

## HEIDEGGER'S CONTRIBUTION TO PHENOMENOLOGY AND EXISTENTIALIST ONTOLOGY

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### INTRODUCTION

This paper attempts to show that Heidegger adopts phenomenology to the needs of his quest for the problematic of the Being-question, most significantly exhibited the potentialities of Husserl's method, as relevant not only for laying open the realm of consciousness, but also as a means of disclosing Being in all its facticity and historicity. It lays bare the fact that the whole of *Being and Time* is a demonstration of phenomenology at work and that is a significant contribution of Martin Heidegger to Existentialist ontology.

Between 1912 and 1916 when Heidegger completed his doctoral studies, he was already very familiar with Edmund Husserl's phenomenology, especially his *Logical Investigations* (1900 – 1901) and his *Ideas* (1913). Heidegger met Husserl for the first time in 1916 when Husserl was appointed to the chair of philosophy at Freiburg and Heidegger was himself admitted to the same faculty as *privatdozent*. By 1919, after Heidegger returned to Freiburg, having done with military service, a closer link was formally established between the two men and Husserl exerted a great influence on the young Heidegger, that by 1920, Heidegger became his personal assistant. Heidegger had

great admiration for Husserl's phenomenology and he worked in close cooperation with Husserl until 1923 when he was appointed a professor at Marburg. During this period, Husserl's phenomenology continued to exert its influence on Heidegger, who cordially continued to work closely with Husserl, but gradually Heidegger's way of thinking began to diverge from Husserl's characteristic ideas to the degree that Heidegger started to develop his own brand of phenomenological philosophy.

With the publication of his first major work, *Being and Time* (1927), it became clear to Husserl that his former assistant had rejected many important ideas of his own philosophy and had developed completely certain new insights which in many respects contradicted the fundamental principles of his phenomenology. Heidegger had discovered that even though he had high regard for Husserl's *Logical Investigations* and the early phase of his phenomenology, he could not stomach Husserl's fundamental theses, especially as were developed in *Ideas* (1913), and other publications.

### ***BEING AND TIME AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS***

This was the situation one finds in his *Being and Time* and other publications immediately following this major work, where Heidegger rejected Husserl's method of phenomenological reductions as well as his view of the transcendental ego. Heidegger, by 1928 returned to Freiburg to occupy Husserl's position there, on the latter's recommendation at his retirement, even though he was highly disappointed that Heidegger refused to follow his transcendental method of philosophizing. Heidegger had already made his position clear in his *Being and Time* that Husserl's hope of ever winning him over once again to his transcendental idealism, would never materialize.

Heidegger subsequently stopped making any references to phenomenology out of respect for Husserl, who nevertheless saw what Heidegger was doing as not so different from philosophical anthropology, having substituted his pure and transcendental ego, with human existence which, of course, he thought was tinted with psychologism. Heidegger himself never saw it that way, for his main and singular interest was with deciphering the meaning of Being. As far as Heidegger was concerned the main stumbling blocks in Husserl's philosophy has to do with transcendental reduction – “the bracketing of Being”, the “reduction” of man to pure consciousness and lastly, in the “reduction” of Being into Being-object-for.<sup>1</sup> It is the attempt of this paper, therefore, to examine Martin Heidegger's position within the phenomenological movement and to delineate his contribution in developing a quite different realm of phenomenological method for existentialist ontology.

Heidegger, no doubt occupies an eminent position within the phenomenological movement. His approach to phenomenology was not only a landmark within that movement as a whole, but has greatly influenced the reinterpretation of Husserl's phenomenology, especially among the later French phenomenologists. In the context of his larger quest for a more fundamental ontology, Heidegger employed Husserl's phenomenology with great modifications, as a conceptual tool and a method which might lay bare the processes of Being in human existence in such a manner that Being and not simply one's own opinion, might come to light. Heidegger's stated primary interest philosophy right from the beginning in – *Being and Time* was to lay bare the problematic of the meaning of Being which for centuries had fallen into oblivion and lay hidden, almost – forgotten.

## WESTERN THOUGHT AND PHENOMENOLOGY

For Heidegger, the whole history of Western thought has shown an exclusive preoccupation with beings or objects that are, to the neglect of the Being-process through which these beings come to be what they are. To the ancient ontologists, the term “Being” appears to be the most general and empty of concepts and therefore the most abstract of terms, not very informative. But for Heidegger, Being is not an empty abstraction, but something in which Man (Dasein) is immersed through and through. Man’s ordinary life is informed, and has within its fold a pre-conceptual understanding of Being and it is this everyday understanding of Being that Heidegger is most interested in, as a philosopher. Being far from being the most remote and abstract of concepts, is the most – closest of presences. Being is the concern of every human being. It is there within everyone’s reach before thinking begins. But this does not imply that this pre-conceptual understanding of Being has been brought into the light. On the contrary, for centuries, Being laid in the dark, because for the most part, past philosophers did not raise questions about it.<sup>2</sup> The whole purpose of Heidegger’s thinking is to reawaken this question of the meaning of Being the very way it first confronted some of the early Greek thinkers, and to bring that meaning into the light.

Thus, the task of the philosopher as an ontologist is, for Heidegger, to exhibit the character and the universal structures of Being as they manifest themselves in the very way they are. This is the task of ontology – for it is “the task of ontology ... to explain Being itself and to make the Being of entities stand out in full relief” (BT: p.49, 27). The proper method for such an ontology which seeks to lay bare and explicate the meaning of Being is – descriptive phenomenology – which essentially is a methodological

conception. “Only as phenomenology”, Heidegger insists, “is ontology, possible” (BT: p.60, 35). Thus, for Heidegger, philosophy is to be viewed as phenomenological ontology. The phenomenological method of inquiry takes as its guiding principle the maxim – “to the things themselves”. This is in line with Husserl’s insistence that phenomenology must abandon all established theory, all traditional, prejudiced, and metaphysical speculations in order to have full access to a pure and primordial experience in which “things” present themselves to us in a genuinely original way.<sup>3</sup> For Husserl, phenomenology as a discipline has the task to describe what is genuinely given to us in experience without obscuring pre-conceptions and hypothetical speculations. Thus, rather than making intellectual speculations about what reality is all about, philosophy must embrace “pure description” of what is; hence, his motto: - “to the things themselves”.

Heidegger adopted this principle, but understood it in a quite different way from Husserl’s approach, as we shall see. He also insisted like Husserl, that only by adhering strictly to this phenomenological principle, can the ontologist be able to avoid: “all free – floating constructions and accidental findings; [or] taking over any conceptions which only seem to have been demonstrated; [as well as] those pseudo-questions which parade themselves as problems often for generations at a time” (BT: p.50, 28). The phenomenologist’s task, Heidegger insists, is simply to describe and analyze the phenomena, of our immediate experience, as they manifest themselves for what they are and how they are. For such an ontological analysis to remain faithful to phenomenological method, strict attention must be given to the original phenomena of human experience. Heidegger rejects in its entirety any rationalist metaphysical

speculation or *a priori* epistemological theory which focuses upon mental and cognitive processes to the neglect of the phenomena themselves.<sup>4</sup> The main objective of his phenomenological ontology is to go back to the original data of human experience and to provide a conceptual framework within which the constitutive universal elements of these data could be brought to light and made manifest for what they are. It is by paying close attention to and focusing only on the phenomena that the ontologist is liberated from any possible epistemological prejudgments and *a priori* limitations that could distort the original data or prevent their manifestation.<sup>5</sup> These phenomena of human experience, indeed, are always there, before any logical or epistemological theories are formulated.

Heidegger developed phenomenology in a new and radical way that phenomenology and phenomenological method take on a totally different character. As a philosopher, Heidegger had a passion for going back to the root of words, especially Greek words which are intrinsically philosophical in character, in order to dig out their hidden nuggets of meaning. He thought that by going back to the root of words, - we can rediscover certain truths which the Greeks themselves through the long history of their language, have either neglected or forgotten in their thinking. Thus, in redefining what phenomenology means, Heidegger went straight back to the Greek language from which the expression “phenomenology” was formulated. Only a clear examination and clarification of the constitutive elements which joined together to form the term “phenomenology” – can reveal insights into the workings of the phenomenological method.

For Heidegger, the expression “phenomenology” has two components: namely, “*phenomenon*” and “*logos*”; both of these, are taken from the Greek terms

“*phainomenon*” and “*logos*” which together make phenomenology to be understood as the science of phenomena (BT: p.50, 28). The Greek word “*phainomenon*” comes from the Greek verb, “*phainesthai*” literally meaning – that which shows itself, the manifest. The phenomenon then, is that which shows itself, or that which is manifest or can be brought to light. Phenomena (plural) are the collection of what can be brought to the light of day or what can be brought to light (BT: p.51, 29). In its original Greek sense, it is “*ta onta*” – (entities) the things that are or what is (singular). Thus, the phenomenon is that which shows or manifests itself in the way in which it is. It is in this sense that the term phenomenon is clearly distinguished from the term “appearance”. Phenomena are not simply appearances, but rather that which appears or that which shows itself. Appearances always refer to some phenomenon. Appearances are appearances of something namely – that which shows itself (BT: p.52, 29).

In defining the signification of the word “*logos*” which together with the word “*phainomenon*” make up what phenomenology is all about, Heidegger reminded us that Plato and Aristotle had already used the concept of *logos* in the context of meaning literally “discourse”, that is, in the context of statement or speech [*Rede*] (BT: p.55, 32). *Logos*, in this deeper sense of “discourse” (speech)<sup>6</sup> means exactly the same as the Greek word – “*deloun*” – meaning to make manifest what one is talking about in one’s discourse. The deeper sense of *logos* then, is itself, to let something appear. The *logos* let something be seen (*phainesthai*); that is, what the discourse is about and it does so either for the person doing the talking or for persons involved in the talking. The *logos* as discourse “opens to sight” or “lets something be seen” (*Apo*). And that which the discourse “opens to sight” is itself the phenomenon or that which shows itself

(*phainesthai*) in the light of day. *Logos* as speaking (speech) or discourse has the function of disclosing, that is, of letting something be seen, or bringing to manifestness, what a thing is; it brings it out of concealment into the light of day. Here the mind does not project meaning onto the phenomenon, but rather what appears is an ontological manifesting of the thing itself. Thus, *logos* as speaking is not really a power given to language by its users, but rather it is a power which language bestows on the speaker; a means of being seized by what is made manifest through the medium of language.

The combination of *phainesthai* and *logos*, then, as phenomenology means, letting things become manifest as what they are, without forcing our own categories on them. This indicates a reversal of direction from that, of which we have been accustomed to. Thus, it is not man who points to things but rather, it is the things which disclose and show themselves to us. In effect we are being led by the power of the things that manifest or show themselves for what they are. Phenomenology then is a means of being led by the phenomenon through a way of access genuinely belonging to the phenomenon. Of course, Heidegger is aware that a thing can be forced, through dogmatism, to be seen only in the desired way (BT: p.56f, 33). Therefore, allowing a thing to manifest itself for what it is now becomes a matter of learning to allow it to do so, for it lets itself to be seen as it is. This conception is in line with Husserl's avowed intention of always returning to things themselves. Phenomenological method is designed to go back to the original phenomena and to allow them to show themselves for what they are.

Thus, phenomenology provides the appropriate mode of access to what constitutes the legitimate theme of ontological inquiry, namely, - Being. With the use of the phenomenological method, Heidegger hoped to provide an accurate description of the

various structures of Being as they manifest themselves in the phenomena. Phenomenology thus, remains the only appropriate approach toward understanding Being, because, Being and its various structures are usually half – hidden, or covered – up or disguised, “the most dangerous of which ...are those ossified concepts within a system which claims to be crystal clear, self-evident, and requiring no further justification”<sup>7</sup>. It is in this sense that ontology is for Heidegger, phenomenological, for according to him, “only as phenomenology, is ontology possible. In the phenomenological conception of ‘phenomenon’ what one has in mind as that which shows itself is the Being of entities, its meaning, its modifications and derivatives” (BT: p.66, 35).

Heidegger’s phenomenological method, we must say, went beyond the boundaries of Husserlian phenomenology. Intricately woven around his phenomenological method is the notion of intentionality. Historically, this notion has its source and origin in Aristotle’s psychology, but it was Franz Brentano in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, whose interpretations, of Aristotle’s work on the subject, which introduced it into contemporary thought. Both Husserl and Heidegger came to an understanding of human experience from the role of intentionality in experience. Husserl in particular came to his notion of intentionality through the direct influence of Brentano, but he made important modifications in Brentano’s account of this notion which eventually enriched his own account of experience. Heidegger on his part went further back behind Brentano’s interpretations of Aristotle’s conception of intentionality and provided a radically new account of intentionality which upstaged the subjectivist tendencies implicit in both the

accounts of Brentano and Husserl. Before returning to Heidegger, let me give a sharp summary of Husserl's intentionality thesis and phenomenological investigation.

In Aristotelian philosophy, the term "intention" means the orientation of the mind toward its object and in union with this orientation this object begins to exist in an individual's mind in an intentional manner. For Brentano, this feature of directedness became one of the characteristics of all psychical activities. According to Brentano, every psychical phenomenon is characterized by the "intentional inexistence" of an object. Husserl objected against Brentano's conception of the immanence of the intentional object to consciousness. Husserl, however, agreed that it is characteristic for an act of consciousness to direct itself intentionally toward an object, but this object is not itself immanent to consciousness, it remains transcendent. Thus, the fact that all consciousness is consciousness of something, that all consciousness is intentional, became for Husserl, one of the building blocks of his philosophy.

One need not be a phenomenologist to realize that any act of consciousness, whether in the form of perception, imagination, memory, or desire, is itself given as it is in its manifestness to consciousness, in such a manner that the subject of the act in its various modes cannot doubt the Being of such act. This was what Husserl discerned from Descartes' "cogito" which disclosed to him not the existence of a substantial subject, but only the cogito itself, with whatever is immanent in it.<sup>8</sup> Thus; the basic discovery of modern philosophy is the Cartesian "cogito". No object can be given without the light of the cogito or consciousness. The cogito is the basic certainty of knowledge, and all certainty about other objects is to be measured from the inner certainty of the cogito. The certainty of the cogito is the criterion for all other certainty.

According to Husserl, Descartes failed, however, to realize that within the cogito itself, the object is already given with the same immediacy and certainty as is the cogito itself. The cogito is an absolute and indubitable datum and so is its cogitatum, provided that this object is taken as it immediately manifests itself to consciousness.<sup>9</sup> Thus, the being of an object as cogitatum is its true-being, such, that in the intentionality of consciousness – an object is absolutely given (as an object in an intentional way) with evidential intuition. For Husserl, this remains the basis of truth, for truth is what is evident, to pure consciousness – that is, to a transcendental consciousness which is the basis of the universality and objectivity of any truth.

Husserl in his systematic treatment of phenomenology had hoped to develop a kind of philosophy which will not leave anything unresolved; he wanted to reduce everything to primary presuppositions that would not require any clarifications because of their being immediately self-evident. In respect of this, he devised series of methods through which he hoped to develop his “philosophy as a rigorous science” of the world. Husserl wanted to develop a critical philosophy based on a rational theory of knowledge which will deal mainly with the essential structures of the “pure” experiences and their meanings. In this regard, there will be no need of statements referring to real existence and no use can be made of propositions drawn from metaphysical speculations, or natural sciences, most especially psychology.<sup>10</sup> This method was extended to include, such reductions like phenomenological and transcendental *epoche*, through which not only the existence of the objects considered, but the whole world is to be put into bracket, including the existence of my own individual consciousness, - the empirical concrete ego.

Through these reductions, the data in naïve consciousness, according to Husserl, become “transcendental phenomena” in “pure” consciousness. In these reductions, all existential judgments concerning the things in space and time which I assume to be “out there” – are all suspended or bracketed. This world which is now suspended is the world to which I myself belong, together with all others. The essence of the so-called “natural stand-point is that it takes the presence and the existence of the world for granted. Even in the natural sciences, the existence of the world is taken for granted. Thus, the task of philosophy then becomes, for Husserl, the clarification of consciousness and of all forms of objectivity which are investigated phenomenologically; and its procedure is supposed to be radical in approach because no reference can be made to real existence of the data under investigation. This is made possible by essential intuition, in which essences are grasped without referring to any existence.<sup>11</sup> In sum; we can talk of a “reality of objects” only as a correlate of an intentional consciousness. Therefore, in order to describe what is basic to our relationship with the world, we have to put aside our natural stand-point, Husserl claims, and radically alter our attitude by disconnecting the thesis of the natural stand-point; that is, we must refrain from making any judgment about the “things out there” in space and time. We must turn our back on every established scientific theory, on all traditional, prejudiced and “metaphysical” views in order to have full and unbiased access to a pure and primordial experience in which the phenomena present themselves to us in a genuinely original experience.<sup>12</sup> In this way, the

data of consciousness become the transcendental phenomena in pure (transcendental) consciousness.

Then it becomes possible to investigate the pure noetical – noematic structures of experience which lay at the basis of the being of the world as a being – for – consciousness. Husserl thought that these structures are obscured from view in the world of the natural stand-point. Thus, Husserl's phenomenology becomes a new theory; a fundamental philosophical discipline, which cannot be separated from his metaphysical theory of consciousness which shows itself in the context of reduction. For the method of reduction is more than a method for discovering what is basic for our relation with the world; what is basic manifests itself as being an autonomous, non-worldly realm of conscious-being, reached in and through reduction. The effect of the reduction is the establishment of the transcendental consciousness, transcendental subjectivity, which is neither mine nor yours (unknown to the natural attitude), as a phenomenological and metaphysical ultimate, which cannot be bracketed, because everything else depends on its existence for its givenness. For it is from here that the world can be described in all its essential aspects; that is, the transcendental structure of the world can be made intelligible only from the standpoint of transcendental subjectivity. This is the kernel of Husserl's transcendental idealism. In sum, everything now becomes the constructions of and for transcendental subjectivity; the whole of reality becomes a mere product of the transcendental ego's activity. Phenomenology in the final analysis becomes a self – description of one's own ego taken as subject of all possible knowledge.

Heidegger followed Husserl in stressing the notion of intentionality as a fundamental presupposition of the phenomenological method; this, perhaps, might be

considered as his greatest debt to Husserl, but he differed widely in his understanding of how intentionality properly functions in human experience. Whereas, Husserl's notion of intentionality provides him with the general epistemological and metaphysical framework for analysis of experience, Heidegger on his part, sees intentional structures pervading and functioning not only in the realm of consciousness with regards to Man's cognitive and theoretical relation to his world, but also in the whole realm of Man's pre-cognitive awareness. Heidegger sees intentionality as a relation to that "which is", as a relation to the world. This is directly evident from his description of Man (Dasein) as Being-in-the-world (BT: p.78f, 53). One can see here the reason why Heidegger's intentional analysis refuses to follow Husserl's form of constitutive analysis, and why he rejected Husserl's phenomenological or transcendental reduction, together with a transcendental subjectivity, the theory of transcendental ego, which treats the object as no more than immanent to consciousness. According to Heidegger, "the idea of a subject which has intentional experiences merely inside its own sphere and is not yet outside it but encapsulated within itself is an absurdity which misconstrues the basic ontological structure of the being that we ourselves are".<sup>13</sup> This criticism of Heidegger shows that Husserl's method can hardly take note of Dasein's original experience of itself as Being-in-the-world. It shows that Husserl is still very much steeped in the Cartesian tradition in which one may toy with the doubt of the external world by clinging only to the representation of the object in the representing unworldly transcendental ego. Heidegger by passed this gulf by replacing the idealized subject of Husserl's intentionality with the factual concretely human existence.

“Existence” as Heidegger conceives it, belongs exclusively to Man (Dasein). It belongs to Man essentially “to exist” (BT: p.67, 42). Man is that entity which is both ontically and ontologically distinct from all other entities, by the fact that constitutionally – in his very Being – this Being is always already an issue for him (BT: p.32, 12; p.67, 42). This implies that essentially, Man has a close relationship towards his own Being, and that is the way Man has been fashioned. Man has a pre-conceptual awareness that in some way “he is” and does so explicitly. “It is peculiar to this entity (Man) that with and through its Being, this Being is disclosed to it” (BT: p.32, 12). Before any cognitive reflection begins, Man already has a pre-ontological awareness through which he understands himself as fundamentally related to his world and to entities discoverable within this world. Man as such ‘intends’ his world not just in perceiving and judging but equally in his everyday dealings and practical preoccupations with things and his encounter with other people implicated alongside his world. Thus, because Man is always already “outside” existing alongside entities he encounters and which belong to an already discovered world, his Being is (essentially) both ontically and ontologically that of “concern” (BT: p. 84, 57). In other words, existence from the beginning is irretrievably Being-in-the-world, and can only be viewed as such; and Being-in-the-world, in its turn, implies from the beginning, Being-with-other-entities and with-other-people.

Thus, the question which has teased modern philosophers ever since Descartes, concerning the existence of the external world beyond the ideas of my thinking ego does not arise for Heidegger.<sup>14</sup> Before this question is even raised, there is already a pre-ontological disclosure of Man’s relation to his world. Man is never isolated,

encapsulated in his Being. He is always already given alongside his world, fully engaged and dwelling there. The mistake Descartes made was in failing to understand the meaning of the Being of the 'I am' (*Sum*) which is presupposed by the 'I think' (*cogito*). "With the 'cogito sum', Descartes had claimed that he was putting philosophy on a new and firm footing. But what he left undetermined when he began in his 'radical' way, was the kind of Being which belongs to the *res cogitans*, or more precisely – the meaning of the Being of the 'sum'"(BT: p.46, 24). Thus, for Heidegger, what is basic is not the thinking-subject or the Cartesian cogito, but the actual fact that 'I am' (*sum*), that is, that 'I exist'. The act of existing in the world is what is primarily given before any questions are raised, before reflections commence, and before any sort of inquiry into the nature of knowledge begins. "Ontically as well as ontologically, the priority belongs to Being-in-the-world as concern" (BT: p.85, 58).

Thus, 'knowing' in the epistemological sense is not what is primarily indicated in Man's first encounter with entities in his world; 'knowing' in the theoretical sense is rather predicted upon and is derivative from Man's pre-ontological awareness of his existence. Heidegger rejects entirely the subject-object dichotomy that has plagued modern philosophical thinking since Descartes. His criticism of this dichotomy is that subject and object "do not coincide with Dasein and the world" (BT: p.87, 60). Man, for Heidegger, is not a subject in the sense of an ego or consciousness enclosed inside his own skin which then gets to know the object 'out there' somehow from his inner sphere through contemplation. For him, Man is defined as "Being-in-the-world"; Man as such and his world are both inseparable and are defined as the same phenomenon. "The compound expression 'Being-in-the-world' indicates in the very way we have coined it,

that it stands for a *unitary* phenomenon. This primary datum must be seen as a whole” (BT: p.78, 53). Therefore it makes no sense to raise the question how Man (Dasein) could leap beyond himself to grasp the world out there; Man is already ‘outside’ alongside the entity to be known, and is there as a Being-in-the-world which knows (BT: p.89, 62). This sort of knowing is not yet theoretical knowing which only arises later in Man’s experience and is itself founded upon Man’s original awareness of Being-with and having a world. It is rather a kind of knowing which first manipulates things and put them to use concernfully (BT: p.95, 67). It is in this respect that Man is primordially an entity intentionally related to his world in his daily pre-theoretical preoccupations and concerns. In all of Man’s practical behaviours and concerns a world is presupposed. Man finds himself existing in the world to which he is related in any or several of the manifestations of ‘Care’ – which is a generalized structure of the concern (BT: p.157, 121; p.84, 57). Man’s relationship to the world is thus fundamentally practical with intentional dimensions, for example, in raising of shelter and using of tools, in undertaking and accomplishing projects and in his encounter and dealings with other beings like himself.

Now what makes Heidegger’s phenomenological ontology quite distinctive is the fact that it is ontology of human existence. As such it has often been referred to as existentialist ontology and its starting point is a hermeneutics of the concrete experience of the historically existing self. As a phenomenological ontology it is not an elucidation of some personal “standpoint” or “private opinion”, but is rather an attempt to exhibit all the basic universal structures of human existence as they phenomenally manifest

themselves in concrete acts of existing. Man (Dasein) is the central theme of this existentialist ontology and is described by Heidegger as that special entity which is “ontologico-ontically distinctive” (BT: p.61, 37), through whom by way of interpretation we can “arrive at the horizon for the understanding of Being and for the possibility of interpreting it” (BT: p.63, 39). Man in his concrete historical existence is the “field”, the “clearing”, in which the meaning of Being becomes visible in the light or hidden in the dark (BT: p.171, 133). As an entity, Man is through and through in himself historical. According to Heidegger, “...this very entity, Dasein, is in itself ‘historical’, so that its ownmost ontological elucidation necessarily becomes a ‘historical’ Interpretation” (BT: p.63, 39). Hence, historical existence itself becomes the subject-matter of a hermeneutical Interpretation and phenomenological description (BT: p.62, 38). This means that ontology must as phenomenology of Being become a hermeneutic of existence, and must lay open the mood and direction of human existence and make accessible the concealed structures of Being-in-the-world in general.

Heidegger, thus linked up phenomenological description with historical or hermeneutical Interpretation, such that his phenomenology and phenomenological method take on a radically different character. His kind of phenomenology now becomes hermeneutical-phenomenology which is historical in character and approach, a kind of creative recovery of the past, and a form of interpretation rooted in an analytic of human existence from “where it arises and to which it returns” (BT: p.62, 38). In a letter which Heidegger wrote to W.J. Richardson in 1962 which later serves as a Preface to *Through Phenomenology to Thought*, he asserted that “phenomenology” in Husserl’s sense only elaborated “a pattern set by Descartes, Kant, and Fichte. The historicity of thought

remained completely foreign to such a position”.<sup>15</sup> He felt that his phenomenological analysis in *Being and Time*, “materially justified holding fast to the principle of phenomenology”.<sup>16</sup> In respect of this, phenomenology still remains relevant not only for laying open of consciousness as Husserl uses it, but also constitutes a means of disclosing Being, in all its facticity and historicity.<sup>17</sup>

Thus, what is essential in ‘phenomenology’ is not its actuality as a philosophical movement, but rather its ‘possibility’. Heidegger is here rating ‘possibility’ higher than ‘actuality’ for phenomenology as such can only be understood “by seizing upon it as a possibility” (BT: p.62, 38). For him, the meaning of phenomenological description as a method lies in hermeneutical or historical interpretation of human existence. Philosophically, this lays open the basic structures of possibility for human existence and in this respect it is an analysis of the existentiality of existence, that is, of Man’s authentic possibilities for Being. This is the primary ontological function of hermeneutical phenomenology. Human existence as Heidegger conceives it, is primarily historical in character, and has as its foundation temporality as the existential meaning of the Being of care. As a historical Being, Man is always emerging out of what has been (past), while anticipating what is forthcoming (in the future) and deciding in the vision of what is now present. Man’s existence is stretched along over the past, present, and future. Historicity and temporality constitute the very essence of his Being (BT: p.434, 382f).

By stressing the historicity of human existence, Heidegger is directly in line with Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) the acknowledged founding father of the contemporary hermeneutical ‘problematic’, who gave the initial impetus to the modern interest in historicity. One of the consequences of historicity in Dilthey is that Man

cannot escape from history, because he is what he is in and through history. Man understands himself only through objectifications of life, and not through introspection. Man, for Dilthey, has no determinate nature or fixed essence and what man is, only history can reveal to him. In other words, Man's self-understanding of himself is never direct but only indirect through constant and creative interpretation of the past. In this regard, Man for Dilthey is a hermeneutical animal, whose self understanding of himself lies in interpreting a heritage and shared world passed on from the past – a heritage that is constantly present and active in all his actions, decisions, and choices. Dilthey was not an existentialist but his thinking greatly affected many contemporary existentialist writers on historicity of human existence. Heidegger himself acknowledged his indebtedness to Dilthey on this subject (BT: p.449, 397), but he went far beyond Dilthey by providing his historical theory with an ontological structure that surpassed and overcame the historical relativism which Dilthey never succeeded in eradicating from his historical theory.

In Heidegger's existentialist ontology, the primary structures or the universal structures which determine Man's existence are – care, anxiety, Being-towards-death, alienation or estrangement, guilt and resoluteness. These are the structures of existence that define Man's radical finitude. Heidegger calls these structures of existence, "existentialia" (BT: p.70, 44). As Calvin Schrag rightly puts it, these existentialia, are for Heidegger, "the elements of structure of existence which are implied in the concrete act of existing itself".<sup>18</sup> According to Schrag, these existentialia are universals 'read off' or 'read out' of Man's concrete historical and ontical situation. As such, they are the ontological elements of the structure which makes human existence what it is. Heidegger

is insistence that these existentialia must be distinguished from the traditional categories of Being, such as – substance, quality, quantity, space, time etc – which only are basic to all physical or non-human entities. Man's existence cannot be understood in terms of a physical thing and therefore cannot be characterized in terms of categories that derived from things of nature.<sup>19</sup> The historical character of Man's existence prohibit any application of such categories derived from non-human things or objects. Existentialia are therefore to be sharply distinguished from categories which only apply to non-human modes of Being.

Part of Heidegger's contention in his criticism of ancient (traditional) ontology is its failure to make clear certain fundamental distinction between concepts (existentialia) which are applicable only to human existence and concepts (categories) setting out the most basic sort of ways that objects or things of nature can be. Traditional ontologists failed because without regard to the distinctive character of Man's existence, they applied the same categorical concepts to every sort of entity, including man, thus such reductionism only succeeded in bringing Man's existence to the mode of presence-at-hand, and in this respect Man is seen as no more than one more object among other objects, as a thing among other things, or as a substance among other substances. They failed to notice that which makes Man's existence quite distinctive among other entities, that is, his personal freedom, his uniqueness, his futurity and above all his historicity. It is precisely on the basis of these distinctive features of human existence, that an existentialist ontology, as explored by Heidegger, would require historical concepts rather than the traditional categories. Man is neither a thing nor a substance. Nor is Man an entity isolated in his being, but is rather an entity that "stands out" and is projected into

his own most possibilities of historical becoming. In this respect, Man's existence is ecstatic and projective.

Existence means to "stand out" and to be "projected into one's own most possibilities of actualization. Thus, "existentialia" are the very ontological structures which constitute the necessary condition for human existence. As the ontological structures of existentiality, these existentialia are *a priori* in the sense that they are ingredients or rather indispensable elements presupposed in concrete existence itself, whether this is in the mode of authenticity or inauthenticity. They can also be said to be transcendental. According to Heidegger, "Being and the structure of Being lie beyond every entity and every possible character which an entity may possess. *Being is the transcends pure and simple*" (BT: p.62, 38). On this ground too, every disclosure of Being as *transcendens* is for Heidegger, transcendental knowledge. For him phenomenological truth, that is, the disclosure of Being is both descriptive as well as transcendental and in this regard, he shares the same aspiration with the central tradition of transcendental philosophy represented mainly by Kant and Husserl in particular.<sup>20</sup>

Whereas Husserl in his transcendental philosophy was interested mainly in the investigation of "pure essences" alone which are "pure generalities" arrived at via his *eidetic* reductions, and by his phenomenological reductions – the suspension or bracketing in a radical way the whole world of natural experience together with all the theories and sciences associated with it, Heidegger on his part, insists that it is precisely this bracketed world of natural experience, which phenomenology has to describe and subject to a fundamental ontological analysis. Husserl's phenomenology then is more oriented towards a science which investigates "essences" alone and is unconcerned with

the investigation of existence as such. Heidegger's phenomenology consistently remains a fundamental ontology of existence, and is aimed at uncovering the ontological elements present in the very structures of existence, that is, elements which are universal and transcendental.

These ontological elements of the structures of existence are different from Husserl's "essences" for the simple fact that they are ingrained in Man's concrete experience and can be "read off" as it were, from this actual experience as the very conditions which are applicable to human mode of Being and only to this mode of Being. They also differ from the "essences" in the sense that like the "essences" which are universal, they are equally universal but their universality are present in the process of actualization itself and can be discerned from this actualization.<sup>21</sup> Whereas Husserlian "essences" are mere potentials which may or may not become actualizations, the ontological structures partake in the concrete actuality of existence and are inherent in that actuality.

Heidegger's ontology of human existence is very rich and complex. His analysis and description of Man's concrete experience reveals several ontological elements of the structure which makes this concrete experience what it is and makes possible its conceptual clarification. "Care" for instance, is one such ontological structure present in the actualization which constitutes Man's concrete experience. Heidegger thinks of care as the simplified single unifying ontological concept in the light of which all other structures of human existence become intelligible. Thus, all other structures of human existence are introduced as structures of care. Care lies at the very root of Man's Being. Indeed, in his first definition of care, Heidegger states that: "the Being of Dasein means

ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in-(the-world) as Being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-world)” (BT: p.237, 192). Care constitutes the Being of Man; without care, there is no Man. Care is manifest in all modes of human existence. Man as an entity for whom in his very Being, that Being is an issue, has an understanding of his Being and in his actual existence sees himself as that entity who is concerned or who cares for his Being. Care is “*concern*” in Man’s everyday practical dealings with tools and equipment and is “*solicitude*” in his dealings with others like himself in the world. Care is indeed a complex phenomenon, and according to Heidegger, it embraces the unity of the three structural moments in which Being may be characterized: namely, *Facticity*, *Existentiality*, and *Fallenness*, each of which has a temporal character of past, future, and present.

Now, *Facticity* has to do with Man’s already ‘given’ situation – that is, the fact that Man is ‘thrown’ into the world to device ways of his Being. This is the direct consequence of Man’s Being-in-the-world. It is not as a result of his own potentiality for his Being. *Existentiality* is primarily the projection of possibilities into his future and existing-ahead-of-himself. This means that Man always already exists in advance of himself through projection of his potentialities for Being. Man is always already in the world existing ahead of himself in such a manner that he can through his memory recall the past that has been through along with him, into the present or through anticipation and imagination can project himself from the present into the future which is yet to arrive. *Fallenness* – describes Man’s tendency to loss himself and fall captive to the world, in this regard, Man experiences himself as not-at-home-in-the-world, yet he is essentially nothing but Being-in-the-world. This falling away from oneself is the same as falling a

victim to the 'they'. This is failure to recognize one's various possibilities of authentic existence. Fallenness is as a result on the part of Man not to recognize his authentic potentialities. For Heidegger, Man in his everyday mode of existing always is in a state of Fallenness in that in most cases, Man is so much engaged in his average everyday preoccupations and concerns that often he is so absorbed as to spare little time to reflect on his existence. This fallen neglect of existence ultimately heralds inauthentic existence.

According to Heidegger, there are just two modes of human existence, apart from "undifferentiated" mode by which Man can relate himself to himself, namely: *authenticity* and *inauthenticity*. Heidegger insists that both authenticity and inauthenticity are ontologically fundamental to human existence (BT: p.78, 53). They are both existentialia. Authenticity develops from an adequate understanding of Man's *Existence, Facticity, and Fallenness*. Inauthenticity stems from neglect of existence and wallowing in Fallenness. For Heidegger, every human existence is structured by this tendency towards Fallenness, but the ideal goal which must be striven for, is authentic existence through recognition of what Man "is" in his very Being, and acting in the light of this recognition (BT: p.68, 42). Authentic existence is characterized by Man's three fundamental modes of comportment towards the world namely, the "discovery of himself" as already Being-in-the-world; this is Man's recognition of his facticity disclosed to him undisguisedly with his moods. "Understanding" is next, and which, like we said, is the projection of possibility with respect to his attitudes and projects towards the world in which he discovered himself, and finally, "discourse" or "language".

This last mode refers to Man's capacity to articulate what '*turning-in*' and understanding disclose to him. It is in this respect that ontology for Heidegger is also

concerned with the study of language, since it is very essential for Man to articulate through language whatever is disclosed to him in understanding of Being. These three fundamental modes of authentic existence also have opposed or counter characteristics in inauthentic mode of existence. In inauthentic existence, Man does not recognize himself as already Being-in-the-world, but finds himself in a state of *Ambiguity* (BT: p.217, 173), captured as it were, in the giddiness of everyday meaningless preoccupations. In such an inauthentic existence, Understanding is not properly functional, in that the inauthentic Man fails to distinguish between what he understands and what the public 'they' have surmised (BT: p.218, 174). Thus, understanding degenerates to the level of *curiosity*. At this level of inauthentic existence, the curious Man fails to ask himself some fundamental questions regarding his very existence, but rather he allows himself to be carried away merely by the looks of how the world seems to him (BT: p.216, 172). What makes the curious Man inauthentic is that he will never pursue a problem in order to understand how it affects his very existence, that is, how the issues of the problem relate to his Being, but just for the fun of it or for casual knowing alone.

Thus, 'discourse' which for the authentic Man is the ability to articulate his understanding of Being, can never function for the inauthentic Man the same way, for his understanding has been greatly distracted by his curiosity (BT: p.216, 172). Instead, *idle-talk* takes over and closes off his understanding and covers up the entities within the world (BT: p.213, 169). Heidegger recognizes that Man has no fixed universal essence or nature, but as an entity in whose Being, this Being is always an issue for him, the Being of Man is always a possibility, with existential structures that are also possibilities, by which he can choose himself and actualize and win himself authentically or neglect to

choose himself and thus fail to actualize and therefore, lose himself. Like we already mentioned, authentic existence is the recognition by Man to stand up to his responsibility and make the right choices concerning the mode of his existence and inauthentic life is the refusal to make such responsible choices in preference to following blindly the life of the public 'they' which, all things considered, is life of Fallenness. Heidegger strongly believes that existing in the state of Fallenness is below the level of existence to which it is possible for Man to attain. And as long as Man remains on this level of the public existence of the 'they', Man remains tranquillized and would fail to attain his true and authentic Self. It is on this level of Fallenness that '*anxiety*' sets in, (though for Heidegger, it is a rare phenomenon) as Man discovers that he cannot find his lost 'Self' in the world of the public 'they' into which he had escaped and he is thrown back upon himself in his unique freedom and possibility (BT: p.232, 188f). Anxiety brings inauthentic man out of these false securities of the public 'they' and he is made to feel uncanny and 'not at home'. In anxiety, Man feels uncanny. It confronts Man with his responsibility, and the call to commit himself to his authentic Being. It is through this encounter with anxiety that in most cases, Man is rescued out of falling and turned away from it, and the "'not-at-home' gets dimmed down" (BT: p.234, 189).

Heidegger thinks that ultimately, it is what he calls '*conscience*', which finally summons Man out and discloses to him his ownmost potentiality for Being. Conscience calls Man "forth (and forward) into (his) ownmost possibilities, as a summons to (his) potentiality-for-Being himself" (BT: p.318, 273). It lets Man know that he no longer can continue to hide behind the world of the public 'they' and that he is responsible for his own existence. It summons the lost Self back to his thrownness and forth into existence,

that is, back to the sort of understanding that projects him into peculiar possibilities of his own future. It is conscience as a manifestation of the call of 'care' which ultimately lures Man to *resoluteness* toward authentic existence.

Heidegger reserves the term "resoluteness" for Man's authentic Being-in-the-world. It is the resolve to take up the responsibility to be one's authentic self (as thrown, existing, falling, and Being-guilty) by setting aside the lure of the public 'they' and to face the burden of one's authentic potentiality-for-Being. Now, since 'care' constitutes the unity of Man's structural whole and 'ahead-of-itself (projecting) is essentially a constituent of care, Man cannot exist without being-ahead-of-himself. At each moment of his existence, Man is always what he is not yet; there are always potentialities-for-Being that are yet to be actualized. In other words, there is in Man as long as he exists 'something still outstanding', something which has not yet been actualized. If we can come upon a situation in which Man (Dasein) can exist with nothing 'outstanding', with nothing 'ahead-of-him to be actualized, then we have come upon an impossible possibility, in that, as soon as Man exists in such a situation that absolutely nothing is still outstanding in it, then Man (Dasein) for that very reason ceases to be the "there". Once the 'ahead-of-itself' is liquidated, the Being of Man is annihilated (BT: p.280, 236). Thus as long as Man exists, he will never have reached his wholeness of Being; and the gain of wholeness comes with the loss of Being-in-the-world. The constant 'lack of totality' in Man comes to an abrupt end in the event of death which is the 'not yet' actualized something, - the 'still outstanding', - which has the character of something towards which Man comports himself. It is death that brings Man to his wholeness of Being. But as the end of Man, death is something quite peculiar. It is something that stands before Man,

something distinctively impending, in that, it is a possibility of Being that Man himself has taken over in his own potentiality-for-Being. Factually, Man in his thrownness, is his own possibilities. Man's Being-in-the-world, is at stake because "death reveals itself as that possibility which is one's ownmost, which is non-relational, and which is not to be outstripped" (BT: p.294, 251). This is not one of the possibilities that Man can manoeuvre nor have a choice. Man ultimately must face his own death, and none can die his death, for him. In this respect, Man's Being is a Being-towards-death. Man's thrownness into death reveals itself to Man in the mood of anxiety. Anxiety in the face of impending death discloses Man's existence (whether in the mode of authenticity or inauthenticity) as thrown Being-towards-death. Being-towards-death is one of Man's ontological structures grounded in care (BT: p.296, 252).

For Heidegger, authentic Being-towards-death is achieved by comporting oneself towards death in such a way that in this Being and for him, death reveals itself as a possibility. This is called "*anticipation of this possibility.*" This authentic anticipation of death, is close to *resoluteness*, because like the latter, it is a mode of understanding, in it anxiety is displayed by which Man comes face to face with his finitude and which reveals to Man his lostness in the 'they-self' and individualizes him and brings him closer to a possibility that belongs to him alone: namely, that he must die some day. Thus, in anticipation of death, Man authentically understands himself as a finite, limited whole. In anticipation Man guards himself against relapsing back to Fallenness of the deceitful 'they-self' or behind the potentiality-for-Being which he has come to terms with. Anticipation salvages Man from the bondage of the 'they' and lunches him into the truth as freed to become himself a whole-Being-towards-death. Thus, in anticipation, Man

authentically understands and does not flee from his Being-towards-death. In listening to the call of conscience, Man resolutely sets aside the lure of the 'they' world and takes up the responsibility of his ownmost potentiality-for-Being-himself. When he understands himself as a Being-towards-death, his potentiality-for-Being becomes authentic and wholly transparent (BT: p.354, 307). Hence, in *anticipatory-resoluteness*, Man comes finally and authentically to himself. Heidegger envisages this phenomenon as a thing of joy, for according to him, "Along with the sober anxiety which brings us face to face with our individualized potentiality-for-Being, there goes an unshakable joy in this possibility", in that, it liberates Man and frees him from slavish entanglements to the petty cares that often threaten to engulf his life and so opens up for him the essential projects through which he can realize his life personally and authentically as his own.

Thus, For Heidegger, Man becomes essentially his very Self in that authentic existence which constitutes itself as anticipatory resoluteness. As a mode of care, such resoluteness shows Man's primordial Self-constancy and totality (BT: p.370, 324). The questions that could be asked here are these: How can Man exist as anticipatory resoluteness? What is the transcendental condition, that is, the condition of the possibility of Man in his authentic unified totality? The answers to these questions will clarify the meaning of authentic care. Anticipatory resoluteness considered primarily, that is, without characterizing its full structural content – is "Being-towards one's ownmost, distinctive potentiality-for-Being (BT: p.372, 325). Anticipatory resoluteness, as authentic care, manifests itself primarily in its existential projective character. This is made possible by the fact that Man (Dasein) exists – that is, that Man stands in his ownmost possibility, and thus lets himself come towards himself. Anticipatory

resoluteness is possible in that Man himself, in his very Being is – futural; in that, he comes towards himself in that projecting of possibilities that define his existence. “This letting-itself-come-towards-itself in that distinctive possibility which it puts up with is the primordial phenomenon of the future as coming towards” (BT: p.372, 325). Man is always ahead-of-himself-in-time.

Man is essentially a Being-towards-death, whether in the mode of authenticity or inauthenticity; and this is possible only as something “futural”. As authentic Being-towards-death, anticipation makes Man “authentically futural, and in such a way that the anticipation itself is possible only in so far as Dasein (Man), as being, is always coming towards itself – that is ... in so far as it is futural in its Being in general” (BT: p.373, 325). In his Being-towards his ownmost potentiality-for-Being, anticipatory resoluteness takes over his own essential Being-guilty. Man takes over his facticity – and makes his thrownness his own by taking charge, as it were, of his own responsibility. To take over thrownness means to be himself authentically as he already was. What the possibilities are would depend on what one has ‘been’. Man can only project himself authentically into the future by coming back to himself as ‘having been’ something. Thus, when Man anticipates his ownmost possibility, he is coming back understandingly to his ownmost ‘been’ or thrownness. “Only so far as it is futural can Dasein (Man) be authentically as having-been. The character of ‘having been’ arises in a certain way, from the future” (BT: p.373, 326). Anticipatory resoluteness finally discloses the current situation of the Man. The authentic Man resolutely takes action in the light of an attuned understanding of his potentialities and his having been. He encounters what has presence by making present the entities that define his situation and circumspectively dealing with them.

“Only as the present ...in the sense of making present, can resoluteness be what it is: namely letting itself be encountered undisguisedly by that which it seizes upon in taking action” (BT: p.374, 326).

Heidegger summarizes this ontological interpretation of the phenomenon of temporality as follows: “Coming back to itself futurally, resoluteness brings itself into the situation by making present. The character of ‘having been’ arises from the future, and in such a way that the future which ‘has been’ (or better which ‘is in the process of having been’) releases from itself the Present. This phenomenon has the unity of a future which makes present in the process of having been; we designate it as ‘*temporality*’. Only in so far as Dasein has the definite character of temporality, is the authentic potentiality-for-Being-a-whole of anticipatory resoluteness ... made possible for Dasein itself. *Temporality reveals itself as the meaning of authentic care*” (BT: p.374, 326). Thus, ‘care’ becomes intelligible only in the structure of temporality. Temporality involves projecting into the future, coming back to one’s past and making present. Heidegger gives priority to the future, because according to him, the future is primary as the region towards which Man projects and in which he defines his own potentialities-for-Being. Man always looks forward; towards the open region of the future and by so doing he takes upon himself the burden of the past and thereby aligns himself in a certain way to his present and current situation in life.

In sum, temporality is the most fundamental structure of Man’s Being. Man is essentially temporal and essentially finite, since the authentic Man looks forward to his end in death. Time in the sense of existential temporality is the framework within which care is possible. This framework of temporality defines the horizon of human existence.

Everything that goes to make up human existence is to be viewed in the light of Man's temporality: namely, in terms of future, past and present. These are the three tenses of time – future, past and present – which Heidegger calls the *ecstasies* of temporality (BT: p.377, 329). Here the future takes priority as we already mentioned for “the primary phenomenon of primordial and authentic temporality is the future” (BT: p.378, 330).

For Heidegger, time also reveals itself as being essentially historical. Man, as we have seen, is for Heidegger, historical in his very Being. In his treatment of ‘Time and History’, Heidegger identifies Man as historical because Man constitutes history and this has its grounds in temporality. Man exists historically and does so only because the innermost foundation of his existence lies in temporality. Man between birth and death, “stretches himself along” (BT: p.427, 375). At every moment of his existence, Man is not just what he has been then, but is always what he has been and what he will become. This movement in which Man “is stretched along and stretches (himself) along”, is what Heidegger calls “*historizing*.” It is by laying bare the structure of *historizing* and the existential – temporal conditions of its possibility, that we can gain an ontological understanding of ‘historicality’.

For Heidegger, the expression ‘history’ in the ordinary understanding has several significations (cf. BT: p.430, 378ff).<sup>22</sup> But all these significations are somehow connected, unified, and centered around the ‘*historizing*’ of some existing entity – Man as the ‘subject’ of events, and all are closely tied up with ‘time’, with a priority for the ‘past’. These insights could well serve as a starting point to prepare the way for interpreting the basic constitution of historicality. Heidegger gives as examples, the ‘antiquities’ that are preserved in the museums, which are called ‘historical’. These

events are 'past'. Still today they exert their influence around us as present-at-hand, but once they belonged to a world within which they formed part of a context of equipment and were ready-to-hand for a concernfully Man, who was-in-the-world. Although that world has gone and is no longer, what was within-the-world then, is still present-at-hand. The historical character of these antiquities, according to Heidegger, "is grounded in the past of that Dasein (Man) to whose world they belonged" (BT: p.432, 380). But for Heidegger Man can never be 'past', not because he is not subject to transition, but rather because, essentially, he can never be present-at-hand. If Man is, he exists. A Man that no longer exists is not 'past' in the strict ontological sense, but rather, he is as "having-been-there" (BT: p.432, 381).

Thus, for Heidegger, the events as equipment still present-at-hand have a character of the 'past' and of history in that they belonged to the world that has been, that is, the world of a Man or Men that "have-been-there" and are coming from that world. They share in Man's history and this is what makes the events as equipment historical. Equipment is called historical by reason of the fact that it belongs to the world that makes up an ontological attribute of Man. In this respect, it is Man that is primarily historical and that which is secondarily historical is whatever Man encounters within-the-world, not merely as equipment ready-to-hand but also the environing nature – which serves as the 'very soil of history' (BT: p.433, 381). All entities other than Man, which are historical by the very fact that they belong to the world are called by Heidegger, "world-historical". They get their historical character by reason of the fact that they are those entities which they are in themselves when they are discovered or disclosed within-the-world by Man.

After pointing out in what respects entities other than Man are ‘historical’, Heidegger started his analysis of “historicality” itself as a basic constitution of Man’s Being. We have seen that Man’s Being finds its meaning in care, and care itself has its ground in temporality. For Heidegger, temporality is also the condition which makes possible Man’s historicality. Temporality was first revealed as that way of existing authentically, which is called “anticipatory resoluteness”. In anticipatory resoluteness, Man understands himself with regard to his potentiality-for-Being, in such a way that even in the face of death which awaits him, he takes over in his state of thrownness the very entity which he himself is, and does so wholly and entirely. This taking over of his factual Self indicates that the situation is one which has been resolved upon. As thrown, Man is submitted to a ‘world’ and exists factually with others. Only the resolute Man, as distinct from the inauthentic Man, comes back to himself (that is, does not abandon himself to the ‘public they’), by disclosing the current factual possibilities of existing authentically in terms of the “heritage” which he takes over in his state of thrownness. This heritage is the whole of the ‘givenness’ that Man finds in his state of thrownness, as Being-in-the-world. To the extent that Man authentically resolves, he chooses the possibility of his existence guided by what has been “handed-down” as heritage. In anticipating freely his ultimate possibility – death, Man comes face to face with the finitude of his existence and is snatched back from the multiplicity of possibilities which offer themselves as closest to him, and is finally brought to the simplicity of his “fate” (*Schicksals*).<sup>23</sup> This, according to Heidegger, “is how we designate Dasein’s primordial historizing, which lies in authentic resoluteness and in which Dasein hands itself down to itself, free for death, in a possibility which it has inherited and yet has chosen” (BT:

p.435, 384). An irresolute Man can have no “fate” and consequently no historicity either, since he makes no choices but lets himself be tossed up and down by the ‘public they’. He is always in the mode of inner dispersal and lacks inner connection and coherence.

Since Man as Being-in-the-world is essentially Being-with-others, historizing is a co-historizing and is determinative of Man’s “destiny”.<sup>24</sup> This is the historizing of the community of a people, not the sum total of individual fates. The choice and fate of the individual Man has already been guided in advance by his being together with that of others in the world in and with his generation and in his resolve with definite and chosen possibilities. Thus, for Heidegger, “Dasein’s fateful destiny in and with its generation goes to make up the full authentic historizing of Dasein” (BT: p.436, 384). For Heidegger, “fate” as such is made ontologically possible by the state of Being of care – that is, - temporality. For him, only when death, guilt, conscience, freedom and finitude reside together in the Being of an entity as they do in the care of resolute Man, can that being ‘exist’ in the mode of a fate; only then can it be essentially “historical” in the depths of its existence (BT: p.437, 385). Historicity, therefore, presupposes authentic Temporality. It presupposes that Man in his Being is essentially futural in that he freely anticipates his death as his ultimate possibility and lets himself be thrown back to his factual “there”. It presupposes that Man in being futural is equiprimordial with his past in that he can hand over to himself the inherited possibilities in the state of his thrownness. It presupposes that Man as a Being of the future and of the past, is also of the present in that by accepting the inherited possibility, he can live in the moment in consonant with the situation of his time. “Only authentic temporality which is at the

same time finite”, that can “make possible something like fate” – constitute authentic historicity (BT: p.437, 385).

For Heidegger, to hand down a possibility that has been inherited means to “repeat” a possibility of existence. Repeating is explicitly handing down, that is, it is going back to regain the possibilities of the human – Dasein that has been there, in the past. The authentic repetition of an existential possibility of the past is grounded in anticipatory resoluteness which thus makes possible new advances for the future. It is only in anticipatory resoluteness that Man chooses an existential possibility freely following in the footsteps of that which can be repeated. Such a “repetition” is not a misguided incentive towards adopting that which is past, but rather, it is the resolute and explicit rejoinder to the possibility of that past existence which has been there – in its genuine originality.<sup>25</sup>

Authentic historicity, thus understood has its importance neither in the ‘past’ nor in the ‘today’ and its ‘connection’ with what is past, but in that authentic historizing of existence which takes its origin from Man’s future – namely, - death which throws Man back to his factual thrownness. Now, both the phenomenon of handing down the heritage of the past to oneself and that of repetition are ultimately grounded in the future. From these very phenomena of handing down and repeating we see why the historizing of authentic history has its significance and import in the past to which heritage and the repetition point, irrespective of their deeper roots.<sup>26</sup>

This interpretation of the basic constitution of authentic historicity as the kind of historizing that lies in anticipatory resoluteness, has been a concrete working out of

temporality.<sup>27</sup> This in effect has been the analysis of Dasein (Man) in its authentic unified totality. We arrived at this phenomenon through the interpretation of anticipatory resoluteness and of the Self, but it is in temporality that this unitary phenomenon is ontologically made possible. The interpretation of Man's historicity has been a necessary and essential step in the working out of the ontological ground of human existence. With the interpretation of historicity, we see the completion of the various stages of the analysis of Man in his authenticity, unity, and totality

### **Conclusion**

Finally at this juncture we want to conclude this paper by way of summarizing what we have outlined above in the preceding sections and to bring to view some of the significant contributions of Heidegger to phenomenology and existentialist ontology. Heidegger's primary quest in philosophy is with deciphering the problematic of the meaning of Being. In order to work out this problematic, Heidegger takes as his clue an ontological analysis of human existence. Such an account requires him to use as his tool the phenomenological method which he took over from Edmund Husserl, but which he greatly modified in order to suit his purpose, thereby developing a radically different phenomenology and phenomenological method, which till today has engendered quite a lot of followers, apart from the early French phenomenologists who immediately were influenced by his move and method. In this regard, it is significant that Heidegger in taking over Husserl's phenomenology did so consciously, while at the same time refusing to follow Husserl's method of phenomenological and transcendental reductions as well as his notion of the transcendental subjectivity. It is to Heidegger's credit to have noticed the utter futility of embarking on such reductions – which finally seem to have bracketed

the entire world of natural experience out of existence, leaving only the unnatural transcendental ego as its starting point of constituting the world from the “essences” yielded to it through the reductions. This is a significant contribution from Heidegger, because many existentialist writers followed him immediately in boycotting this trend of thought from Husserl. Heidegger showed that phenomenology could not be restricted to an investigation of “pure consciousness” alone as Husserl practiced it, but must necessarily involve an analysis of human existence as a unitary whole. For him, any attempt to consider transcendental subjectivity as a disembodied “thinker” is definitely doomed to failure, for Man, as Being-in-the-world, is the only possible point of departure for phenomenological analysis.

Also significant, was Heidegger’s linkage of his phenomenological method with hermeneutical interpretation. Phenomenology as ontology requires a hermeneutical approach in order to enable one reach to the roots of various conceptions of Being and to make visible the presuppositions on which these conceptions were based. Hence, his project in *Being and Time*, is a hermeneutic of human existence. This suggests an antiscientific bias of Heidegger’s phenomenology as against Husserl’s who actually wanted his phenomenology to become a “rigorous science” of the world – a kind of super-empiricism. Thus it is to Heidegger’s credit to have realized from the beginning that all the rigours in the world could not make scientific knowledge a final goal. For him, the methodological meaning of phenomenological description becomes a type of historical interpretation, - a form of creative recovery from the past, and a form of interpretation that has as its foundation an analysis of human existence. Thus, his hermeneutical – phenomenology aims to set forth the basic structures of possibility of

human existence, that is, Man's authentic possibilities for Being. In effect, hermeneutics has the function of 'announcing' through which Man makes known to himself the nature of Being. It is ontology of understanding and interpretation.

Another unique and equally significant contribution from Heidegger was his rejection of the Cartesian "cogito" as the point of departure for phenomenological investigation; this he replaced with his conception of Man as Being-in-the-world. For Heidegger, we cannot imagine ourselves without a world. At the fundamental level, our understanding of the world is a dimension of our practical preoccupation with it. He showed that the 'world' is 'essentially human' and that human existence is intelligible only in terms of an engagement with the world. Both remain forever inseparable as long as Man exists; both form a unitary phenomenon. Philosophy, since Descartes, has never attempted to see Man and the world in this way. In the same vein, he replaced Husserl's notion of 'intentionality' which often assumes a cognitive attitude towards objects, with his notion of "care" which essentially has practical connotations. It is equally significant that he moved 'knowledge of the world' to a secondary position, while notions such as involvement, design, utility, moods and concern – become Man's primitive attitudes towards the world.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, Heidegger's philosophy contributed much to our understanding of Man (more than any other philosopher before him) through his ontological analysis of the primary structures which determine Man's concrete historical existence, and beyond that, his exposition of the temporality of human existence as the inner meaning and possibility of the ontological structures seems to be his most relevant contribution to Western philosophical thought. As we have seen, his analysis of the existential structures (existentialia) are extraordinarily very penetrating and insightful in

revelations regarding authentic and inauthentic forms of existence, time, historicity, and indeed, all fundamental problems of existence and Being. It is indeed not misleading on the part of some commentators on Heidegger's fundamental ontology, to have tried to 'read off' from his existential analysis some ethical meanings, based on his thesis, - namely, that Man is never a finished product, but an entity constantly having-to-be.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Joseph J. Kockelmans, ed., *Phenomenology: The Philosophy of Edmund Husserl and Its Interpretation*, (Anchor Books, Doubleday and Co; N.Y.), 1967, 274.

<sup>2</sup>The problem which Heidegger is here trying to revive, that is, the question of the meaning of Being, had been the central problem of the early Greek thinkers from Anaximander and Parmenides down to and including Plato and Aristotle; but after Aristotle not much attention was paid to the problem in a genuinely philosophical investigation. The achievement of elucidation reached until Aristotle greatly affected the discussion of the problem in the Middle Ages and through many changes the tradition of the problem was kept alive till Hegel's "logic". Subsequently not much was inquired into the problem of Being and since then it appears to have fallen into oblivion. Cf. Werner Brock, (1949), *Existence and Being* (Gateway Edition), 11ff.

<sup>3</sup>Joseph J. Kockelmans, ed., *ibid*, 223f, 1967.

<sup>4</sup>Calvin O. Schrag, “*Phenomenology, Ontology and History in the Philosophy of Heidegger*”, Reprinted in J.J. Kockelmans, (1967), ed; 278, 1958.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid, p.279.

<sup>6</sup>The word ‘*Logos*’ apart from being translated as ‘discourse’ has other several interpretations which include: ‘reason’, ‘judgment’, ‘concept’, ‘definition’, ‘ground’, ‘science’ and so on. Vide: footnote number 3, of BT: p.47.

<sup>7</sup>Magda King, (1964), *Heidegger’s Philosophy, A Guide to his Basic Thought*, (Basil Blackwell, Oxford), 156.

<sup>8</sup>Quentin Lauer, (1965), “*On Evidence*”, from “*Introduction: Structure of the Ideal*”, in Edmund Husserl, *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, trans. Quentin Lauer, Reprinted in J.J. Kockelmans, (1967), ed; 151.

<sup>9</sup>Kockelmans, (1967),ed; “*Intentional and Constitutive Analysis*”, 138.

<sup>10</sup>Marvin Faber,(1940), “*Husserl and Philosophical Radicalism*” From “*The ideal of a presuppositionless Philosophy*” in Marvin Faber, ed; *Philosophical Essays in Memory of Edmund Husserl*, (Cambridge), Reprinted in J.J. Kockelmans, (1967),ed; 48.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 50.

<sup>12</sup>Kockelmans, (1967), ed; p223f.

<sup>13</sup>Martin Heidegger, (1982), *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, (Indiana University Press), 64.

<sup>14</sup>Thus, because our pre-ontological awareness of our own existence and our awareness of our existence in the world are inseparable, there can be no problem of Knowledge for Heidegger. Cf. Richardson, (1963), 58.

<sup>15</sup>Letter to W. J. Richardson, (1962), printed as Preface to Richardson's *Through Phenomenology to Thought*, (1963), xiv.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid, xiv.

<sup>17</sup>Richard E. Palmer, (1969), *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleimacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer*, (Northwestern University Press, Evanston), p.127.

<sup>18</sup>Calvin Schrag, (1958), *ibid*, 287.

<sup>19</sup>Existential analysis proves that Man is not a mere thing or an entity like any other, but enjoys a prerogative that distinguishes him from all other beings, namely, his understanding of Being. "Dasein is ontically distinctive in that it is ontological". (BT: p.32, 12). Therefore to interpret Dasein (Man) as an entity like any other is to forget the fact that its essence is existence.

<sup>20</sup>Calvin Schrag, (1958), *ibid*, 289.

<sup>21</sup>Calvin Schrag, (1958), *ibid*, 287ff.

<sup>22</sup>Ordinarily, for Heidegger, when we speak of "history" we indiscriminately use several different notions: (1) We speak of 'history' in reference to the 'past' as such, (2) We speak of 'history' in reference to the origin of something from the 'past', e.g. a particular monument, (3) We speak of 'history' in reference to the whole of things that are changing through the course of time; i.e. changes in reference to the long destinies of men, of

human communities and of their civilization and culture, (4) finally, we speak of ‘history’ in reference to all that is handed down by tradition. All these notions of history have their root in the historicizing possibilities in the process of happening of human Dasein.

<sup>23</sup>“Fate” [*Schicksals*], for Heidegger, is described as the ‘destiny’ of the resolute individual; whereas, the word “*Geschick*” [destiny] refers to the “destiny” of a larger group of people or of Man as a member of such a group. (cf., the footnote: BT: 436, no.,1).

<sup>24</sup>Since Man is not simply an isolated unit, but ontologically includes Being-with-others, historicizing is achieved with others all of whom form a community of people. This historicizing of the community is called common-destiny [*Geschick*]. The historical Man cannot achieve his own individual authenticity apart from the community. The heritage which Man assumes in authenticity, therefore, is not simply his own individual history but somehow the heritage of the entire people with whom he resides. This process will thus include the renewal of potentialities of Being that concern all human-beings and thus the history of the entire community is made manifest.

<sup>25</sup>Werner Brock, (1949), *Martin Heidegger: Existence and Being*, Gateway Edition, Indiana., 92.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>27</sup>After his interpretation of the basic constitution of authentic historicity, Heidegger turned to explain how Man in his Fallenness and inauthenticity looks at history as made up of facts rather than of repeatable possibilities. He also turned to ‘historiology’ – as

made possible by Man's historicity. For space reasons, we have not included these in this paper.

<sup>28</sup>Robert Solomon, (1972), *From Rationalism to Existentialism*, Harper and Row Publishers, London, 227.

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