruction and Formal Indication” for further discussion.

³⁵ See Chapter 1, “Hermeneutics” and “Phenomenology as Such” for further discussion of φαινόμενον, λόγος, and ἀλήθεια in GA 17 and GA 20.

signifies primarily a *concept of method*. It does not characterize the what of the object of philosophical research...but the how of such research.”³⁶ In this manner, similarly to the phenomenal structure of questioning, phenomenological investigation thus remains guided solely by what is sought in the questioning itself.

Thus, as Heidegger writes: “The more genuinely effective a concept of method is...the more originally it is rooted in confrontation with the things themselves and the farther away it moves from what we call a technical device....”³⁷ Instead, and in this very sense, Heidegger expresses phenomenology through the traditional maxim ‘to the things themselves,’ which he explains in the following way: “It is opposed to all free-floating constructions and accidental findings; it is also opposed to taking over concepts only seemingly demonstrated; and likewise to pseudo-questions which often are spread abroad as ‘problems’ for generations.”³⁸

However, Heidegger remarks that this mere formulation of a maxim to guide phenomenological research has yet to penetrate the essential meaning of phenomenology. Thus, Heidegger proceeds with a presentation of the meaning of phenomenology to ground its guiding method. As he writes: “The expression has two components: phenomenon and logos. Both go back to the Greek terms φαινόμενον and λόγος. Viewed extrinsically, the word phenomenology is formed like the terms theology, biology, sociology...Accordingly, phenomenology would be the *science of phenomena*.”³⁹ Thus, Heidegger first addresses φαινόμενον in search of its meaning with respect to phenomenology. He writes:

³⁶ GA 2: 27/26.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ GA 2: 28/26.

³⁹ GA 2: 28/26-27.

The Greek expression φαινόμενον, from which the term ‘phenomenon’ derives, comes from the verb φαίνεσθαι, meaning ‘to show itself.’ Thus φαινόμενον means: what shows itself, the self-showing, the manifest. φαίνεσθαι itself is a *middle voice* construction of φαίνω, to bring into daylight, to place in brightness... Thus the meaning of the expression *phenomenon* is established as *what shows itself in itself*, what is manifest.⁴⁰

From this explanation, Heidegger continues to address the nature of phenomenon as the self-showing with respect to its various modes of access and appearance. On this, he writes: “Beings can show themselves from themselves in various ways, depending on the mode of access to them. The possibility even exists that they can show themselves as they are *not* in themselves.”⁴¹

In this manner, as Heidegger explains, rather the phenomenon appears as a semblance [*Schein*]: “In this self-showing beings ‘look like...’ Such self-showing [*Sichzeigen*] we call *seeming* [*Scheinen*]... φαινόμενον ἀγαθόν means a good that looks like – but ‘in reality’ is not what it gives itself out to be.”⁴² Heidegger then proceeds further to address the notion of appearance [*Erscheinen*] with respect to phenomenon, as he writes:

Thus, one speaks of ‘appearances of symptoms of illness.’ What is meant by this are occurrences in the body that show themselves and in this self-showing as such ‘indicate’ something that does *not* show itself... Appearance, as the appearance ‘of something,’ thus precisely does *not* mean that something shows itself; rather, it means that something which does not show itself announces itself through something that does show itself. Appearing is a *not showing itself*.⁴³

Having determined the various understandings that arrive with the notion of φαινόμενον, Heidegger then presents its essential meaning with respect to phenomenology as a method. On this, he writes: “*Phenomenon* – the self-showing in itself – means a distinctive way something

⁴⁰ GA 2: 28/27.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² GA 2: 28-29/27. Here, Heidegger makes an emphatic note towards the basic relation between phenomenon and semblance. GA 2: 29/27: “Only because something claims to show itself in accordance with its meaning at all, that is, claims to be a phenomenon, *can* it show itself *as* something it is *not*, it *can* it ‘only look like...’ The original meaning (phenomenon: what is manifest [*das Offenbare*]) already contains and is the basis of φαινόμενον.”

⁴³ GA 2: 29/28.

can be encountered. On the other hand, appearance means a referential relation in beings themselves such that what does the *referring* (the announcing) can fulfill its possible function only if it shows itself in itself – only if it is a ‘phenomenon.’”⁴⁴ Indeed, as it relates to the phenomenological investigation of Dasein, what is here decisive is that, like the distinguishing of ontological difference, what appears as phenomena are beings themselves – and for *Sein und Zeit* Dasein specifically. However, as Heidegger indicates through the notion of appearing [*Erscheinung*], what remains hidden, what announces itself through the phenomena of beings is being itself. Thus, as Dasein is to be interrogated, it is clearly delimited that through an investigation into the appearance of Dasein as a phenomenon through its average everyday being-in-the-world, the very mode of appearing itself, Dasein’s being, can be accessed.⁴⁵

Following this presentation on the meaning of φαινόμενον, Heidegger then moves to a discussion of the meaning of λόγος. Here, the critical element of λόγος in its ‘letting something be seen’ thus provides an account of the revelatory character of discourse. Heidegger begins by expressing the essential meaning of λόγος as discourse [*Rede*] and further investigating its nature. He thus writes:

...λόγος as discourse really means δειλοῦν, to make manifest ‘what is being talked about’ in discourse. Aristotle explicates this function of discourse more precisely as ἀποφαίνεσθαι. λόγος lets something be seen (φαίνεσθαι), namely what is being talked about, and indeed *for* the speaker... Discourse ‘lets us see,’ ἀπό...from itself, what is being talks about. In discourse (ἀποφανσις), insofar as it is genuine, *what* is said should be derived *from* what is being talked about.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ GA 2: 31/29.

⁴⁵ These remarks are further clarified as Heidegger writes GA 2: 29/28: “Appearing is an announcing of itself through something that shows itself.” For further discussion, see François Raffoul, *Thinking of the Event*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, forthcoming).

⁴⁶ GA 2: 32/30-31. For further discussion on σύνθεσις [synthesis] see GA 2: 33/31.

It is from this essential revelatory character of ἀποφανσις in discourse that Heidegger extracts the relation between truth and λόγος.⁴⁷ Thus, as it is termed by Heidegger, this ‘apophantic speech’ serves an essential determination for the understanding of λόγος with respect to phenomenology.

As he writes:

Furthermore, because λόγος lets something be seen, it can *therefore* be true or false. But everything depends on staying clear of any concept of truth construed in the sense of ‘correspondence’ or ‘accordance’ [*Übereinstimmung*]. This idea is by no means the primary one in the concept of ἀλήθεια. The ‘being-true’ of λόγος as ἀληθεύειν means: to take beings that are being talked *about* in λέγειν as ἀποφαίνεσθαι out of their concealment; to let them be seen as something unconcealed (ἀλεθέες); to *discover* them.⁴⁸

Having addressed φαινόμενον and λόγος individually, Heidegger now investigates their unified meaning to present a guiding understanding of phenomenology as a method. In this manner, Heidegger thus begins: “The expression ‘phenomenology’ can be formulated in Greek as λέγειν τὰ φαινόμενα. But λέγειν means ἀποφαίνεσθαι. Hence phenomenology means: ἀποφαίνεσθαι τὰ φαινόμενα – to let what shows itself be seen from itself, just as it shows itself from itself.”⁴⁹ However, given this highly formal definition, Heidegger remarks: “But this expresses nothing other than the maxim formulated above: ‘To the things themselves!’”⁵⁰ Thus, to make matters clear, Heidegger directly addresses phenomenology, and indeed as the method of ontology. In this manner, from the previous analyses of φαινόμενον and λόγος, the specific operation of unconcealment or disclosure [ἀλήθεια] is expressed as the proper aim of phenomenology. He thus writes: “Accordingly, the term ‘phenomenology’ differs in meaning

⁴⁷ For further discussion, see GA 2: 33/31-32. Here, as Heidegger warns: “But because ‘truth’ has this meaning, and because λόγος is a specific mode of letting something be seen, λόγος simply may *not* be appealed to as the primary ‘place’ of truth.”

⁴⁸ GA 2: 33/31. See GA 2: 33/31 for further discussion on concealment and being-false.

⁴⁹ GA 2: 34/32.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

from such expressions as ‘theology’ and the like... ‘Phenomenology’ neither designates the object of its research nor is it a title that describes their content. The word only tells us something about the *how* of the demonstration and the treatment of *what* this discipline considers.”⁵¹

Heidegger thus brings these matters to bear on the essential aim of *Sein und Zeit*, as phenomenology takes its charge from beings themselves, with the task of explicating their being as the method of ontology. As Heidegger writes: “What is it that phenomenology is to ‘let be seen?’... Manifestly it is something that does *not* show itself initially and for the most part, something that is *concealed* [*verborgen*].”⁵² He continues: “But what remains *concealed* in an exceptional sense... is not this or that being but rather, as we have shown in our foregoing observations, the *being* of beings.”⁵³ It is from these matter that Heidegger emphatically imparts: “Phenomenology is the way of access to, and the demonstrative matter of determination of, that which is to become the theme of ontology. *Ontology is possible only as phenomenology*. The phenomenological concept of phenomenon, as self-showing, means the being of beings.”⁵⁴

Thus, in this manner, the phenomenological method reaches its prime determination by Heidegger as the method of ontology, that which seeks to disclose beings in their being as they show themselves. From these considerations, Heidegger thus reaches an essential delimitation of the task of *Sein und Zeit* to follow – the phenomenological investigation and interpretation of the being of Dasein from which the meaning of being in general may be accessed in some provisional manner. Thus, the primary task to follow these methodological considerations is the

⁵¹ GA 2: 34-35/32-33. For a brief address of phenomenological description, see GA 2: 35/33.

⁵² GA 2: 35/33.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ GA 2: 35/33. For further discussion on concealment and being covered up, see GA 2: 36/34.

examination of Dasein in its average everyday mode of being-in-the-world. For as Heidegger writes: “Because phenomenon in the phenomenological understanding is just what constitutes being, and furthermore because being is always the being of beings, we must first of all bring beings themselves forward in the right way if we are to have any prospect of exposing being.”⁵⁵

Further in *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger expresses this phenomenological disclosure as the ‘letting-be’ [*sein lassen*] and ‘clearing’ [*lichtung*] of Dasein itself.⁵⁶ In this manner, as phenomena are revealed and thus ‘brought to light’, they are ontologically interpreted in some fashion. As there being is disclosed through some determinate approach, they are thus ‘let be’ depending on the manner of access, generating the *fiat lux* that exposes the being of beings through Dasein. Heidegger here delimits this path from phenomenology to ontology, once more by explicating the phenomenality of the German word *Gang* [way] to express the path of access to being through beings: “The way of encountering being and the structures of being in the mode of phenomenon must first be *wrested* [*abgewonnen*] from the objects of phenomenology. Thus the *point of departure* [*Ausgang*] of the analysis, the *access* [*Zugang*] to the phenomenon, and the *passage through* [*Durchgang*] the prevalent coverings must secure their own method.”⁵⁷

From these considerations from *Sein und Zeit*, the development of phenomenology as the method of ontology has thus been expressed through the essential structure of the *Daseinanalytik*, Heidegger’s venture into the being of Dasein and towards being in general. These matters serve to determine, as Heidegger imparts: “Philosophy is universal phenomenological ontology, taking

⁵⁵ GA 2: 37/35.

⁵⁶ See GA 2: 84-85/82-83 and GA 2: 133/129-130 for further discussion on letting-be [*sein lassen*] and clearing [*Lichtung*], respectively. It is from this initial understanding of letting-be as *sein lassen* expressed in GA 2 that Heidegger will determine this concept as *Gelassenheit*.

⁵⁷ GA 2: 36-37/34, (my brackets). See GA 2: 37/34 for further discussion on phenomenology as the method of ontology, including a brief discussion of hermeneutics.

its departure from the hermeneutic of Dasein, which, as an analysis of *existence* [*Existenz*], has fastened the end of the guideline of all philosophical inquiry at the point from which it *arises* and to which it *returns*.”⁵⁸

Reduction, Construction, Destruction

In the Summer semester of 1927, immediately following the publication of *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger continues with the essential problematics of the *Seinsverständnis* of Dasein and the explication of the meaning of being in general in *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (GA 24). Indeed, as a somewhat ‘sequel’ to the incomplete *Sein und Zeit*,⁵⁹ GA 24 expounds on Heidegger’s indication to repeat the entire *Daseinanalytik* along the exposition of the horizon of time as the guiding phenomena through which being can appear.⁶⁰ In this manner, GA 24 contains Heidegger’s address of four traditional ontological theses concerning the nature of being for the sake of explicating four corresponding ‘basic problems of phenomenology’ through phenomenological interpretation. However, far from an ‘original science of factual life,’ the insistence on GA 24 as comprised of *the* basic problems of phenomenology properly understood makes it very clear that above all others, being itself is the basic problem of phenomenology and the phenomena of temporality [*Temporalität*] as the horizon of possibility for being itself. In this manner, ontology and phenomenology continue to be at one as phenomenology serves as the method to an access and thinking of being itself.

⁵⁸ GA 2: 38/36.

⁵⁹ As translator Albert Hofstadter remarks throughout GA 24: xv-xvi, this text serves as the missing Division III of *Sein und Zeit* as Heidegger seeks to repeat the *Daseinanalytik* with the proper thematization of temporality [*Temporalität*] as the horizon for being’s appearance. For further discussion, see Lee Braver, *Division III of Being and Time: The Unanswered Question of Being*.

⁶⁰ See GA 2: 331-333/316-318.

Indeed, just as Heidegger begins in the 1919/20 lecture course, it remains so here in 1927 as he first addresses phenomenology and its position with respect to the lecture as a whole. He states: “This course sets for itself the task of posing *the basic problems of phenomenology*, elaborating them, and proceeding to some extent toward their solution. Phenomenology must develop its concept out of what it takes as its theme and how it investigates its object.”⁶¹ In this manner, what is to be discussed is thus not phenomenology as such, but rather the basic problems that phenomenology attends to. As Heidegger insists: “The point is not to gain some knowledge about philosophy, but to be able to philosophize.”⁶² In this manner, phenomenology is furthermore not to be understood “as just one philosophical science among others, nor is it the science preparatory to the rest of them [logic, ethics, aesthetics, and philosophy of religion]; rather, *the expression ‘phenomenology’ is the name for the method of scientific philosophy in general.*”⁶³ This understanding of scientific philosophy serves to distinguish phenomenology from the convictions of world-view philosophy as the “wisdom of the world and of life...to provide a *Weltanschauung*, a world-view.”⁶⁴ In this manner, phenomenology thus takes its place in scientific philosophy as *the* sole method of ontology – philosophy’s essential realm. As Heidegger states: “*being is the proper and sole theme of philosophy...philosophy is not a science of beings but of being...ontology.*”⁶⁵

⁶¹ GA 24: 1/1.

⁶² GA 24: 2/1-2.

⁶³ GA 24: 3/3.

⁶⁴ GA 24: 5/4, (my italics).

⁶⁵ GA 24: 15/11.

Following these introductory remarks, Heidegger proceeds to the first division of GA 24 with phenomenological investigations of each thesis in order to explicate the genuine ontological problems within that will serve as phenomenology's basic problems. Heidegger thus presents the four traditional theses as follows: "1. Kant's thesis: Being is not a real predicate. 2. The thesis of medieval ontology...essence (*Was-sein*, essential) [and] existence or extantness (existential, *Vorhandensein*). 3. The thesis of modern ontology...the being of nature (*res existensa*) and the being of the mind (*res cogitans*). 4. The thesis of logic...the 'is.' The being of the copula."⁶⁶ To address these matters for the sake of reaching an understanding of the "*fundamental question of the whole science of being...the question of the meaning of being in general...*"⁶⁷ the analysis of these theses will take its charge from the *Seinsverständnis* already present in the temporality [*Zeitlichkeit*] Dasein that in itself reveals temporality [*Temporalität*] as the horizon for the interpretation of being itself.⁶⁸ With this in mind, Heidegger makes an advanced indication of the essential ontological problematics within each thesis that will be explicated as the four basic problems of phenomenology. The list is as follows: "1. The problem of the ontological difference (the distinction between being and beings). 2. The problem of the basic articulation of being (essential, existential). 3. The problem of the possible modifications of being and the unity of its

⁶⁶ GA 24: 20/15, (my italics).

⁶⁷ GA 24: 21/16.

⁶⁸ Note, Heidegger provides a distinction in both GA 2 and GA 24 between temporality as *Zeitlichkeit* and *Temporalität*, the first referring to the ontological structure of Dasein and the last to being itself. As expressed in GA 24: 22/16: "If temporality [*Zeitlichkeit*] constitutes the meaning of the being of the human Dasein [*den Seinsinn des menschlichen Dasein*] and if the understanding of being [*Seinsverständnis*] belongs to the constitution [*Seinsverfassung*] of the Dasein's being, then this understanding of being, too, must be possible only on the basis of temporality [*Zeitlichkeit*]." Compared to GA 24: 22/17: "The fundamental subject of research in ontology, as determination of the meaning of being by way of time, is *Temporality* [*Temporalität*]." See Françoise Dastur, *Heidegger and the Concept of Time* for further discussion.

manifoldness [as the how and what of modes of the being of beings]. 4. The truth-character of being [as the disclosedness of truth in the ‘it is’].”⁶⁹

Following these matters, Heidegger then gives explicit considerations on the method to be employed in the investigation and explication of these theses towards their basic ontological problematics. Here, Heidegger begins by remarking that ontology, as the study of the being of beings towards being itself, finds itself through the *Seinsverständnis* of Dasein. As Heidegger writes: “Being is given only if the understanding of being, hence the Dasein, exists.”⁷⁰ To grasp being thusly, however, Heidegger explains once again that it is through phenomenology as the method of ontology that the understanding of being in the analysis of Dasein is accessed and worked-upon. To explain this route further, Heidegger thus presents a reformulation of the phenomenological method as it aims to reach being itself through an encounter with beings. This three-fold phenomenological method serves to situate phenomenology as the direct path to ontology.

As Heidegger begins: “Being is to be laid hold of and made our theme. Being is always being of beings and accordingly it becomes accessible at first only by starting with some being. Here the phenomenological vision which does the apprehending must indeed direct itself toward a being....”⁷¹ In this manner, the being of a being must be accessed and investigated in a proper regard in order for being to become thematized as the being of this being, namely, Dasein – in this way the phenomenological method of ontology receives its characterization. As Heidegger explains, “Apprehension of being, ontological investigation, always turns...to some being; but

⁶⁹ GA 24: 33/24, (my brackets, as inclusions on definitions from GA 24: 23-25/18-19).

⁷⁰ GA 24: 26/19.

⁷¹ GA 24: 28/21.

then, *in a precise way, it is led away from that being and led back to its being*. We call this basic component of phenomenological method – the leading back...[from a] being to being – *phenomenological reduction*.⁷² From this first step in the phenomenological method, an essential position is reached whereby being itself is rendered accessible as the being of beings in some provisional manner.

However, as Heidegger states: “Phenomenological reduction as the leading of our vision from beings to being nevertheless is not the only basic component of phenomenological method; in fact, it is not even the central component.”⁷³ In this manner, it is thematically necessary that being itself must be approached in its own right as it itself is the sole aim of phenomenological ontology. Thus, to reach the second step in the phenomenological method, Heidegger states the following: “Being does not become accessible like a being. We do not simply find it in front of us. As is to be shown, it must always be brought to view in a free projection. This projecting of the antecedently given being upon its being and the structures of its being we call *phenomenological construction*.”⁷⁴ At this stage, being itself is grasped in some provisional way, and such constructions are indeed related to hermeneutical interpretations. However, neither is this second stage consummate of phenomenological ontology. As Heidegger writes:

But the method of phenomenology is likewise not exhausted by phenomenological construction. We have heard that every projection of being occurs in a reductive recursion from beings...This commencement is obviously always determined by the factual experience of beings and the range of possibilities of experience that at any time

⁷² GA 24: 28-29/21, (My brackets). Here, Heidegger directly remarks on this reference to Husserl. See GA 24: 29/21 for more discussion.

⁷³ GA 24: 29/21.

⁷⁴ GA 24: 29-30/21-22.

are peculiar to factual Dasein, and hence to the historical situation of a philosophical investigation.⁷⁵

Indeed, as the concept of history and its affects has been of essential importance to phenomenology, Heidegger provides further explanation, stating: “The store of basic philosophical concepts derived from the philosophical tradition is still so influential today that this effect of tradition can be hardly overestimated. It is for this reason that all philosophical discussion, even the most radical attempt to begin all over again, is pervaded by traditional concepts and thus by traditional horizons....”⁷⁶ Thus, to provide a proper formulation of a phenomenological construction of being, the third stage of the phenomenological method must be invoked. As Heidegger states:

It is for this reason that there necessarily belongs to the conceptual interpretation of being and its structures, that is, to the reductive construction of being, a *destruction* – a critical process in which the traditional concepts, which at first must be necessarily employed, are de-constructed down to the sources from which they are drawn. Only by means of this destruction can ontology fully assure itself in a phenomenological way of the genuine character of its concepts.⁷⁷

Having presented this three-fold determination of the phenomenological method of ontology, Heidegger thus delimits the process whereby a phenomenological interpretation of the four ontological theses may be rendered as four basic problems of phenomenology. It is thus through reduction, construction, and destruction that being itself, the sole theme of philosophy as phenomenological ontology, may be accessed and the possibility of ontological knowledge may be attained through Dasein’s essential *Seinsverständnis*.⁷⁸ As Heidegger states in closing on

⁷⁵ GA 24: 30/22.

⁷⁶ GA 24: 31/22.

⁷⁷ GA 24: 31/22-23.

⁷⁸ For further discussion on reduction, construction, and destruction, see François Raffoul, *Thinking of the Event*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, forthcoming).

these methodological remarks: “The method of ontology thus delineated makes it possible to characterize the idea of phenomenology distinctively as the scientific procedure of philosophy. We therewith gain the possibility of defining the concept of philosophy more concretely. Thus our considerations [on the scientific method of ontology and the idea of phenomenology] lead back again to the starting point of the course.”⁷⁹

Interpretations of Kant

In the 1927/28 Winter semester lecture *Phenomenologische Interpretationen von Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (GA 25) directly follows the critical ontological problematic of the *Seinsverständnis* expressed in GA 24 through a reading of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*. Here, through phenomenological interpretation, Heidegger explicates the essential problematic of the possibility of ontological knowledge in Kant’s work, expressed through the possibility of synthetic judgement and a priori intuition essential for a grounding of pure reason and thus philosophy itself. In this manner, through such pursuit of the possibility of the *Seinsverständnis* in phenomenological interpretations of Kant, Heidegger discovers a new essential ontological problematic – the possibility of the ‘knowing comportment’ as the transcendence of Dasein. In this manner GA 25 serves as an essential stage of development for phenomenology as the method of ontology. Here, what is first readily apparent is the operation of phenomenological interpretation. As it has been employed many times by Heidegger before, what is decisive in this operation is the interpretation of a text as the expression of a particular ground of experience through which phenomenology can investigate to grasp essential concepts and basic problems.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ GA 24: 32/23, (my brackets).

⁸⁰ See Chapter 1: “Destruction and Formal Indication” and “Hermeneutics” for further discussion on phenomenological interpretation in GA 60 and 61.

Thus, as Heidegger expresses at the outset of GA 25, the task of the lecture will be indeed “to understand Kant properly [which] means to understand him better than he understood himself.”⁸¹

In this manner, it is from a close reading of the *Critique* that the essential problematic of Kant’s thinking is to be extracted, as Heidegger relates it to be the possibility of ontological knowledge through the problem of a priori intuition. Thus, what is at stake for phenomenological interpretation is as Heidegger states: “of bringing the observations made so far to focus on the fundamental problems....”⁸² Indeed, this task of phenomenological interpretation is thus of critical ontological importance, for through the interpretations of Kant, the *Seinsverständnis* and transcendence of Dasein become understood as expressed in the *Critique*. Thus, through investigation and interpretation of synthetic judgement, the a priori, intuition and thinking, and appearance,⁸³ Heidegger reaches an essential determination of Kant’s “radical grounding of the possibility of ontological knowledge”⁸⁴ essential for the growing task of a pure *Seinsverständnis*.

As Heidegger states at the beginning of GA 25, the guiding understanding of the phenomenological interpretation of Kant takes as its first theme an understanding of metaphysics and of metaphysics as philosophy. Thus, he begins by addressing the word itself: “Literally the word *metaphysics* — means that which comes after that which deals with φύσις or nature, the world in general, and being.”⁸⁵ Indeed, as Heidegger continues, such meaning originates from its

⁸¹ GA 25: 3/2.

⁸² GA 25: 387/262.

⁸³ This is not an exhaustive list of the concepts addressed in the interpretation of the *Critique*.

⁸⁴ GA 25: 431/292.

⁸⁵ GA 25: 11/8.

place in the works of Aristotle, referring to the treatises following the *Physics*. Thus, metaphysics receives further signification from the content of these treatises, as Heidegger states:

People saw that these treatises dealt with the problem of the world as a whole and in a comprehensive sense...an inquiry which Aristotle designates as theology. On the other hand, there were essays which took as object of inquiry the totality of beings as such insofar as they are beings; and this discipline, which inquires into beings as beings and questions the meaning of the being of beings, was called πρώτη φιλοσοφία, i.e., first philosophy.⁸⁶

Here, as Heidegger makes explicit, from the outset of the course, metaphysics and philosophy, as ontology, are at one. Thus, as Heidegger explains, this is the essential meaning of general metaphysics: “We already heard that in the collection of Aristotelian treatises called ‘μετά τά φυσικά’ there were essays which dealt with beings as beings, with ὄν ἢ ὄν or *ens inquantum ens*...The metaphysical discipline which deals with being in general...is called general metaphysics or *metaphysica generalis*.”⁸⁷

Heidegger then relates this essential meaning of metaphysics to its position in Kant’s thinking, where what is at stake is indeed ‘transcendence.’ As he explains from its meaning in Aristotle: “The essays ‘transcend’ unto something which lies beyond ‘physics;’ and the meaning of the μετά in the technical title of ‘metaphysics’ gets transformed. It no longer means *post* – following sequentially – but means *trans*: transcending what is considered in ‘physics’ and its manner of treating the problematic. Metaphysics is thus the science of the super-sensible.”⁸⁸

However, as Heidegger endeavors through the essential project of the course to better formulate metaphysics it guides an understanding of ontological knowledge, it is thus this understanding of Metaphysics by Kant that must be held suspect. As Heidegger explains: “Kant does not deny the

⁸⁶ GA 25: 11/9.

⁸⁷ GA 25: 12/10. This is to be distinguished from ‘special metaphysics’ as discussed further here.

⁸⁸ GA 25: 12/9. For further discussion, see GA 25: 14-17/10-12.

possibility of metaphysics, but holds on to traditional metaphysics in its ultimate goal *as genuine metaphysics*. The only question is: Whither and how are we to attempt this crossing over to the super-sensible?"⁸⁹

Indeed, for Heidegger, this is the essential question of the possibility of ontological knowledge itself. In this manner, to retrieve a genuine understanding of metaphysics and thus of ontology, the second critical element at-stake for the project of GA 25 arises. Thus, as Heidegger proceeds to delimit the path to understanding Kant's *Critique* and thereby philosophy, as metaphysics, through phenomenological interpretations of knowledge as the being of science, the essential comportment of Dasein towards entities becomes a thematic endeavor as it reveals the transcendence of Dasein. Thus, as Heidegger writes:

We begin our observation with a preliminary designation of science as a kind of knowing. But we do not mean knowing in the sense of the known, but rather as knowing comportment. This comportment is not a so-called psychic process in the interior of a so-called soul. Rather, as human comportment it is a definite, possible way for humans to be. To inhere in this way of being and of knowing means to have a relationship with beings that are knowable or known... This way of being relates to beings themselves; in fact, it is a comportment which reveals the being to which it is related.⁹⁰

To bring these matters to bear with their essential significance in the *Daseinanalytik*, and indeed for the future reference to Kant's *Critique*, Heidegger thus expresses this knowing comportment in the following way:

The revealing comportment toward beings which occasionally surrounds human Dasein is a free possibility of this Dasein. Generally we give the name *existence* [*Existenz*] to the way of being which is peculiar to human Dasein and to which moreover knowing belongs as a free possibility. Humans exist, whereas things in nature are extant [*vorhanden*].

⁸⁹ GA 25: 16-17/12.

⁹⁰ GA 25: 18/13.

Accordingly we conceive knowing as a free possibility of human existence [*menschlichen Existenz*].⁹¹

Before proceeding towards these essential problematics explicated through phenomenological interpretations of Kant, Heidegger first presents a few methodological remarks. Here, Heidegger directly indicates the essential character of the *Critique*, and indeed as one of phenomenological standing. He states: “It is important ‘to see what reason produces entirely out of itself,’⁹² which cannot conceal itself but will be brought to light by reason itself... If pure reason is to become an object to itself, i.e., to attain self-knowledge, then the *manner of investigation itself is pure a priori knowledge.*”⁹³ Thus, Heidegger illuminates the critical phenomenological nature of Kant’s operation in the *Critique* as an essential task of self-knowing. As he states: “In its basic posture the *method* of the *Critique* is what we, since Husserl, understand, carry out, and learn to ground more radically as *phenomenological method*. That is why a phenomenological interpretation of the *Critique* is the only interpretation that fits Kant’s own intentions, even as these intentions are not clearly spelled out by him.”⁹⁴ Following these considerations, Heidegger further remarks on the nature of the phenomenological interpretation to follow. Here, as Kant’s task in the *Critique* is the grounding of pure reason, and indeed of philosophy itself understood as metaphysics, Heidegger states: “*The main task of our phenomenological interpretation consists in rendering this foundation visible and in determining it positively.*”⁹⁵ This, in contrast with the many misunderstandings and misinterpretations of

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, (my brackets). For further discussion on being-in-the-world [*In-der-Welt-sein*] and freedom [*Freiheit*] see GA 25: 19-25/13-18.

⁹² Kant, *Kritik A*, xx., (Heidegger’s citation).

⁹³ GA 25: 72/50.

⁹⁴ GA 25: 71/49.

⁹⁵ GA 25: 79/54.

Kant's transcendental aesthetic and logic, this task must be the sole guidance of a genuine understanding of the *Critique* itself and indeed if it is to serve as the further ground to explicate the *Seinsverständnis*.⁹⁶

Further on in the lecture, Heidegger presents a precise indication on these essential misunderstanding of Kant, namely that such a radical attempt to ground philosophy via pure reason has been taken by the philosophical tradition as the positing of a worldview [*Weltanschauung*] rather than an attempt to ground philosophy itself in pure reason. As Heidegger writes: "Nowadays one is easily inclined to attribute to Kant's *Weltanschauung*...this predominant superiority of the mind over the body. Such a *Weltanschauung* exists in every scientific philosophy – in Plato and Aristotle as well as Hegel - and it would be a wretched dunce of a philosopher who would not share such a *Weltanschauung*."⁹⁷ He continues:

However, we are not concerned with a *Weltanschauung* but with a fundamental methodological question which decides the possibility of philosophy in general, namely whether it is possible to ground philosophy as such by laying out the foundation of the problematic in sensibility. Philosophy is the conceptual knowledge of a fundamental realm of phenomena – indeed a conceptual knowledge which must necessarily be grounded in and guided by a self-knowledge of human Dasein.⁹⁸

In this manner, as Heidegger writes, "The problem which Kant poses will be brought to light only by coming philosophically to terms with him...according to his own challenge."⁹⁹ Thus, in this way, it is through phenomenological interpretation that a genuine understanding of Kant's

⁹⁶ For further discussion on these misunderstandings see GA 25: 75-80/50-55.

⁹⁷ GA 25: 397/269.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ GA 25: 74/51.

aims in the *Critique* will be achieved, further still as Heidegger states: “We are for Kant against Kantianism.”¹⁰⁰ Indeed, as Heidegger imparts in the end of GA 25:

When some years ago I studied the *Critique of Pure Reason* anew and read it, as it were, against the background of Husserl’s phenomenology, it opened my eyes; and Kant became for me a crucial confirmation of the accuracy of the path which I took in my research... In Kant as in no other thinker one has the immediate certainty that he does not cheat. And the most monstrous danger in philosophy consists in cheating... But where the greatest danger of cheating is, there is also the ultimate possibility for the genuineness of thinking and questioning. The meaning of doing philosophy consists in awakening the need for this genuineness and in keeping it awake.¹⁰¹

Metaphysics

Following this, in the Spring of 1929 Heidegger delivered *Was ist Metaphysik?* (GA 9) as an inaugural address for his instatement as professor at Freiburg University upon Husserl’s retirement. Here, the aim of the lecture address concerns a deeper understanding of metaphysics, following the interpretations of Kant, one that through phenomenology presents the essential concept for the possibility of all ontology – the nothing [*das Nichts*].¹⁰² Here, phenomenology appears as the direct method of metaphysics, ontology, in what Heidegger calls the unfolding [*Entfaltung*] of the nothing. In this manner, Heidegger presents what is to be understood as a phenomenological description and thus an ontological determination as he addresses the nihilating character of the nothing. Thus, through metaphysics understood as μετά τὰ φυσικά, the transcendent study ‘beyond beings’ and thus to being itself, ontology is grasped in its pure possibility through the presentation of the nothing. Heidegger thus further approaches the idea of metaphysics as a pure ontology, invoking phenomenology as its essential methodological

¹⁰⁰ GA 25: 279/190.

¹⁰¹ GA 25: 431/292-93.

¹⁰² There is a relation here between the nothing [*das Nichts*] and death [*der Tod*] as expressed in *Sein und Zeit* (GA 2: 267-301/257-288). The origin of this concept appears in Heidegger’s thought as early as 1922 through the ruinance [*Ruinanz*] of Dasein. See GA 61: 131-155/98-115 for further discussion.

disclosure. These matters serve to situate Heidegger's thinking towards the pure thinking of being through metaphysics which must be recovered through an address of the history of the thinking of being. Thus, following the final presentation of the development of phenomenology in this chapter, the way will be prepared in a proper manner for the next stage in Heidegger's phenomenological thinking of the history of being through metaphysics.

Heidegger begins GA 9 by introducing the essential task of the lecture, an understanding of metaphysics: “‘What is metaphysics?’...This question we will forego. Instead we will take up a particular metaphysical question. In this way it seems we will let ourselves be transposed directly into metaphysics. Only in this way will we provide metaphysics the proper occasion to introduce itself.”¹⁰³ Thus, to guide the lecture towards a self-imposed understanding of metaphysics, Heidegger provides a traditional metaphysical question, “‘Why are there beings at all, and why not rather Nothing?’”¹⁰⁴ It will thus be this metaphysical thinking of the nothing that will serve to ground an understanding of metaphysics, and indeed as the very possibility of the being of beings itself. Here, Heidegger's tact in handling philosophical matters has indeed reached a critical stage in his phenomenological thinking. As expressed previously through disclosure and the proper approach to beings, what is here decisive is letting metaphysics ‘show-itself,’ indeed, to manifest phenomenologically in its own way.

Proceeding in this manner, Heidegger thus presents several key remarks that will guide the self-introduction of metaphysics. He begins by providing the following critical determinations which highlight the priority of the nothing in all scientific research: “‘That to which the relation to the world refers are beings themselves – and nothing besides. That from

¹⁰³ GA 9: 103/82.

¹⁰⁴ GA 9: 122/96.

which every stance takes its guidance are beings themselves – and nothing further. That with which the scientific confrontation in the irruption occurs are beings themselves – and beyond that, nothing.”¹⁰⁵ These considerations serve Heidegger’s task of a proper formulation of the question itself so that the nothing can appear by its own right and thus provide its own understanding of metaphysics.¹⁰⁶ Heidegger then considers a provisional understanding of the nothing as the ‘not’ [*nicht*] of logical negation. From these considerations, Heidegger then brings this ‘common nothing’ into a more precise understanding, as he explicates its essential ontological foundation. It is from these considerations that Heidegger ultimately states: “The nothing is the complete negation of the totality of beings.”¹⁰⁷ In this manner, Heidegger thus draws a relation between the nothing and beings that is essential to its self-unfolding.

As the nothing is here understood as the negation of beings, Heidegger delves further into the position of Dasein with respect to beings as whole. Here he states: “The totality of beings must be given in advance so as to be able to fall prey straightaway to negation – in which the nothing itself would then be manifest.”¹⁰⁸ In response to this, Heidegger states: “As surely as we can never comprehend absolutely the whole of beings in themselves we certainly do find ourselves stationed in the midst of beings that are unveiled somehow as a whole.”¹⁰⁹ In this manner, Heidegger then seeks to locate a sense of the nothing in Dasein’s attunement [*Befindlichkeit*] from this essential relatedness to beings.¹¹⁰ Here, he states: “Does such an

¹⁰⁵ GA 9: 105/84.

¹⁰⁶ See GA 9: 104-108/82-86 for further discussion on the position of the nothing in scientific research.

¹⁰⁷ GA 9: 109/86.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ GA 9: 110/87.

¹¹⁰ See GA 2: 134-142/130-138 for further discussion on attunement [*Befindlichkeit*].

attunement, in which man is brought before the nothing itself, occur in human existence? It can and does occur, although rarely enough and only for a moment in the fundamental mood of anxiety.”¹¹¹ Pursuing this matter further, Heidegger then presents Dasein’s encounter with the nothing as it is found in anxiety [*die Angst*]. Here, the meaning of anxiety is first distinguished from “the quite common anxiousness, ultimately reducible to fearfulness....”¹¹² Rather it is through anxiety as a fundamental uncanniness [*Unheimlichkeit*] in Dasein that the nothing is encountered. As Heidegger states:

In anxiety we say, ‘one feels uncanny.’ What is ‘it’ that makes ‘one’ feel uncanny?...All things and we ourselves sink into indifference. This, however, not in the sense of mere disappearance. Rather, in their very receding, things turn towards us. The receding of beings as a whole, closing in on us in anxiety, oppresses us. We can get no hold on things. In the slipping away of beings only this ‘no hold on things’ comes over us and remains.¹¹³

Thus, from this Heidegger ultimately states: “Anxiety makes manifest the nothing.”¹¹⁴ To explain this further, he states: “This implies that we ourselves – we humans who are in being – in the midst of beings slip away from ourselves. At bottom therefore it is not as though ‘you’ or ‘I’ feel uncanny; rather it is this way for some ‘one.’ In the altogether unsettling experience of this hovering where there is nothing to hold on to, pure Da-sein is all that is still there.”¹¹⁵ From these determinations which source anxiety as the site of appearance of the nothing, Heidegger then states that it is necessary to interrogate Dasein’s attunement to the nothing in anxiety from which an understanding of the nothing can appear. Here, as Heidegger begins: “In anxiety beings as a

¹¹¹ GA 9: 111/88.

¹¹² *Ibid.* See GA 2: 140-142/136-138 and 184-191/178-184 for Heidegger’s distinction between fear [*die Furcht*] and anxiety [*die Angst*], respectively.

¹¹³ GA 9: 11-112/88.

¹¹⁴ GA 9: 112/88.

¹¹⁵ GA 9: 112/88-89.

whole become superfluous.”¹¹⁶ To pursue this matter further, Heidegger then provides an analysis of the essential nihilating character of the nothing through annihilation and repulsion.

Here, he states:

In anxiety there occurs a shrinking back before...that is surely not any sort of flight but rather a kind of entranced calm. This ‘back before’ takes its departure from the nothing. The nothing itself does not attract; it is essentially repelling. But this repulsion is itself as such a parting gesture toward beings that are submerged as a whole. This wholly repelling gesture...which is the action of the nothing that closes in on Dasein in anxiety, is the essence of the nothing: nihilation.¹¹⁷

Indeed, it is from this point that Heidegger emphatically states: “The nothing itself nihilates.”¹¹⁸

From this essential exposition of the character of the nothing, Heidegger then provides a response to this essential metaphysical question that concerns the possibility of the being of beings at all. Here, he states:

The nothing is neither an object nor any being at all. The nothing comes forward neither for itself nor next to beings, which it would, as it were, adhere. For human Dasein, the nothing makes possible the manifestness of beings as such. The nothing does not merely serve as the counterconcept of beings; rather, it originally belongs to their essential unfolding as such. In the being of beings the nihilation of the nothing occurs.¹¹⁹

Thus, Heidegger returns to the essential task of the lecture itself, an understanding of metaphysics. He thus states: “Our inquiry concerning the nothing is to bring us face to face with metaphysics itself. The name ‘metaphysics’ derives from the Greek μετά τά φυσικά. This peculiar title was later interpreted as characterizing the question that extends μετά or *trans* – ‘over’ – beings as such.”¹²⁰ As explicated from the self-unfolding of the nothing, the meaning of

¹¹⁶ GA 9: 113/90.

¹¹⁷ GA 9: 114/90.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ GA 9: 115/91.

¹²⁰ GA 9: 118/93.

metaphysics thus becomes apparent as Heidegger states: “Metaphysics is inquiry beyond or over beings that aims to recover them as such and as a whole for our grasp. In the question concerning the nothing such an inquiry beyond or over beings, beings as a whole, takes place. It proves thereby to be a ‘metaphysical’ question.”¹²¹

In this manner, the phenomenon of the nothing thus proves to be the possibility for the manifestation of beings and for metaphysics, as ontology, as a whole. Indeed, as Heidegger explains: “Only if science exists on the basis of metaphysics can it ever fulfill in ever-renewed ways its essential task...Only because the nothing is manifest in the ground of Dasein can the total strangeness of beings overwhelm us.”¹²² It is thus in this manner that the essential metaphysical question ‘Why are there beings at all, and why not rather Nothing?’ manifests metaphysics as a philosophical endeavor. As Heidegger states: “The question of the nothing puts us, the questioners, ourselves in question. It is a metaphysical question.”¹²³ As Heidegger explains: “As long as human beings exist, philosophizing of some sort occurs. Philosophy – what we call philosophy – is the getting under way of metaphysics, in which it comes to itself and to its explicit tasks. Philosophy gets under way only by a peculiar insertion of our own existence into the fundamental possibilities of Dasein as a whole.”¹²⁴

From these consideration on metaphysics, Heidegger thus reaches a critical development of phenomenology as the method of ontology through the self-unfolding of the nothing. In this manner, as phenomenology overall serves as a way of doing philosophy, Heidegger thus

¹²¹ GA 9: 118-119/93-94.

¹²² GA 9: 121/95.

¹²³ GA 9: 121/96.

¹²⁴ GA 9: 122/96.

indicates its essential character as the path to the self-manifestation of the phenomenon of the nothing, and as that which brings forward being as such, allows philosophy to address being in its pure possibility. From this chapter, it has been made clear how phenomenology provides a method of ontology, a way of access to being itself, first through the interrogation of the being of Dasein and the access of its *Seinsverständnis*, which in turn leads towards phenomenological disclosure of the being of beings. It is through this thinking of Dasein that phenomenology further serves as the way to a study of being in the possibility of pure ontological knowledge and the pure possibility of being itself through the transcendence of Dasein brought forth through the thinking of the nothing and its phenomenological unfolding.

Conclusion

As I have made apparent through the presentation of this research, it is quite clear how the phenomenological method is understood, employed, and indeed self-informing of Heidegger's philosophical career from 1919-1929. Expressed through Chapter 1, Heidegger thus begins with the hermeneutics of facticity – the thinking of life itself in its immediacy – where the phenomenological method is largely characterized by stages of description, destruction, and interpretation that provide a critical philosophical insight into life experience to allow the structures of life, facticity, and Dasein to reveal themselves. During this time, Heidegger continues to rethink how philosophy approaches its content, human existence, and its proper mode of access to it through phenomenology, bringing the being of Dasein and being itself closer into thematic view.

It is thus upon reaching 1927, as expressed through Chapter 2, that the progression of phenomenology towards its ontological import becomes a paramount task for Heidegger, and indeed the method of phenomenology becomes oriented towards this task. In this manner, description, reduction, construction, and destruction are each reoriented in their goal, but remain interconnected the same in operation, as Heidegger seeks to approach beings in a significant encounter whereby their being is made manifest. And, as possibility stands higher than actuality, it is for the thinking of being in its pure possibility that Heidegger reaches a greater understanding of ontology through metaphysics and the phenomenology of the nothing, where phenomenology can begin to allow for the thinking of being itself to manifest. Indeed, as Heidegger attributes to the understanding of being within Dasein, this meta-ontology is only at all made *possible* as it emerges from human being itself.

I have thus been able to characterize the critical stages of the phenomenological method for Heidegger in its development throughout this period of 1919-1929. In this manner, though the core aspects of description, interpretation, reduction, construction, and destruction are present at the very beginning, they each receive specific attention as Heidegger moves through different stages of his early career in search of the facticity of life, the being of human being, and being itself in its pure possibility. Further, the role of phenomenological destruction and interpretation to Heidegger's approach persists with an amazing consistency, as these are not only aspects of the overall method explored through various works, but remain his very approach to thinking in general. I have made this altogether apparent, in what sense Heidegger employs the phenomenological destruction as he begins many of his projects by addressing and critiquing the tradition of philosophy so that phenomenology can start afresh. Indeed, he also approaches each philosopher from the history of philosophy as one whose expressions and thoughts lend themselves to the original and core problematic of philosophy – human existence as the ground of all thinking – rendered visible through the decisive exposition of phenomenological interpretation.

Though my task in this project has been restricted to the first decade of Heidegger's work, it becomes altogether clear from my demonstrations herein that phenomenology, and specifically the phenomenological thinking of being itself, continues on to characterize Heidegger's thought into the thirties and indeed until the end of his life. In this manner, following 1929, Heidegger immediately progresses from the thinking of being through metaphysics to a retrieval of being from its concealment in the tradition of philosophy. Here, Heidegger looks to Hölderlin for insights on the history of being and its phenomenality as expressed through *Ereignis*, or the event. He challenges Nietzsche against his own thought over

four immense volumes. He revives an ancient understanding of being through interpretations of Parmenides. Thus, through phenomenology, Heidegger achieves every possibility for the thinking of being, and indeed as possibility. It is thus entirely clear in what sense the task of this project may continue to track the development of phenomenology through the history of being and the thinking of *Ereignis* in the eras of Heidegger's thought following 1929. However, what remains here will have to suffice until any more can be written – “The form by which this silence may alone be broken is real, strenuous work ‘on the things themselves’ [*an den Sachen*].”¹²⁵

¹²⁵ GA 58: 24/17.

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