

V. TEMPORALITY AND HISTORICALITY	H. 372	424
72. Existential-ontological exposition of the problem of history	H. 372	424
73. The ordinary understanding of history, and Dasein's historizing	H. 378	429
74. The basic constitution of historicity	H. 382	434
75. Dasein's historicity, and world-history	H. 387	439
76. The existential source of historiography in Dasein's historicity	H. 392	444
77. The connection of the foregoing exposition of the problem of historicity with the researches of Wilhelm Dilthey and the ideas of Count Yorck	H. 397	449
VI. TEMPORALITY AND WITHIN-TIME-NESS AS THE SOURCE OF THE ORDINARY CONCEPTION OF TIME	H. 404	456
78. The incompleteness of the foregoing temporal analysis of Dasein	H. 404	456
79. Dasein's temporality, and our concern with time	H. 406	458
80. The time with which we concern ourselves, and within-time-ness	H. 411	464
81. Within-time-ness and the genesis of the ordinary conception of time	H. 420	472
82. A comparison of the existential-ontological connection of temporality, Dasein, and world-time, with Hegel's way of taking the relation between time and spirit	H. 428	480
(a) Hegel's conception of time	H. 428	480
(b) Hegel's Interpretation of the connection between time and spirit	H. 433	484
83. The existential-temporal analytic of Dasein, and the question of fundamental ontology as to the meaning of Being in general	H. 436	486
Author's Notes		489
Glossary of German Terms		503
Index		524

## FOREWORD

In their translators' preface, written nearly a half century ago, John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson described *Being and Time* as "perhaps the most celebrated philosophical work which Germany has produced in this century." In the eight decades since its original publication, and with the twentieth century now at an end, it has become even clearer that *Being and Time* is indeed one of the most important philosophical works of modern times. No other text, with the possible exception of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, has exerted such a profound and enduring influence on the way philosophy is done, or indeed on our collective sense of what (some might say *whether*) philosophy can be. Like other great thinkers, Heidegger divided his audience: many were inspired by his work, others were and remain hostile to it, whether for good reasons or for bad. In either case, no one who reads *Being and Time* seriously can remain indifferent to it.

What makes *Being and Time* a great book? There is, to begin with, the sheer scope of its ambition, the evocativeness and originality of its style, the extraordinary wealth of explicit reference as well as tacit allusion to the two and a half millennia of philosophical tradition preceding it. Apart from these more obvious merits, a few other crucial qualities are worth noting, along with the no less important outstanding interpretive and systematic problems readers still have to grapple with.

In broad outline, *Being and Time* addresses a striking combination of ancient and modern themes. The central question of the book concerns the meaning (*Sinn*) of being (*Sein*). What does it mean (for something) to be? What *is* it to be? The question hearkens back to ancient Greek thought and to the medieval scholasticism in which Heidegger was immersed as a young theology student. The more immediate impetus behind Heidegger's early work, however, was the problem of *intentionality*—the problem of the *of*-ness or *about*-ness of our attitudes—which he inherited from his elder colleague at the University of Freiburg, his sometime friend and mentor, the founder of modern phenomenology, Edmund Husserl, and which Husserl in turn adopted from his own teacher, Franz Brentano.

The question of being is a question about everything and, in a sense, nothing. Aristotle and the scholastics knew that "being" does not name a peculiar feature distinguishing a kind of entity, or even entities as a whole, since a contrast class is by definition out of the question. What would "entities" lacking being *be*? They would not be entities at all. As Kant observed in his refutation of the ontological argument for the existence of God in the



*Critique of Pure Reason*, existence may be a linguistic predicate, but it is not a "real predicate," or property. On the surface, the sentence "Water exists" looks grammatically the same as "Water boils." But the surface grammar is misleading. We know what nonboiling water is, but what is nonexistent water? What would an entity *be* without the property of existence? Nothing. And what could *have* such a property? Only an entity. Yet the *entity*-ness of the entity is just what possession of the property was supposed to explain.

So, being (*das Sein*) is neither an entity nor the totality of entities (*das Seiende*). The difference between being and entities is what Heidegger would, soon after writing *Being and Time*, dub the "ontological difference," and it is absolutely central to his philosophy. What is *being*? It is easier to say what it is *not*, namely an entity. Being is not itself something that exists. If we were to make a list of everything that exists, we could not name all objects and properties and events and relations, and then add, *and being*.

What *is* it, then? Perhaps the closest we can come to a definition is to say that being is that *in virtue of which* entities are entities. It is what *makes* (in a noncausal sense of "makes") entities entities. More specifically, for Heidegger, it is what we understand in our understanding of being, what we know when we know—however dimly and inarticulately—*what* and *that* entities are. Here, then, is our first clue to the link between the seemingly divergent ancient and modern themes in Heidegger's thought, the question of being on the one hand and the problem of intentionality on the other. For it turns out that to ask about the *meaning* of being is necessarily to ask about our *understanding* of being. Indeed, for Heidegger, being just *is* what we understand when we have an understanding of being. Being is entities *making sense* (to us) as entities—even if only tacitly, dimly, unconsciously. Unlike entities themselves, then, being in a sense depends on us; it is not "out there" like some alien or occult phenomenon but resides entirely in the most mundane human experience.

Since Plato, however, philosophers have systematically neglected the question of being—the question of what it means *to be*—in favor of inquiries into the kinds of entities there are: their basic character, their distinguishing features, their essential properties. Are there visible things and also supersensible forms or ideas, substances and accidents, universals, extended and thinking substances, subjects and objects, or perhaps just subjectivity and will? These various inventories of the "furniture of the world" are the stuff of traditional ontology, from Plato to Hegel. (Heidegger's critical engagement with Nietzsche and Nietzsche's metaphysics of the *will to power* would commence in the mid-1930s, almost a decade after he had written *Being and Time*.)

Heidegger embarked upon two projects with respect to traditional on-

tology, only one of which he actually carried out in the two published divisions of *Being and Time*. (In Section 8, he sketches his plan for the entire treatise, which was to fall into two main parts, each comprising three divisions. *Being and Time* as we know it thus constitutes only a third of the original design.) Heidegger first sought to shed light on the structures of human existence and understanding that *make possible* all explicit accounts of the furniture of the world, accounts of *what* entities in general are. How was it ever possible for philosophers to pronounce on that subject? The answer, he argues, lies in the fact that traditional ontology presupposes a more "fundamental ontology" rooted tacitly in the "preontological" (which is to say, *pretheoretical*, *prereflective*) understanding of being that defines the entity we are, namely human beings (*Dasein*).

*Being and Time* is thus an instance of what has been called, since Kant, "transcendental" philosophy, that is, an account of the conditions of the possibility of something given, in this case our (sometimes explicit) understanding of *what* entities are and *that* they are. And just as Kant's transcendental critique of reason centered on an "analytic" (or *dissection*, Kant says) of the faculty of understanding, so too, Heidegger tells us, his own fundamental ontology—his explication of our average, everyday understanding of being—will take the form of an "analytic of *Dasein*," an interpretive interrogation of the entity we ourselves are. We shall ask ourselves, that is, how we experience and understand ourselves and the world around us, or more precisely how we experience and understand our *being* and the being of all the things we take *to be*.

So, for instance, whereas traditional ontology regarded all entities as objects, or substances with properties, Heidegger points out that ordinary things in our daily environment—tables and chairs, hammers and nails, doors and doorknobs, automobiles and street signs—do not show up in that way at all. A hammer is not a piece of steel adjoining a piece of wood, which we *first* see as an object with properties and *then* interpret or judge to be useful for hammering; it is first of all, and above all, something *to grab*, something *for hammering*. So, too, a doorway is not just a rectangular aperture in a wall but something *to go through*. Such things are not occurrent or "present-at-hand" (*vorhanden*) but available or "ready-to-hand" (*zuhanden*). Even less is a human being a mere object with mental properties added on, but a doer and a sufferer, an agent and a patient, not a *what* but a *who*, not something with extra psychological features in addition but *someone* living a life, emerging from a history and plunging into a future.

The second project Heidegger envisioned, but only announced and did not actually develop until his lectures of the summer of 1927, immediately



following the publication of *Being and Time*, is what he calls "The Task of Destroying the History of Ontology" (Section 6). To destroy the metaphysical tradition is not to smash or obliterate it, but to take it apart, undo it, and correct its fixation on *entities* at the expense of *being*, to wake it from its slumbers, to *remind* it of its "forgetfulness" of being. Thus, fundamental ontology first reveals the transcendental conditions of the possibility of our explicit understanding of being, and so of all traditional ontology, the historical series of authoritative accounts of what there is, articulated by the great thinkers of past ages. The critical destruction of the history of ontology was then to proceed backward from Kant and Descartes to Aristotle, reading between the lines of their professed metaphysical and epistemological doctrines to gain insight into their unspoken—indeed "unthought"—understanding of what it is *to be*.

Between the analytic of Dasein in the first two divisions of Part One and the projected destruction of the history of ontology in Part Two, the third division of Part One, also unwritten, was to treat "time and Being." And it is there, in that inversion of the book's title, that its core thesis lies. Time, Heidegger tells us, is "the transcendental horizon for the question of Being" (Section 8). What does this mean? Again, the claim is transcendental: time is what *makes possible* our asking of the question of the meaning of being, the question, What does it *mean* to be? What *is* it to be? We ask that question always only against the background (or "horizon") of time, in particular the temporal structure of our own existence—our past history, our contemporary condition, our projects, our future—and we answer the question, whether tacitly in our behaviors and practices or explicitly in our thoughts and words, in irreducibly temporal terms. To be an object with properties, like a stone or a molecule, for example, is to occur punctually at a discrete *moment* in time. To be available for use, like a hammer or a doorknob, is to be defined by functions and opportunities for possible *future* serviceability. To be a human being is to be "thrown" into an *already* established cultural tradition (Sections 72–77), to "fall" into a *current* situation (Section 38), and to "project" into the *eventual* closing down of all of one's possibilities, to be "towards death" (Sections 49–53). In each case, whatever the entity in question, it is *time* that makes sense of being, that is, makes it intelligible to us.

We can now begin to see why Heidegger pursues the question of being (and time) by undertaking a phenomenology of human understanding. On the face of it, the two themes might seem unconnected. Our attitudes, after all—our memories, perceptions, judgments, expectations—are just so many tiny bits of reality, vanishingly small, scattered fragments of experience in the vastly wider universe of things composing the traditional subject mat-

ter of ontology. Why take such a narrow detour through phenomenology if our aim is to ask the fully general question of the meaning of being? The answer is that, for Heidegger, "Only as phenomenology, is ontology possible" (35; here and *infra*, references are to the German page numbers printed in the margins of the translation). To understand why this is so, we need to understand what phenomenology was for Heidegger, and what it had been for his predecessor, and its founder, Husserl.

Husserl wanted phenomenology to be a pure, presuppositionless, systematic scientific description of consciousness. What is consciousness? There are (at least) two ways to think about it. On the one hand, consciousness can be regarded as a "real" (spatiotemporal) psychological object, a property of minds or organisms, perhaps an event causally linked to other mental (and physical) events. Consciousness, so construed, is the subject matter of psychology, not phenomenology. On the other hand, we can conceive of consciousness as the "ideal" (abstract) *meaning* or intelligible structure and content of any awareness of anything. Consciousness so understood, in its "purity" and "ideality," is what Husserl calls *transcendental subjectivity*; this is the proper subject matter of "pure" or "transcendental" phenomenology. Consciousness in this sense is not *my* current visual experience or *your* particular recollection or *her* belief state, but *perception* as such, *memory* as such, *judgment* as such. Husserlian phenomenology is thus a description of subjectivity, not of the objective world, but it is emphatically *not* empirical psychology.

Husserl therefore insists on two methodological exclusions, or "reductions." The first draws a sharp distinction between subject and object, or mind and world ("consciousness and reality," as he says). This is the *transcendental reduction*, or *epoché* (the word ancient Greek skeptics used to describe their suspension of judgment, or withholding of belief). The second distinguishes the *de facto* concrete *existence* of ourselves and our attitudes from what Husserl takes to be their reflectively observable *essences*. This is the *eidetic reduction* ("eidetic" from *eidos*, Plato's word for *idea* or *form*). "Essences" are, for Husserl, abstract structures as indifferent to our existence as the truths of geometry are to the existence of tangible figures drawn in sand or on paper to illustrate them. Husserlian phenomenology, then, is the systematic scientific description of the ideal essences belonging to pure, transcendental subjectivity.

Heidegger embraced Husserl's notion of phenomenology as *description*—as opposed to deductive argument, speculative system-building, abstract analysis, explanation, or hypothesis-testing—but he could not accept the reductions, the sharp distinctions between subject and object, and between



essence and existence, on which Husserl's project depended. For Heidegger, phenomenology would be a description not of subjectivity to the exclusion of the world, but of the world as such, as it manifests itself. It would be a study not of appearances internal to consciousness, as distinct from the external things appearing, but of the external manifestation of things themselves. If we had to define phenomenology as a study of *appearance*, in some sense of that word, we would have to add that the relevant contrast is not between appearance and *reality*, as it was for Husserl, but between appearance and *disappearance*—showing up and hiding, revealing and concealing.

Indeed, the fact that things conceal themselves in obscurity and indeterminacy is precisely what makes phenomenology at once possible and necessary. Husserl sought phenomenological insight in immediate transparent intuitions of appearances given self-evidently to self-conscious reflection. But then the sheer difficulty of phenomenological description, not to mention its conspicuous lack of definitive results, becomes a mystery. Heidegger agrees that phenomenology must be *descriptive*, but he thinks its descriptions cannot pretend to rest on pure eidetic insight into something present in pristine form in consciousness. Phenomenology must instead be "hermeneutical," or *interpretive*. Like the illuminating construal of a text, that is, hermeneutical phenomenology offers insight not just by exhibiting what is already self-evident in awareness, but by drawing out, eliciting, evoking, uncovering what lies hidden or buried in and around whatever manifests itself openly in the world.

Nor, for Heidegger, would phenomenology be a description of essences to the exclusion of existence; instead, it would describe—again, by digging up, uncovering, interpreting—the *being* of things, the existence of ourselves and the world around us. Phenomena have innumerable hidden aspects, of course, all potentially worthy of hermeneutical excavation and elucidation. But again, the deep and important hidden aspect of things that Heidegger is after is not just some arbitrary characteristic they happen to share, but the humble fact—obvious yet enigmatic—that they *are*. We deal with things constantly, not just by perceiving and thinking about them, but also—arguably more importantly—by *not* perceiving or thinking about them, but using them, relying on them, taking them for granted, even ignoring them in various ways. In all such behaviors and dispositions, things manifest themselves to us and we are familiar with them. But their *being* is so pervasive and fundamental that it ordinarily withdraws into the background of our understanding; it conceals itself.

What would it be to interpret something ordinary and familiar by way of bringing out the relatively strange and unfamiliar aspect of its *being*?

Consider the example of the world itself. Things always only show up for us in the context of a world. But what *is* a world? What is its being? What *makes* a world a world? What does a world's "worldhood" consist in (Section 18)? The only way to get clear about that question, let alone try to answer it, Heidegger insists, is to describe how we experience and understand our world by *inhabiting* it, by *being-in* it (Sections 12, 28–38). A world *is* a world by being structured by norms, ways, means, purposes, and "for-the-sakes-of," which constitute the *point* of what we do. We inhabit a world not simply by confronting objects in perception and judgment, but by pursuing ends, participating in practices, occupying social roles, establishing at least presumptive identities. A world is not an object standing over against a subject; it is *where* we live our lives, the *milieu* in which we *dwell*.

We saw earlier that to ask about *the* meaning of being is to ask about *our* understanding of being: "Only as phenomenology, is ontology possible" (35). The question of being thus leads us back from traditional ontology to fundamental ontology, and so to the analytic of Dasein. The emphasis and orientation of Heidegger's analytic shifts considerably, however, between Division One and Division Two of *Being and Time*. The early reception of the book filed it all too hastily under the heading of *Existenzphilosophie*, thanks largely to the dramatically charged themes—death, guilt, authenticity—that dominate the second division. Only decades later did readers begin to take seriously the strikingly *unexistentialist*-sounding claims at the heart of Division One, for example that everyday Dasein does not encounter the world as an individuated subject, but rather as "they" or "one" (*das Man*), the generic anybody to whom the public world is an anonymous field of impersonal practices and norms.

Indeed, the tension between what we might call the ontological socialism of Division One and the increasingly intense psychological individualism of Division Two generates what may be the only explicit contradiction in *Being and Time*. On the one hand, Heidegger tells us (twice) that "Authentic Being-one's-Self" is "an existentiell modification of the 'they'—of the 'they' as an essential *existentiale*" (130, cf. 267). He reiterates the point later when he says that authentic understanding can never extricate itself from the "interpretedness" it inherits from its historical tradition (383). Received, customary practices and understandings form the abiding background for any self-understanding, no matter how innovative and individualistic. And yet elsewhere he seems to say just the opposite: "the they-self . . . is an existentiell modification of the authentic Self" (317). So, which is it? Does individual authentic selfhood consist in occupying a preestablished place in an already constituted social and historical world—or perhaps occupying



it in a special *way*, with a special style and sensitivity—or is conforming to social norms necessarily a *lapsing* from a prior, more basic, more desirable form of “authentic being-oneself”?

It is conceivable, but unlikely, that that last sentence was simply a blunder, perhaps owing to the frenetic pace at which Heidegger was writing the second half of the manuscript in 1926, in part to secure his appointment as Husserl’s successor to the chair of philosophy at the University of Freiburg, which he did shortly thereafter. Yet even if it was a mistake, it was a symptomatic mistake pointing up a real tension at the heart of the book. Is our usual conformity to social norms a benign, necessary condition for authentic and inauthentic modes of existence alike, or is it the insidious beginning of the kind of conformism that robs us of our authentic selfhood? Is our perpetual “falling” (*Verfallen*) into the present sometimes just a healthy absorption in our current cherished tasks and attachments, or is it always an irrationally motivated “flight” (*Flucht*) into distraction and alienation? Readers will also have to continue to grapple with Heidegger’s use of hot-button words like “guilt” (*Schuld*) and “death” (*Tod*), whose meanings in *Being and Time* turn out to depart widely from standard usage. Failing to do so will condemn the text to seeming to assert what is either absurd or trivial, a charge that Heidegger’s most unsympathetic and uncomprehending critics have repeated over the years.

What direction did Heidegger’s thinking take after the publication of *Being and Time*? It is impossible to say in just a few words, but there is no doubt that he quickly gave up the idea of writing the remaining four divisions of the projected treatise. Perhaps he realized that any systematic transition from the analytic of Dasein to the general question of the meaning of being would be impossible. Or perhaps the creeping inconsistencies in the text as it then stood, however incomplete, had become glaring and intolerable to him. In any case, by about 1930, he had begun to take what he would later call the “turn” (*Kehre*), the radical stylistic and methodological shift that in retrospect separates what we now designate the “early Heidegger” of *Being and Time* and the lectures of the 1920s (many of which have now been published and translated into English) from the “later Heidegger” of the famous essays on art, science, technology, poetry, nihilism, meditative thinking, dwelling, and “letting be” (*Gelassenheit*). Whatever else it was, the turn was a turn away from the kind of systematic discipline or “science” (*Wissenschaft*) customarily expounded in scholarly treatises like *Being and Time*, toward a more open-ended, exploratory, nontheoretical way of thinking and writing.

Today, more than eighty years after its publication, *Being and Time* repays careful study, not only for the insight it gives us into Heidegger’s intellectual

development, but in substantive philosophical currency as well. Heidegger radically changed our understanding of our place in the world, what a “world” is, what it means to be human, and what it means to think philosophically. Whatever its successes and failures, its triumphs and obscurities, the book stands as an enduring monument to one of the great achievements of late modern thought. It is and will likely remain, as the translators suggest, one of the most celebrated works of the twentieth century.

Taylor Carman  
New York City  
March 2008