

Contributions To Phenomenology 80

Tziovanis Georgakis
Paul J. Ennis *Editors*

Heidegger in the Twenty- First Century

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Chapter 3

Dasein as Transcendence in Heidegger and the Critique of Husserl

Dermot Moran

‘The transcendence of knowledge is what perplexes me.’¹

There is a long debate as to whether and to what extent Heidegger may be termed a transcendental philosopher, following in the tradition of Kant and of Husserl (after 1905). Indeed, in one sense, the answer is straightforward. Martin Heidegger’s *Sein und Zeit* is, by his own admission, an essay in transcendental phenomenology. He writes: ‘Every disclosure of being as the *transcendens* is transcendental knowledge. *Phenomenological truth (the disclosedness of being)* is *veritas transcendentalis* (SZ, § 7, p. 38). Of course, here Heidegger is invoking both the concept of the transcendentals (*ens, verum, bonum, unum*), i.e. the most universal categories that apply to anything, as found in medieval Scholasticism and referring to the transcendental conditions for the possibility of knowledge as in Kant. Heidegger very often speaks of the transcendental conditions of knowledge with an implied reference to subjectivity. At the same time, *Being and Time* presents itself as an anti-subjectivist manifesto, and Heidegger more and more emphasises this anti-subjectivism in his later writings, most notably in the ‘Letter on “Humanism”’ (GA 9, 1976b). This is puzzling as usually the transcendental turn is understood as a turn towards the subjective grounding of knowledge. How does Heidegger reinterpret the transcendental and especially transcendental subjectivity? What then is his relation to Husserl and transcendental phenomenology?

¹Edmund Husserl, *Einleitung in der Logik und Erkenntnistheorie. Vorlesungen 1906/07, Husserliana: Edmund Husserl—Gesammelte Werke, Band 24* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1984), 398. For the English translation, see Edmund Husserl, *Introduction to Logic and the Theory of Knowledge. Lectures 1906/07*, trans. C. Ortiz Hill, *Husserliana: Edmund Husserl—Collected Works, Volume 13* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008), 398.

D. Moran (✉)

Professor of Philosophy (Metaphysics & Logic), University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland

Walter Murdoch Professor of Philosophy, School of Arts, Murdoch University,
Perth, Australia

e-mail: dermot.moran@ucd.ie

3.1 Between German Idealism and Life-Philosophy

When Heidegger returned from Marburg to Freiburg to take up the Chair vacated by Edmund Husserl on his retirement, he was regarded by the students as someone who had a high regard for German Idealism, specifically Hegel and Schelling, as is evident from his first Freiburg lecture course.² Indeed, in a 1927 letter to Heidegger's Marburg colleague Rudolf Bultmann, Heidegger proclaimed:

The fundament of [my work] is developed by starting from the 'subject,' properly understood as the human Dasein, so that with the radicalization of this approach the true motives of German idealism may likewise come into their own ...³

In his correspondence with Bultmann, Jaspers and others, Heidegger makes clear that he is seeking to rethink the mode of being of the transcendental subject (opposing all typically Hegelian formulations which he took to be mere dogmas). This rethinking of the subject is informed by his independent reading of life-philosophy [Lebensphilosophie] as he had found in it in the works of Wilhelm Dilthey—it is not clear how much he knew of Simmel. He is drawn especially to Dilthey's account of human being 'as he exists as a person, a person acting in history' [als Person, alshandelnde Person in der Geschichte existiert] (GA 20, p. 163), as Heidegger puts it in his 1925 *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* lectures, essentially a first draft that eventually became *Being and Time*. Heidegger was also beginning to confront Kant on whom he had begun to lecture in Marburg in 1925. Indeed, Heidegger writes to Jaspers on 10th December 1925: 'I am beginning to really love Kant.'⁴ His relationship with Kant grew in the late 1920s but remained critical. In this regard, he considered that Kant had not properly interrogated the being of the subject. As he wrote in *Being and Time*, '[Kant] failed to provide an ontology with Dasein as its theme or (to put this in Kantian language) to give a preliminary ontological analysis of the subjectivity of the subject' (SZ, § 6, p. 24). Heidegger had planned to include the 'destruction' of Kant's philosophy in *Being and Time* (as we know from SZ, § 6), but this project had to be postponed to his 1929 *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* (GA 3), as he was under pressure to publish *Being and Time* in order to be promoted at Marburg. A decade later, in his 1938 *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*, Heidegger will speak of 'using force' (GA 65, p. 253) against Kant in order to break open his concept of transcendental subjectivity and its relation to being. Sometime in the 1930s, however, Heidegger came to realize that even his efforts to articulate Dasein as transcendence

² See GA 28. Heidegger lectured also on Schelling (1930) and Hegel (1930/1931). See Heidegger GA 32.

³ Landmesser Christof and Andreas Großmann, eds., *Rudolf Bultmann/Martin Heidegger: Briefwechsel 1925–1975* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 48. See also Otto Pöggeler, *Philosophie und hermeneutische Theologie: Heidegger, Bultmann und die Folgen* (München: Wilhelm Fink, 2009).

⁴ See letter of Heidegger to Jaspers, 10 December 1925, in Walter Biemel and Hans Saner, eds., *The Heidegger-Jaspers Correspondence (1920–1963)* (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2003), 61.

(and as an open projecting) ended up caught in a kind of Platonism and that the whole language of transcendental philosophy is seen as hopeless. He then explicitly abandons the language of transcendental philosophy as is evident in the ‘Letter on “Humanism.”’

Inspired by Wilhelm Dilthey and, of course, by his reading of Kierkegaard, Eckhart, Jaspers and other more ‘existential’ thinkers, Heidegger in the 1920s wants to reinterpret subjectivity in a way that conveys its sense of living, temporal historical existence, living a *life* (*Leben*, a term with particular resonance for Dilthey) with all its connotations of immediate insertion into thrownness and absorption in the world and also to gain some kind of authentic stance towards one’s temporal existence such that one can, in the Pauline sense, ‘seize the time.’ As Heidegger had earlier proclaimed in a 1921–1922 lecture course given while he was still at Freiburg, ‘the phenomenological category “world” immediately names—and this is crucial—*what* is lived, the content aimed at in living, that which life holds to’ (GA 61, p. 86). Indeed, already in 1925, Heidegger had been reading Hegel (in order to lecture on him in his courses) and wrote to Karl Jaspers complaining that Hegel’s abstract conception of being, nothingness and becoming showed no true understanding of ‘life—existence—process and the like.’ He explains:

He [Hegel] didn’t see that the traditional stock of categories from the logic of things and the world is fundamentally insufficient, and that we must question more radically, not only about becoming and motion, happening and *history*—but about being.⁵

The inquiry into being is supposed to revisit the underlying issue that was obscured in traditional ontologies—thinking the uniqueness of human existence and its way of being in time. Heidegger had been seeking a proper way of accessing the specifically human mode of being-in-the-world and a new way of articulating his radical conception of ‘concrete [konkret]’ human existence. The remarkable result of these interrogations is the ontological analytic of Dasein from the standpoint of temporality in *Being and Time* and specifically its conception of Dasein and its ‘thrown-projection’ (SZ, § 31).

As is almost too well known and hence its significance has been covered up, in introducing Dasein, Heidegger wants to avoid many of the pitfalls associated with traditional metaphysical concepts of human being—both the Platonic-Aristotelian conception of human being as ζῶον λόγον ἔχον (SZ, § 6) and the traditional Biblical understanding of human being made *in imaginem et similitudinem dei* (SZ, § 10), since they both treat human beings as present-at-hand entities. He also rejects not just a purely biological account of human life but even the attempt by personalism to give a new conception. In this regard, Scheler’s conception of the human being as a person is given acknowledgement, even if in the end it is regarded as unclear and not penetrating through to an ontological conception. Heidegger regards the current interest in ‘personalism’ as shallow. The being of the person has not been interrogated in positive terms, and the phenomenologists have been content to remain with negative characterizations: ‘The person is not a thing, not a substance, not an object

⁵ See Heidegger letter to Jaspers, 16 December 1925. *Ibid.*, 62.

[Die Person ist kein Ding, keine Substanz, kein Gegenstand]' (SZ, § 10, p. 48). Here Heidegger links Scheler's account of the person to Husserl's meditations on the person in the then unpublished *Ideas II* where the person is not to be understood as an entity in nature but as a subject who engages in personal and social acts involving mutual recognition of other persons in the 'personalistic attitude [die personalistische Einstellung].' Heidegger, although he acknowledged the influence of Husserl's analyses in *Ideas II*, is not happy that Husserl continues to talk of human being in terms of the layering of body, soul and spirit, which he sees as continuing a stale Cartesian ontology (or set of regional categories—consciousness and nature).

Most especially, however, Heidegger is deliberately targeting and rejecting in these opening chapters his mentor Husserl's interpretation of human being in terms of the stream of consciousness [Bewusstseinsstrom] (which he sees as bedeviling modern psychology) and of intentionality. He does take over Husserl's conception of human being as being in an 'envirning world [Umwelt],' but he reinterprets intentionality in terms of transcendence towards this world. As Heidegger will state in his essay 'Vom Wesen des Grundes' ('On The Essence of Ground', VWG),⁶

We name *world* that towards which Dasein as such transcends, and shall now determine transcendence as *being-in-the-world*. World co-constitutes the unitary structure of transcendence; as belonging to this structure, the concept of world may be called *transcendental*.⁷ (GA 9, p. 139)

Furthermore, in offering a re-interpretation of Kant's conception of world (as unconditioned totality), Heidegger suggests that Dasein comes to be itself *from out* of the world. It is first out there in the world and then comes to grasp itself. This relation of Dasein to world inevitably leads to the misconstrual of the world as something subjective. Heidegger writes:

... the task is to gain, through an illumination of transcendence, one possibility for what is meant by 'subject' and 'subjective.' In the end, the concept of world must indeed be conceived in such a way that world is indeed subjective, i.e., belongs to Dasein, but precisely on this account does not fall, as a being, into the inner sphere of a 'subjective' subject. (VWG, p. 158 GA 9)

Transcendence has to be thought as a new way of thinking human Dasein in a non-subjectivist manner. Dasein is 'always already [immer schon]' out there, available, public, caught in the network of social practices.

In *Being and Time*, as is well known, Heidegger more or less abandons or even suppresses the Brentanian/Husserlian concept of intentionality and replaces it with his existential analytic of Dasein in the course of which he emphasizes Dasein's finite transcendence, attempting to wrest the thinking of transcendence away from the associated notion of attaining of a timeless Platonic realm. In fact, despite the emphasis placed on it by his mentor Husserl, the text of *Being and Time* contains

⁶The essay written in 1928 and contributed to Husserl's seventieth-birthday *Festschrift*, published as a supplementary volume to the *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung* in 1929 and reprinted in *Wegmarken* (GA 9, pp. 123–75).

⁷'Wir nennen das, *woraufhin* das Dasein als solches transzendiert, die Welt und bestimmen jetzt die Transzendenz als *In-der-Welt-sein*.' (GA 9, p. 139)

only two brief references to intentionality: a critical remark regarding the inadequacy of Max Scheler's analysis of the person as the 'performer of intentional acts [Vollzieher intentionaler Akte]' (SZ, § 10, p. 48); and a single—important but dense—footnote on intentionality as 'grounded in the ecstatic temporality of Dasein' (SZ, § 69 (b), p. 363), a remark to which we shall return later in this chapter.

Heidegger, of course, did have plenty to say about intentionality elsewhere, especially in his Marburg lectures leading up to *Being and Time*. In general, and among many other criticisms, in his lectures from 1925 to 1929, Heidegger persistently portrays Husserlian phenomenology—not entirely unjustly given the 'Cartesian way' that Husserl seemed to emphasize in his public pronouncements—as in the grips of an un-interrogated Cartesian metaphysics (which is also Heidegger's main complaint about Kant). To overcome this supposed defect, Heidegger proposes instead to address the ontological 'question of the being of the intentional [die Frage nach dem Sein des Intentionalen]' (GA 20, § 12, p. 148), as he puts it in his 1925 lectures on *The History of the Concept of Time*. The suggestion seems to be that Husserl—who he acknowledges has played a key role in the revival of ontology in the twentieth century, overcoming its neglect in Neo-Kantianism—lacks a 'concrete' (a heavily loaded term for Heidegger) ontological understanding of consciousness and of intentional life in its dynamic lived capacity, something he finds better articulated in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, for instance, or in St. Paul. Heidegger does not want to reject intentionality entirely. He states that it is not so much intentionality itself that is problematic but rather what is presumed within its structure:

It is not intentionality as such that it is metaphysically dogmatic but what is built under its structure [Struktur], or is left at this level because of a traditional tendency not to question that of which it is presumably the structure, and what this sense of structure itself means. (GA 20, p. 63)

According to Heidegger, the *relation* of the act of intending to its object have been left completely obscure, and, in phenomenological investigation, the word 'intentionality' is the very last one that should be used as a phenomenological slogan (GA 20, § 5). In other words, Heidegger is criticising Husserl and his phenomenological followers for not really offering an analysis of the nature of the transcendental 'correlation' between noesis and noema in the intentional relation. Heidegger wants to make the correlation itself thematic. He is not, *pace* Quentin Meillassoux and his followers, rejecting correlationism *per se*. In fact, the choice of the term Dasein is precisely the highlight the 'place' where the correlation between being and its manifestation comes to light.

In his Marburg lecture courses from 1925 onwards, Heidegger had been carefully preparing the way for this shift from Brentanian and Husserlian intentionality to what he calls in 1925 'the being of the concrete entity called man' (GA 20, p. 148). He now explicitly proclaims that the intentionality of consciousness (and indeed the noetic-noematic structure as proposed by Husserl) has to be rethought in terms of the very peculiar transcendence of Dasein which is not simply that a present-at-hand entity has some special quality that raises it above other entities in the world. Dasein is never a present-at-hand object. Heidegger further claims that

the manner in which beings have been revealed in the ‘natural attitude’ (Husserl’s ‘die natürliche Einstellung’) has been understood naturalistically—the human being has been interpreted as experiencing itself zoologically as a ‘ζῷον,’ a living being that is part of the world (GA 20, § 12). This itself, for Heidegger, is a tremendous distortion and indeed reduction of the truly radical character of human existence as disclosive of truth, of human existence in its phenomenality.

Furthermore, only an inquiry into the manner in which human beings live in their ‘everydayness’ can begin to disclose a right way of interpreting human existence and its temporality. One cannot simply start to understand human beings by fastening upon some trait, e.g. rationality. Humans live their lives out and make their lives meaningful. Everydayness [Alltäglichkeit] itself, of course, is just the proximal point for beginning the investigation into Dasein. As Heidegger will clarify in the ‘Letter on “Humanism,”’ everydayness is not some sociological way of portraying human existence (such as one will find in Henri Lefebvre) nor is it any kind of moral or normative category (‘normal’ life); rather, it is a way of articulating phenomenality, disclosure and the truth of being (GA 9, p. 332).

In his Marburg lectures, Heidegger is especially critical of Husserl’s allegedly Cartesian construal of the traditional concepts of ‘transcendence’ and ‘immanence,’ terms upon which Husserl relies heavily in *Ideas I*. At this time (and well into the 1930s), Heidegger himself, somewhat ironically, also makes considerable use of the concept of transcendence. Indeed, throughout *Being and Time*, there are strong hints that the meaning of being should be thought in terms of transcendence.⁸ Being is simply transcendence, Heidegger remarks—although it is not clear from the context if he is really endorsing this statement or simply summarising a typical view from the tradition that ‘Being is the *transcendens* pure and simple [Sein ist das transzendens schlechthin]’ (SZ, § 7, p. 38).⁹ In his ‘Letter on “Humanism”’ (1947), Heidegger returns to gloss this phrase as it appeared in *Being and Time* and, this time, construes it in terms of his own ‘correlationist’ approach:

The introductory definition, ‘Being is the *transcendens* pure and simple,’ articulates in one simple sentence the way the essence of being hitherto has been cleared for the human being. This retrospective definition of the essence of the being of beings from the clearing of beings as such remains indispensable for the prospective approach of thinking toward the question concerning the truth of being. (GA 9, p. 337)¹⁰

⁸At the outset of *Being and Time*, Heidegger refers to being [*Sein*] as that which, according to Aristotelian philosophy, ‘transcends’ the categories. In this regard, the Scholastics referred to being as ‘*transcendens*’ (SZ, § 1, p. 3). The transcendentals are those characteristics of being that lie beyond every genus (SZ, § 4, p. 14).

⁹Heidegger seems to say this more as a kind of statement that is in one sense obviously true and, in another sense, has never been interrogated as to its deeper meaning. It is, as it were, a truism, what Aristotle calls a commonly held opinion.

¹⁰Heidegger’s ‘Letter on “Humanism”’ was originally written to the French philosopher Jean Beaufret in 1946 as a response to certain questions put to Heidegger regarding his relations to Jean-Paul Sartre’s existentialism. In his letter, Heidegger believes ‘humanism’ is an essentially metaphysical position deriving from Roman philosophy that fails to capture what is essential to human existence. He writes: ‘Humanism is opposed because it does not set the *humanitas* of the human being high enough’ (GA 9, p. 330).

The point is that being has been understood as ‘transcendence’ in one way or another by the philosophical tradition. That is the way being has revealed itself, but the manner—or even more importantly the *site*—of this revealing has not been articulated. As we shall see, Heidegger offers a number of interpretations of what ‘transcendence’ means in the philosophical tradition and attempts a new account while still retaining in the language of the tradition (later he abandons this attempt as mistaken). But, at least in the 1920s, he is also insistent, in many different places in his lectures, in interpreting what Husserl calls ‘intentionality [Intentionalität]’ in terms of the transcendence of Dasein. What remains puzzling is that, although Heidegger is critical of Husserl’s retention of and interpretation of the terms transcendence and immanence, he himself continues to work within the same contrast of immanence/transcendence, albeit offering new connotations to these terms and ignoring the fact that Husserl too claimed to be investing these terms with entirely new—and phenomenologically grounded—meanings. We shall have to examine Husserl’s new conception of ‘transcendence in immanence’ or ‘immanent transcendence’ to see if Heidegger is right to criticize him for Cartesianism and to see whether Heidegger can offer a new way of thinking the relation between immanence and transcendence.

Although intentionality appears rarely in *Being and Time*, Heidegger offers extensive discussion of the concept in his lecture courses both in Marburg (especially 1925) and again when he returned to Freiburg (at least until around 1931). Thus, in his 1928 *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz* lecture course at Marburg, he writes that ‘the intentional relation must be founded on the ‘being-with [Sein-bei],’ or ‘being-by,’ of Dasein (GA 26, p. 168). He goes on to characterize intentionality as a form of ‘ontic’ transcendence that can only be understood if Dasein’s more basic ‘ontological’ transcendence is understood (GA 26, p. 170). Heidegger is trying to understand how Dasein ontologically transcends: how his mode of being is already ‘beyond’ beings and actually functions to display or disclose being. In invoking this peculiar conception of transcendence, Heidegger appears to be striking out on a path quite different from Husserl’s eidetic phenomenology of consciousness and its intentional ‘achievements [Leistungen].’

Heidegger’s relationship to the concept of ‘transcendence’ is most complicated and clearly evolves in the course of his thinking. He struggles to articulate the centrality of the designation of transcendence in relation to Dasein without repeating the old conceptions of ‘transcendence.’ His new approach is to link transcendence to both the questions of grounding and of truth. In the late 1920s, he often describes Dasein as itself transcendence, by which he means that it essentially involve or even is a ‘stepping over,’ a ‘passage across,’ a ‘surpassing.’ He uses both nominal and verbal forms: *Transzendenz*, *transzendieren* [to transcend] as well as equivalent terms, in particular *übersteigen* [to climb over, surmount, exceed, transcend] and *überschreiten* [to cross, exceed, and also to overstep, to transgress]. As he puts it in his last Marburg lecture course of 1928, ‘Dasein is itself the passage across [Das Dasein selbst ist der Überschritt]’ (GA 26, p. 211). In general, as in ‘*Vom Wesen des Grundes*’ (1928), he interprets the meaning of transcendence quite traditionally: ‘transcendence means surpassing [Transzendenz bedeutet Überstieg]’ (VWG, p. 137.) But he also links transcendence to the individuation of Dasein and its

becoming a *self*: ‘Transcendence constitutes selfhood,’ he proclaims in the same essay (VWG, p. 137). He asserts that transcendence is something that belongs uniquely to Dasein as what fundamentally constitutes its being (VWG, pp. 136–37), but he seems not to be able to incorporate a clear account of the manner in which Dasein’s ecstatic existence of thrownness and projection somehow are also to involve the notions of inauthentic and authentic selfhood.

In his ‘Letter on “Humanism”’ (1947), Heidegger—and this reiterates remarks he had already made in the late 1920s—explains one traditional meaning of transcendence as found within Christianity: God is *beyond* the world. The transcendent means that which is *beyond the sensible*—beyond the flesh:

The reference to ‘being-in-the-world’ as the basic trait of the *humanitas* of *homo humanus* does not assert that the human being in merely a ‘worldly’ creature understood in a Christian sense, thus a creature turned away from God and so cut loose from ‘Transcendence.’ What is really meant by this word would more clearly be called ‘the transcendent.’ The transcendent is a supersensible being. That is considered the highest being in the sense of the first cause of all beings. (GA 9, pp. 349–50)

The later Heidegger, under the influence of Nietzsche, never wants his conception of Dasein to be mistaken for some kind of anthropology derived from Christian theology that locates human uniqueness in its orientation towards a transcendent infinite being. Human finitude is intimately connected with its disclosive alethic character.

3.2 Heidegger and Jaspers’ Conception of Transcendence

In relation to his own understanding of transcendence, Heidegger is quite clearly influenced by his personal contact with Karl Jaspers for whom transcendence is a central concept in his existential account of human existence, a concept found right across his voluminous writings. But one should also not ignore the influence on Heidegger of Max Scheler, who had recently died, and especially his extraordinary *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos*,¹¹ originally delivered as a lecture and then published in 1928. Scheler’s work offers a critique of traditional understandings of human nature and a new multi-layered account that in many ways parallels what Heidegger is saying in *Being and Time*.

For Jaspers, as for Heidegger and Scheler, transcendence names something essential about the human condition. For Jaspers, transcendence means first and foremost that which is permanently non-objective. Thus, in *Volume 2* of his three-volume *Philosophy* (1932), Jaspers writes:

Just as I do not exist without the world, I am not myself without transcendence . . .
I stand before transcendence, which does not occur to me as existing in the world of phenomenal things but speaks to me as possible—speaks to me in the voice of whatever

¹¹ Max Scheler, *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos* (Darmstadt: Otto Reichl Verlag, 1928). For the English translation, see Max Scheler, *The Human Place in the Cosmos*, trans. M Frings (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2009).

exists, and most decidedly in that of my self-being. The transcendence before which I stand is the measure of my own depth.¹²

According to this enigmatic formulation, I primarily experience transcendence in experiencing my own existence as possessing a depth and a range of unactualised possibilities that surpass me and yet make me who I am. Furthermore, Jaspers explicitly relates transcendence to his unique conception of human ‘existence [Existenz]’—a term also invoked by Heidegger (SZ, § 3, p. 12). Jaspers writes: ‘Existence is the self-being that relates to itself and thereby also to transcendence from which it knows that it has been given to itself and upon which it is grounded.’¹³ And again, he notes that ‘existence is not a self-contained unity. If there is unity it only is in transcendence.’¹⁴ This is a way of stating that existence is somehow as it were ‘outside’ itself, displaced into its possibilities rather than situated in the self as a stable entity with fixed properties.

Jaspers is a man of bold pronouncements, of enigmatic and provocative insights, rather than arguments, but he was deeply influential on Heidegger and more so than is often appreciated. Indeed, Heidegger had written to Jaspers on 24 May 1926 (just as *Being and Time* was going to its initial proof stage) that only *he* will understand the true intentions of the work. Heidegger’s letter continues:

From the fact that Husserl finds the whole thing to be off-putting and can no longer find it fit under phenomenology in the usual sense, I conclude that I have *de facto* already gone much further than I believe and see myself.¹⁵

Indeed, it is precisely as a result of his discussions with Jaspers that Heidegger decided to hold back on printing Part Three of Division One. Jaspers emphasises the historicity (and finitude) of human existence as precisely revealing this transcendence. Thus, Jaspers notes in his *Philosophy of Existence* (1938) that transcendence is revealed through human historicity (a thought Heidegger will develop in *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*). He writes: ‘Only through historicity do I become aware of the authentic being of transcendence—and only through transcendence does our ephemeral existence acquire historical substance.’¹⁶ I am both inside and outside history. I experience myself historically, but this allows me to see myself in some sense as beyond history.

¹²Karl Jaspers, *Philosophy, Volume 2*, trans. E. B. Ashton, *Philosophy: 3 Volumes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 45. For the original German collection, see Karl Jaspers, *Philosophie. 3 Bände (I. Philosophische Weltorientierung; II. Existenzerhellung; III. Metaphysik)* (Berlin: Springer, 1932).

¹³Karl Jaspers, *Philosophy of Existence*, trans. R. F. Grabau (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), 21. For the original German text, see Karl Jaspers, *Existenzphilosophie* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1938). Although strictly speaking, these written remarks of Jaspers were published after the period we are discussing, Jaspers himself was exploring these issues much earlier than they appear in published form.

¹⁴Jaspers, *Philosophy of Existence*: 76.

¹⁵Heidegger letter to Jaspers, 24 May 1926. See Biemel and Saner, *The Heidegger-Jaspers Correspondence (1920–1963)*, 67. See also, Theodore Kisiel, *The Genesis of Heidegger’s Being and Time* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 483.

¹⁶Jaspers, *Philosophy of Existence*: 74.

3.3 Transcendence as a Theme in Heidegger's Writings of the Twenties and Thirties

The term 'transcendence' is relatively uncommon in *Being and Time*, but it appears more frequently in Heidegger's writings in the late 1920s and very early 1930s,¹⁷ especially in 'Vom Wesen des Grundes' (VWG) (1929), 'Was ist Metaphysik?' (WM) (1929), and *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* (GA 3) (1929), all writings that Heidegger himself associates with the overall project of *Being and Time*. The term is discussed critically in the *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)* (GA 65) and other writings of the late 1930s. But it reappears in writings such as the 'Letter on "Humanism"' (BH) only to disappear again in the Heidegger of the 1950s. In these 1928 to 1930 writings, Heidegger explicitly ties transcendence to the essence of Dasein but also insists, following Jaspers, that transcendence is an indicator of Dasein's finitude. Thus, he makes statements such as 'transcendence means the being in itself accessible to a finite creature,' 'transcendence is ecstatic-horizontal' (GA 3, p. 114) and that 'ontological knowledge forms transcendence' (GA 3, § 25). It is noteworthy too in this context that Eugen Fink (1905–1975) and Oskar Becker (1889–1964), two of Heidegger's most original and most capable students, also take up the problem of 'transcendence' in their writings in the thirties and make it a central theme.

Indeed, in a somewhat pompous and obscure paper entitled 'Transcendence and Paratranscendence,' delivered at the Ninth International Conference of Philosophy in Paris in 1937 (the so called 'Descartes conference' where National Socialists officially represented German philosophy), Becker, an ardent follower of National Socialism, who was banned from teaching for a time after the war for his anti-Semitic writings, seeks to make a distinction between 'transcendence' and what he calls 'paratranscendence [Paratranszendenz]' and also suggests there is a difference between 'Dasein' and (his own neologism) 'Dawesen' and between the 'ontological difference' and his own 'parontological difference.'¹⁸ Becker's paper did not go unnoticed and was singled out for criticism by Husserl's student Marvin Farber (who had escaped Nazi Germany by moving to the USA) who wrote:

The linguistic extravagances of Heidegger may be said to have culminated in the rapid straining after unprobed depths which Oskar Becker of Bonn illustrated under the heading of 'Transcendence and Paratranscendence' in the 1937 meeting of the International Congress of Philosophy in Paris.¹⁹

¹⁷For an excellent discussion, see Daniel O. Dahlstrom, 'Heidegger's Transcendentalism,' *Research in Phenomenology* 35(2005): 29–54.

¹⁸See Oskar Becker, 'Transcendenz und Paratranszendenz,' in *Travaux du IXe congrès international de philosophie. Volume 8. Analyse réflexive et transcendance*, ed. Raymond Bayer (Paris: Hermann, 1937), 97–104. See also Oskar Becker, 'Para-Existenz: Menschliches Dasein und Dawesen,' *Blätter für Deutsche Philosophie* 17 (1943): 62–95.

¹⁹See Marvin Farber, 'Experience and Transcendence,' *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 12, no. 1 (1951): 20.

Following Heidegger's discussions in *'Vom Wesen des Grundes'* (VWG, pp. 160–62) and elsewhere, Becker distinguishes between the traditional conception of transcendence to be found in Plato (ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας)²⁰ and a new sense of transcendence ('paratranscendence') which ought to give rise to a new science called 'parontology.' Becker asks whether Kant really introduced a double meaning into transcendence or whether something like that distinction already permeated the tradition prior to Kant. The first sense of transcendence he finds in Plato's concept of the Good (τὸ ἀγαθόν) *beyond* being and in Aristotle's distinction of the difference between being (τὸ ὄν) and beings (τὰ ὄντα). There is a second sense of transcendence in Aristotle, according to Becker, when one says that God transcends things. Becker explains his terms in a way that echoes Heidegger: transcendence means 'stepping-over [Überschreitung]' or 'passing beyond [Überstieg]' or whereas paratranscendence means a kind of 'insurmountability [Unentstiegenheit].'²¹ Farber points out that, for Becker,

'Unentstiegenheit' is taken to signify something positive because the prefix 'un' suspends the syllable 'ent.' Thus, that which 'gets away' (*entsteigende*) from the existent is to a certain extent caught and held back before it completely 'gets away,' so that 'Unentstiegenheit' is a 'dialectical' term.²²

Becker equates this kind of 'paratranscendence' with φύσις, with the idea of nature both as supporting and holding back. He attributes this kind of paratranscendence to human existence, now articulated as 'Dawesen.' Becker writes:

Its mode of living is neither genuine [eigentliche] nor non-genuine (fallen) existence, neither a gaining itself nor a losing itself. It is rather the absence of every kind of self-being, but not in the sense of a total negation, or, rather, of an antithetical, equal position.²³

Here Becker is changing the emphasis from that found in Heidegger. For Heidegger, it belongs to the transcendence of Dasein to live in a temporal manner and also to live either authentically or inauthentically. Becker seems to be taking Heidegger's anti-subjectivism much further than Heidegger himself would have wanted to go.

3.4 Husserl's Conception of Immanent Transcendence

In his late 1920s writings, Heidegger does not attempt to articulate transcendence in the speculative terms that one finds in his later writings. Rather, his main focus is to criticise Husserl's phenomenology. As is well known, after his discovery of the

²⁰ Plato, *The Republic: Books 1–5*, trans. Paul Shorey (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 509b9.

²¹ Becker, 'Transcendenz und Paratranszendenz,' 100.

²² Farber, 'Experience and Transcendence,' 20.

²³ See Becker, 'Transcendenz und Paratranszendenz,' 104. It is translated in Farber, 'Experience and Transcendence,' 21.

epochē and reduction in 1905, Husserl consistently describes his phenomenology in transcendental terms and explicitly records his debt to Kant and even more to Descartes, the true founder of transcendental philosophy by his recognition that the entire sense and being (*Sinn und Sein*) of the world is the outcome or achievement of the constituting subjectivity of the 'I think.' In *Ideas I*, for instance, Husserl insists that phenomenology is possible only *as transcendental philosophy* and that the correct understanding of the *epochē* and the reduction is essential for understanding the move to the transcendental required by any genuine, ultimately grounded 'first philosophy'.²⁴ Late works such as *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* even present phenomenology not just as transcendental but as the 'final form [Endform]' of transcendental philosophy.²⁵ In describing the phenomenological domain, Husserl also speaks very often of 'transcendence' and 'immanence,' and, indeed, he even seems to have almost as a slogan the idea that phenomenology is concerned with transcendence-in-immanence. This conception of 'transcendence in immanence' or 'immanent transcendence' makes its appearance probably for the first time in his *The Idea of Phenomenology* lectures of 1907,²⁶ but it continues to play a central role from *Ideas I*²⁷ to the *Cartesian Meditations*.²⁸ and then seems to disappear in the later discussions of the 'life-world' in *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. In the First Cartesian Meditation, for instance, Husserl speaks of 'immanent

²⁴Husserl adopted from Descartes (and of course originally from Aristotle) the idea of an ultimate grounding science which is called *prima philosophia* or 'first philosophy.' Husserl insists that fully clarified transcendental phenomenology (which includes even the 'phenomenology of phenomenology') is the ultimate first philosophy.

²⁵Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der Europäischen Wissenschaften und die Transzendente Phänomenologie*, *Husserliana: Edmund Husserl—Gesammelte Werke, Band 6* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1976a), § 14. For the English translation, see Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, trans. David Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), § 14.

²⁶Edmund Husserl, *Die Idee der Phänomenologie. Fünf Vorlesungen*, *Husserliana: Edmund Husserl—Gesammelte Werke, Band 2* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1973a). For the English translation, Edmund Husserl, *The Idea of Phenomenology*, trans. L. Hardy, *Husserliana: Edmund Husserl—Collected Works, Volume 8* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999).

²⁷Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer Reinen Phänomenologie und Phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die Reine Phänomenologie*, *Husserliana: Edmund Husserl—Gesammelte Werke, Band 3–1* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1995). For the English translation, see Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. First Book. General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology*, trans. F. Kersten, *Husserliana: Edmund Husserl—Collected Works, Volume 2* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1982).

²⁸Edmund Husserl, *Méditations cartésiennes: introduction à la phénoménologie*, trans. Emmanuel Levinas and Gabrielle Peiffer (Paris: Almand Colin, 1931). The German text was not published until 1950. See Edmund Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge*, *Husserliana: Edmund Husserl—Gesammelte Werke, Band 1* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1950). For the English translation, see Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1960).

transcendence.²⁹ Phenomenology, using the method of radical bracketing and suspension of all commitments to actuality and being, proceeds in immanence and uncovers the hidden structures of intentional life. At the same time, phenomenology uncovers how transcendence happens, as it were, how a transcendent world comes to be constituted within immanence.

Initially, as in his 1906/1907 lectures on logic and epistemology, Husserl interprets the transcendental problematic in terms of epistemology and a radicalisation of the Cartesian and Kantian problematic of the justification of knowledge as an attainment of objectivity. He speaks of the ‘sphinx of knowledge [Die Sphinx der Erkenntnis]’³⁰—when we reflect on knowledge, it becomes something mysterious. He goes on to say that ‘the transcendence of knowledge is what perplexes me.’³¹ In this regard, he asks the question: ‘what is immanence and what is “transcendence”?’³² He asks, adapting Kant’s question in his letter to Marcus Herz: ‘How can knowledge, through the particular act, the particular series of acts, “reach beyond” and grasp, posit, know something that is valid independently of the individual act.’³³ There is no doubt that Husserl is thinking of Kant and the problem of ‘representation.’ How does mind transcend its own ‘immanence’—its internal relation to its own mental states and their contents (representations)—to reach the thing or object which is defined as that which is outside of or transcendent to the mental state and its content? In fact, in his 1907 *Ding und Raum* lectures,³⁴ Husserl explicitly invokes Kant’s famous 1772 letter to Marcus Herz.³⁵ He believes that this question of the *Triftigkeit* of knowledge can only be understood if the phenomenological reduction is effected.³⁶ This reduction brackets nature and all naturalistic understanding of the mind-object relation. We have to explore the essence of knowledge in itself—without reference to nature, in just the same way as we can explore the essence of perception in imagination. The problem is that natural and philosophical ‘position-takings’ have become mixed up.³⁷

²⁹Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge*: 134.; Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*: § 47.

³⁰Husserl, *Einleitung in der Logik und Erkenntnistheorie. Vorlesungen 1906/07*: 396.

³¹Ibid., 398.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid.; Husserl, *Introduction to Logic and the Theory of Knowledge. Lectures 1906/07*: 398.

³⁴Edmund Husserl, *Ding und Raum. Vorlesungen 1907*, *Husserliana: Edmund Husserl—Gesammelte Werke, Band 16* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1973b). For the English translation, see Edmund Husserl, *Thing and Space: Lectures of 1907*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz, *Husserliana: Edmund Husserl—Collected Works, Volume 7* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1998).

³⁵Especially in various writings from the period 1906/1907, Husserl frequently invokes Kant’s Letter to Herz. See for example, Husserl, *Ding und Raum. Vorlesungen 1907*: 139. He often alludes to Kant’s formulation in this letter in his mature works. See, for instance, Edmund Husserl, ‘Phänomenologie und Erkenntnistheorie (1917),’ in *Aufsätze und Vorträge 1911–1921*, ed. H. R. Sepp and Thomas Nenon, *Husserliana: Edmund Husserl—Gesammelte Werke, Band 25* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1987), 143.

³⁶Husserl, *Einleitung in der Logik und Erkenntnistheorie. Vorlesungen 1906/07*: 400.

³⁷Ibid., 402.

More than 20 years later, in the *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl speaks of the problem expressed in Kant's letter to Marcus Herz as being a false problem for phenomenology. It simply formulates the question incorrectly. He asks:

What does phenomenology's transcendental self-investigation have to say about this? Nothing less than that the whole problem is inconsistent. It involves an inconsistency into which Descartes necessarily fell, because he missed the genuine sense of his reduction to the indubitable we were about to say: his transcendental *epoché* and reduction to the pure ego. But, precisely because of its complete disregard of the Cartesian *epoché*, the usual post-Cartesian way of thinking is much cruder. We ask: Who then is the Ego who can rightly ask such 'transcendental' questions? As a natural man, can I rightly ask them? As a natural man, can I ask—seriously and transcendentially—how I get outside my island of consciousness and how what presents itself in my consciousness as a subjective evidence-process can acquire Objective significance? When I apperceive myself as a natural man, I have already apperceived the spatial world and construed myself as in space, where I already have an Outside Me.³⁸

For Husserl, natural life cannot even pose the problem of transcendence; we are always out there in the world. It is only a peculiar (and essentially modern) epistemological approach that can raise this question, and it misses the whole point.

In *Ideas I*, Husserl includes a number of sections where he explains how phenomenology proceeds in immanence and that various forms of transcendence or transcendent entities ('transcendencies [Tranzendenzen]') have to be excluded. These include God, the ego, and the object understood as a real part of the experience. In this sense, what is transcendent is the physical thing which is not a real part of any *Erlebnis* and which has a horizon of profiles other than the one that presents itself to me now in perception. For example, he notes that 'the physical thing is said to be, in itself, unqualifiedly transcendent.'³⁹ He furthermore elaborates in detail:

Our considerations have established that the physical thing is transcendent to the perception of it and consequently to any consciousness whatever related to it; it is transcendent not merely in the sense that the physical thing cannot be found in fact as a really inherent component of consciousness; rather the whole situation is an object of eidetic insight: *With an absolutely unconditional* universality and necessity it is the case that a physical thing cannot be given in any possible perception, in any possible consciousness, as something really inherently immanent.⁴⁰

According to Husserl, the physical thing is essentially adumbrated in profiles in all forms of perception, and this eidetic truth holds true even for God. Even God cannot contemplate all dimensions and adumbrations of a physical object at once. The *Erlebnis*, on the other hand, is always given as it is, and this is what allows phenomenological reflection to lay hold of something absolute and be given once and for all. In the application of the reduction, according to Husserl, various kinds

³⁸Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge*: 116. Husserl; Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*: § 41, 83.

³⁹Husserl, *Ideen I*: 77.; Husserl, *Ideas I*: § 42, 90.

⁴⁰Husserl, *Ideen I*: 77.; Husserl, *Ideas I*: § 42, 89.

of ‘trascendencies’ have to be excluded, including both God and ego. As he writes, ‘The transcendency God excluded [Die Transzendenz Gottes ausgeschaltet].’⁴¹ At the same time, the ego is to be reconceived as a ‘transcendence within immanence [eine Transzendenz in der Immanenz]’⁴² since it not only seems to be present in every experience but also goes beyond that specific experience as it is present in the entire stream of experiences. Even after excluding these elements, Husserl goes on to exclude essences from the experience:

Having excluded individual realities in every sense of the word, we now attempt to exclude all other sorts of ‘transcendencies.’ This attempt concerns the set of ‘universal objects,’ of essences. They are also ‘transcendent’ to pure consciousness in a certain manner; they are not found as really inherent within it. Nevertheless, we cannot go on excluding transcendencies without limit; transcendental purification cannot mean an exclusion of *all* transcendencies since otherwise even though a pure consciousness would indeed remain, there would not remain, however, any possibility of a science of pure consciousness.⁴³

These processes of methodical exclusion continue to be found in Husserl’s later writings, especially *Cartesian Meditations*. But Husserl does not have any further way of articulating precisely what he means by the manner in which various kinds of intentional object ‘transcend’ the intentional lived experiences which are directed at them. They simply exceed the viewing act.

3.5 Husserl’s Interpretation of Immanent Consciousness as Absolute Being in *Ideas I*

The procedure of phenomenological and transcendental reduction is meant to exclude objects that are really transcendent in the old sense and bring in a new way of considering things that asks how they can be constituted in their transcendent features from within consciousness. This seems to be dangerously close to reformulating Herz’s problem within phenomenology. Husserl conceives of the phenomenological reduction as in some sense a reduction to immanence, and, furthermore, within this phenomenologically reduced immanent sphere, we somehow discover the roots of the transcendent world. Husserl writes that ‘*within*

⁴¹ Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu Einer Reinen Phänomenologie und Phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die Reine Phänomenologie, 2. Halbband: Ergänzende Texte (1912–1929)*, *Husserliana: Edmund Husserl—Gesammelte Werke, Band 3–2* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1976b), § 58, 124.; Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. First Book. General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology*: § 58, 133.

⁴² Husserl, *Ideen I*: § 57, 124.; Husserl, *Ideas I*: § 57, 133.

⁴³ Husserl, *Ideen I*: § 59, 111–12.; Husserl, *Ideas I*: § 59, 135.

this “*original sphere*” (the sphere of original self-explication) we find also a “transcendent world.”⁴⁴

In the *Cartesian Meditations* and elsewhere, Husserl claims phenomenology operates within an entirely new framing of the contrast between the immanent and the transcendent—a new formulation that owes nothing to the metaphysical tradition. In this regard, both Husserl and Heidegger are seeking a new way of understanding the transcendent. Husserl writes in *Cartesian Meditations*:

This concept of the transcendental and its correlate, the concept of the transcendent, must be derived exclusively from our philosophically meditative situation . . . Just as the reduced Ego is not a piece of the world, so, conversely, neither the world nor any worldly Object is a piece of my Ego, to be found in my conscious life as a really inherent part of it, as a complex of data of sensation or a complex of acts. This ‘transcendence’ is part of the intrinsic sense of anything worldly, despite the fact that anything worldly necessarily acquires all the sense determining it, along with its existential status, exclusively from my experiencing, my objectivating, thinking, valuing, or doing, at particular times notably the status of an evidently valid being is one it can acquire only from my own evidences, my grounding acts. If this ‘transcendence,’ which consists in being non-really included, is part of the intrinsic sense of the world, then, by way of contrast, the Ego himself, who bears within him the world as an accepted sense and who, in turn, is necessarily presupposed by this sense, is legitimately called transcendental, in the phenomenological sense. Accordingly the philosophical problems arising from this correlation are called transcendental-philosophical.⁴⁵

Transcendence is an intrinsic part of anything worldly. That seems to mean, at least for Husserl, that anything other than conscious processes themselves are given in profiles, are essentially incomplete and are encountered within a horizon of intentional (and hence ‘non-real’) implication. Husserl goes on to distinguish between different forms of transcendence—in particular, distinguishing between the ‘first’ transcendence of physical things and the ‘second’ transcendence of persons. He explicates the phenomenological concept of transcendence in terms of intentional constitution and being somehow generated ‘within the ego’:

Transcendence in every form is a within-the-ego self-constituting being-sense. Every imaginable sense, every imaginable being, whether the latter is called immanent or transcendent, falls within the domain of transcendental subjectivity, as the subjectivity that constitutes sense and being.⁴⁶

Husserl insists on this point: there is no being or sense possible outside of the domain constituted by transcendental subjectivity. He notes:

Transcendency in every form is an immanent existential characteristic, constituted within the ego. Every imaginable sense, every imaginable being, whether the latter is called immanent or transcendent, falls within the domain of transcendental subjectivity, as the subjectivity that constitutes sense and being. The attempt to conceive the universe of true

⁴⁴Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge*: 135.; Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*: § 47, 104–05.

⁴⁵Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge*: 65.; Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*: § 11, 26.

⁴⁶Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge*: 117.; Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*: § 41, 83–4. Translation modified.

being as something lying outside the universe of possible consciousness, possible knowledge, possible evidence, the two being related to one another merely externally by a rigid law, is nonsensical. They belong together essentially; and, as belonging together essentially, they are also concretely one, one in the only absolute concretion: transcendental subjectivity. If transcendental subjectivity is the universe of possible sense, then an outside is precisely nonsense.⁴⁷

Transcendental subjectivity is the ‘universe of possible sense.’ It is impossible to postulate something beyond it. Every objectivity is what it is precisely through the constitution of transcendental subjectivity. Husserl is clearly interpreting the transcendental in terms of transcendental idealism.

Heidegger was uneasy with these blatantly idealist formulations, which seemed to fall back into the very subjectivist trap from which phenomenology had been trying to escape. Heidegger is also—and this is very evident in the ‘Letter on “Humanism”’—trying to combat the impression that somehow Dasein makes things appear and controls the manner of their appearing. Constitution is not to be construed as creation, Heidegger says elsewhere. For Heidegger, Husserl is offering too subjectivist a construal of the peculiar transcendence of Dasein. Heidegger also criticizes Husserl for not having thought through a proper notion of the grounding relation. In ‘*Vom Wesen des Grundes*,’ Heidegger discusses the problem of ‘ground’ by situating it within the problem of truth or disclosure, and then goes on to say that to understand truth is to raise the question of transcendence: ‘the question about the essence of ground becomes *the problem of transcendence*’ (VWG, p. 135). But Husserl did attempt to give a new transcendental account of groundedness and of the factual grounding of the world. Thus, in *Erste Philosophie (1923/24)*, in an essay entitled ‘Kant’s Copernican Revolution and the Sense of such a Copernican Turn in General,’ he writes the following:

The question on the part of the human being living in the natural attitude concerning the ground of the fact of this world becomes, in the transcendental internal attitude, the question as to the ground of the being of these factual subjectivities and the constitution of the world taking place in them factually, including that of all factually fulfilled conditions of the possibility of such constitutions. What meaning the concept of ‘ground’ at stake here can have and what it can be which does not let us rest in peace with this fact, that is a new question, which points to a higher level of transcendental research.⁴⁸

Just as disclosure involves closure and revealing is always accompanied by a concealing, so too Heidegger’s way of conceiving of ‘ground’ always connects it with the notion of the ‘abyss [Abgrund]’ (VWG, p. 174). Furthermore, the manner of apprehending Dasein’s temporal transcendence has to vary depending on whether we are approaching its mode of being from the standpoint of everydayness [das Man] or the standpoint of authentic selfhood.

⁴⁷Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen*: 117.; Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*: § 41, 83–4.

⁴⁸Edmund Husserl, *Erste Philosophie (1923/24)*. *Erster Teil: Kritische Ideengeschichte, Husserliana: Edmund Husserl—Gesammelte Werke, Band 7* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1956), 220.

3.6 Heidegger's Critique of Husserl on Transcendence

In his Marburg lectures in the 1920s, Heidegger already criticizes Husserl's understanding of immanence and transcendence. Thus, in his discussion of Husserl's *Ideas I* in his 1925 *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* lectures, Heidegger writes critically of Husserl's four determinations of consciousness (GA 20, § 11), which he sees to continue to harbour metaphysical prejudices despite Husserl's official pronouncements. These four determinations of consciousness are:

1. Consciousness is immanent being.
2. Consciousness is absolute being in the sense of absolute givenness.
3. Consciousness is absolutely given in the sense of lacking nothing for its existence ('*nulla re indigent ad existendum*').
4. Consciousness is pure being.

Heidegger finds that all these determinations can be traced back to Descartes. He states critically:

The elaboration of pure consciousness as the thematic field of phenomenology is not derived phenomenologically by going back [Rückgang] to the matters themselves but by going back to a traditional idea of philosophy. (GA 20, p. 147)

In these 1925 *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* lectures, Heidegger is particularly critical of Husserl's conception of immanence. He interprets immanence as meaning being-in-something else: 'immanence implies . . . to be in another [in einanderensein]' (GA 20, p. 142). For Husserl, furthermore, immanence is understood as a relation that is possible between lived experiences themselves, between the reflecting act and the reflected (GA 20, § 11a, pp. 142–43). The problem is the following: what kind of relationship is involved here? The concept of the 'immanent' is really the concept of something being related to, but the nature of this relation has not been clarified.

Heidegger then offers his solution: intentionality must be understood not as an inner-outer relation (which retains all the problems of the Cartesian way and also of Brentano's notion of *Inexistenz*) but based on Dasein's transcendence. Dasein already transcends towards the world. In his 1925 lectures, Heidegger makes interesting remarks about the nature of 'being-in' and 'being-with [Sein-bei].' He speaks of the manner in which the snail is in its shell. When the snail sticks its head out of the shell, it is not now entering the world, as if it did not belong to the world before. Even in its shell, it is out in the world (GA 20, p. 223).

The 1925 discussion in *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* sets the stage for the bold pronouncements to be found in *Being and Time*, § 69, entitled 'The temporality of being-in-the-world and the problem of the transcendence of the world [Transzendenz der Welt].' Heidegger interprets intentionality in terms of transcendence but then sees transcendence as deeply implicated in the individuality of Dasein. This individuality has to be generated through the manner in which each Dasein lives out its temporal existence. It is worth recording the later enigmatic note that Heidegger wrote in his copy and which the editors inserted into the

Gesamtausgabe edition of *Being and Time*: ‘Transcendence as the ecstatic—timeliness—temporality, but ‘horizon’! Being covered up as being. Transcendence, however, of the truth of Being: the Event of appropriation’ (GA 2, p. 5na).⁴⁹ Heidegger recasts the problem of transcendence as a problem about how Dasein both belongs to the world in a very special sense and also lives out its individual existence:

The ‘problem of transcendence’ cannot be brought round to the question of how a subject comes out to an object, where the aggregate of objects is identified with the idea of the world. Rather we must ask: what makes it ontologically possible for entities to be encountered within-the-world and objectified as so encountered? This can be answered with recourse to the transcendence of the world—a transcendence with an ecstatico-horizonal foundation. (SZ, § 69c, pp. 417–18, 366)

It cannot be said that Heidegger answers the question of the individuality of Dasein in a satisfactory manner in *Being and Time*. Heidegger’s effort to relate intentionality, subjectivity and transcendence continues immediately after *Being and Time*. Thus, in his ‘*Vom Wesen des Grundes*,’ he states unequivocally that ‘to be a subject means to be in and as transcendence’ (VWG, p. 138). Here, he is more or less repeating the stance that he had already taken in his *Basic Problems of Phenomenology* where he writes that ‘intentionality is the *ratio cognoscendi* of transcendence. Transcendence is the *ratio essendi* of intentionality in its diverse modes’ (GA 24, § 9, p. 91). And in his 1928 lectures *Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, Heidegger also proclaims that ‘to be a subject means to transcend’ (GA 26, § 11, p. 211).

But again, we should be clear—and perhaps this slowly dawned on Heidegger—that this interpretation of intentionality in terms of transcendence remains close to Husserl’s own formulations. In his *Formal and Transcendental Logic* (1929),⁵⁰ from exactly the same period as Heidegger’s writings on the topic, Husserl also speaks of intentionality as involving transcendence:

It is the *universal ideality of all intentional unities* over against the *multiplicities* constituting them. In it consists the ‘*transcendence*’ belonging to all species of objectivities over against the consciousness of them (and in an appropriately altered but corresponding manner, the transcendence belonging to this or that ego of a consciousness, understood as the subject-pole of the consciousness.) If, in spite of this, we still *separate immanent from transcendent objects*, that can only involve a distinction *within* this broadest concept of transcendence. In no respect does it alter the fact that likewise the transcendence belonging to the real (the objective in a pre-eminent sense) is constituted in respect of its being and sense exclusively in the immanent sphere, the sphere of the multiplicities of consciousness, and that the *transcendence belonging to the real as such, is a particular form of ‘ideality’* or better, of a *psychic irreality*; the irreality of something that itself, with all that belongs to it in its own essence, actually or possibly *makes its appearance* in the purely phenomeno-

⁴⁹The whole note reads: ‘transcendens freilich nicht—trotz alles metaphysischen Anklangs—scholastisch und griechisch-platonisch *koinon*, sondern Transzendenz als das Ekstatische—Zeitlichkeit—Temporalität; aber “Horizont”! Seyn hat Seyendes “überdacht.” Transzendenz aber von Wahrheit des Seyns her: das Ereignis.’

⁵⁰Edmund Husserl, *Formale und transzendente Logik. Versuch einer Kritik der logischen Vernunft, Husserliana: Edmund Husserl—Gesammelte Werke, Band 17* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1974). For the English translation, see Edmund Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, trans. Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1969).

logical sphere of consciousness *and yet* in such a manner that it is evidently *no real part of moment of consciousness*, no real psychic datum.⁵¹

But—as Becker will recognize in his 1937 paper—Heidegger begins to associate the transcendence of Dasein more and more with ‘nothingness’ and with grounding understood as the abyss. Thus, in his 1929 ‘*Was ist Metaphysik?*’ lecture, he declares:

Da-sein means: being held out into the nothing [Hineingehaltenheit in das Nichts]. Holding itself out into the nothing, Dasein is in each case already beyond beings as a whole. This being beyond beings we call *transcendence* [Dieses Hinaussein über das Seiende nennen wir *Transzendenz*]. If in the ground of its essence Dasein were not transcending, which now means, if it were not in advance holding itself out into the nothing, then it could never be related to beings nor even toward itself. Without the original manifestation of the nothing, no self-being [Selbstsein] and no freedom. (WM, p. 115)

Dasein’s transcendence means that it is holding itself out in the ‘nothing’—its grounding comes in being released for grounding. The kind of transcendence which Dasein possesses is precisely its ‘freedom for ground’ (VWG, p. 165). In terms close to Jaspers, if humans did not have this relation to nothing, they could not have ‘self-being.’ Something can only be itself if it is open to its ground, which is really transcendent nothingness. Heidegger connects that releasement towards grounding with freedom.

In ‘*Vom Wesen des Grundes*,’ Heidegger is critical of Husserl’s understanding of the groundedness of human subjectivity. Here, he connects ‘transcendence’ with intentionality:

If one characterizes all *comportment* towards beings as intentional, then *intentionality* is possible only *on the grounds of transcendence*. Intentionality, however, is neither identical with transcendence nor, conversely, does it itself make transcendence possible. (VWG, p. 135)

Dasein transcends towards the ‘world.’ Transcendence essentially characterizes Dasein as being-in-the-world. How does worldhood manifest itself? Transcendence has a temporal ‘ecstatic’ character: ‘The ecstatic unity of temporality—that is the unity of the “outside-of-itself” [in future, past, present] is the condition for the possibility that there can be an entity which exists as its “there”’ (SZ, § 69, p. 350). For Heidegger, transcendence is always towards *the world*, but the world is never an object, or even something that can be said to exist. ‘The world,’ in Heidegger’s notorious phrase, ‘worlds’ [Welt ist nie, sondern *weltet*] (VWG, p. 164).

Another constant theme is that transcendence cannot be understood in any religious-Christian-Platonic sense as towards another non-sensory realm or involving any denial of or renunciation of the world. All transcendence is what he calls ‘finite transcendence.’ Heidegger also wants to express this finite transcendence in terms of ‘thrownness [Geworfenheit]’ and ‘projection [Entwurf].’ Dasein exists as ‘thrown’ (SZ, § 29, p. 134–40). In his later years, especially in *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*, the concept of transcendence recedes into the

⁵¹ Husserl, *Formale und transzendente Logik. Versuch einer Kritik der logischen Vernunft*: § 62, 148.; Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic*: § 62, 165–66.

background. Heidegger continues to articulate (now more inspired by Nietzsche) a rejection of the two-world theory of Platonized Christianity. Thus, he writes:

Even when ‘transcendence’ is grasped differently than up to now, namely as *surpassing* and not as the *super-sensible* as a being, even then this determination all too easily dissembles what is ownmost to Dasein. For, even in this way, transcendence still presupposes an *under and this-side* [*Unten und Diesseits*] and is in danger of still being misinterpreted after all as the action of an ‘I’ and subject. And finally even this concept of transcendence continues to be stuck in Platonism. (GA 65, § 199, p. 322)

In *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*, Heidegger also acknowledges that his speaking of ‘human Dasein’ in *Being and Time* and elsewhere had been misleading since it suggested there might be another kind of Dasein e.g. animal or plant Dasein. In fact, only human beings can be Dasein: ‘Da-sein—the being that distinguishes human being *in its possibility*; thus Dasein then no longer needs the addition “human”’ (GA 65, § 176, p. 301). He also tries to re-interpret his talk in *Being and Time* of the ‘understanding of being’ in a way that does not make being in some way ‘subjective’:

Indeed it [understanding of being] overcomes all ‘subjectivity’ and shifts man into the openness of being, poses him as the one who is exposed to beings (and before that, to the truth of be-ing). (GA 65, p. 303)

In later years, Heidegger sought to eradicate the ‘subjectivism’ that he felt continued to haunt *Being and Time*. His *Kehre* or ‘turning’ is also a reversal, from beings to being, from human wilfulness to the ‘sending of being.’ Dasein is now said to ‘unfold in the throw of being’ (BH, p. 327). Its selfhood is now something that seems to come from elsewhere and absolutely not from some kind of self-constitution of the ego, as in Husserl, or from the self-knowing of absolute subjectivity, as in Hegel. The problem remains, however, that Heidegger gives us no new language with which to articulate this new conception of subjectivity that he is supposed to be advocating. In the later Heidegger, as in the earlier, there is a strong sense that language—and not just the language of metaphysics but the language of thinking—has failed him.⁵²

3.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, we can recognize that Heidegger does see himself as offering a radical re-thinking of the nature of intentionality in terms of the transcendence of Dasein. He tries to articulate this notion of ‘transcendence’ in various ways but eventually abandons this language. In fact, as we have shown, Heidegger is not

⁵²In his ‘Letter on “Humanism,”’ Heidegger explains that the third division of Part One of *Being and Time* was held back because ‘thinking failed in the adequate saying of this turning and did not succeed with the help of the language of metaphysics’ (GA 9, pp. 327–28). However, the ‘other thinking’ of the later Heidegger does not appear to have any adequate way of expressing the meaning of Dasein’s self-being either.

radically going beyond Husserl's own understanding of the kind of 'immanent transcendence' that characterizes the nature of the intentional relation. Both recognize that intentionality is possible only against a backdrop of a world which always is presumed but which is never presented as an object of experience. The relations between Heidegger's and Husserl's conceptions of worldhood remain to be explored, and this would be an important project for twenty-first century Heidegger studies. Finally, it is important to recognise that Heidegger, as much as Husserl, sought to think through the relation that Husserl calls the 'noetic-noematic correlation.' Heidegger as a phenomenologist and as a transcendental philosopher (although he eventually abandons the language of transcendental philosophy) remains committed to the essential a priori correlation between Dasein and Sein. Phenomenology as a transcendental philosophy remains correlationism. This needs to be understood in light of the new speculative realist readings of Heidegger.

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