PHENOMENOLOGY AS FINDINGNESS: THINKING WITH HEIDEGGER

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ABSTRACT

"Phenomenology" has taken on such a variety of definitions that it behooves anyone referring to the method to explain exactly what she means by it. The present essay characterizes phenomenology as a practice rather than as a theoretical framework. It is a means of gathering what Heidegger calls "phenomenological facts." The attempt is to discern Heidegger's practice of the method in *Being and Time*, hopefully allowing us both to better understand that work and to further pursue the hermeneutic of human existence. Following a quick review of some of the difficulties interpreting *Being and Time*, Husserl's phenomenology is reviewed with help from Sartre. The phenomenology of *Being and Time* is then characterized as a mode of *befindlichkeit*, findingness. In this way "Dasein", finds itself constantly and essentially. Phenomenology makes that finding, as opposed to what is found, explicit: finding finds itself.

Keywords: Phenomenology; Heidegger; Dasein; Befindlichkeit

Introduction

> "The word [phenomenology] merely informs us of the "*how*" with which *what* is to be treated... gets exhibited (Heidegger, *Being and Time*)."**2**

"Phenomenology" has taken on such a variety of definitions that it behooves anyone claiming to utilize the method to explain exactly what she means by it. Relying on *Being and Time* and *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*³ I characterize the *how* of Heidegger's phenomenology in terms of *befindlichkeit*, findingness. The argument is motivated by some of the difficulties of interpretation so as to discern what Heidegger may have been doing in an attempt to think *with* him: How can we understand what Heidegger was doing in such a way that we can understand not just what he meant but, more, what he understood? My intent is to stake out a mode of phenomenology as a method, rather than as a theoretical framework, that I hope to pursue in subsequent work.

It is to be acknowledged that given nearly a century of disagreement and the mountainous range of Heidegger scholarship, claims to finally understand him or to cover new ground sound rather foolish. Accordingly, although the form of the argument is that this is what Heidegger was attempting, and although I believe that I am correct, I claim only that phenomenology as findingness provides a useful way of reading *Being and Time* and of pursuing something like Heidegger's project.

One difficulty in writing about *Being and Time* is that the very meaning of key concepts is matter of contention. What, precisely, does Heidegger mean by "authenticity", "world", "*das Man*", "*befindlichkeit*", "Dasein", for that matter, "*sein*"? While it is clear that Heidegger is using words in ways that depart from their usual signification,⁴ commentators often force these concepts in existing well-understood terms, potentially jettisoning Heidegger's breakthrough insights. Moreover, many or all of these concepts are so interrelated with the others that we cannot define any one without simultaneously defining all the others within the whole.

That puts efforts to interpret the work into something of a hermeneutic circle, made the more difficult in that *Being and Time* itself is pursuing the hermeneutic circle of thematizing Dasein *as* understanding understanding itself. Even those of us who attempt to work out what is genuinely new and who recognize the interrelatedness, often attempt to put these concepts together like pieces of a puzzle, thus arguably falling into the kind of metaphysics that Heidegger is trying to transcend (or "destroy"). We ask, for example, "What is Dasein?", "What is world?", and "What is *das Man*?" Even realizing correctly that they are mutually defining, we ask what kind of thing each is. Dasein is an "entity"; world and *das Man* are "existentialia", thus in some way constitutive of Dasein. But we persist in taking these as items set in front of the philosopher who queries them after their being, as it were looking at them. That is, tacitly taking the subject matter as what Heidegger calls present-at-hand, the very approach he seeks to avoid.[5]

The situation may be illustrated with attempts to understand what Heidegger meant by "Dasein": "This entity, which each of us is himself,"[6] "we *are* it each of us, we ourselves."[7] "Dasein", in these formulations could refer to the individual person or to something broader. We could, for example substitute "human" for "Dasein": "We are human, each of us," and it is unclear whether I should say, "I am Dasein", "I am a Dasein", "We are Dasein", or something entirely different. Interpretations vary from "person", to "way of living" of which persons are "cases" (Haugeland),[8] to enculturated human individuals, or perhaps the culture that is "in them" (Dreyfus),[9] to an incompleteness[10] or "clearing" that allows there to be a world (Sheehan).[11] We understand, at least superficially, that Dasein is neither a present-at-hand object nor a ready-to-hand item of gear, but rather that for which such entities are what and how they are. Based on the text, we then construct models of Dasein as a purposeful defining agent within networks of possibilities giving meaning to the nexus of equipment, thus constituting or disclosing a world of "significance". As adequately as these models may make sense of *Being and Time* they may remain models of a world objectively in front of us. That is to say, we

tend in spite of ourselves to reduce the entities and extentialia of *Being and Time* to a holistic yet present-at-hand network. In particular, some reduce *Being and Time* essentially to social psychology (e.g. Dreyfus, Haugeland). Such models put the ontic cart before the ontological horse, explaining ontological structures in terms of the ontic phenomena for which they are supposed to be the "foundations"[12]; as Charles Guignon has it, "Since fundamental ontology is supposed to lay a foundation for such regional sciences as biology and psychology, it cannot begin by taking over their assumptions about the nature of man."[13] Such models are examples of what Heidegger called "leveling":[14]

> "The context of assignments or references, which, as significance, is constitutive for worldhood, can be taken formally in the sense of a system of Relations. But one must note that in such formalizations the phenomena get levelled off so much that their real phenomenal content may be lost."[15]

Reading *Being and Time*, in the way that I would argue Heidegger meant it to be read, requires that beyond trying to make sense of the bewildering maze of strange concepts, we ask, not only what they mean, but also how did he come up with them. The book is neither speculative metaphysics nor logical elaboration of self-evident propositions but is rather built on a certain kind of "data" that Heidegger occasionally calls "phenomenal facts", "phenomenal content" in the just-cited passage. The question in this essay is not: What did Heidegger mean by "Dasein"? but: How did he, and how can we, get access to it and to those "phenomenal facts"? The answer, of course is phenomenology. But what is Heidegger's phenomenology?

Phenomenology as *Befindlichkeit*

Some recent understandings of phenomenology make of it little more than asking "What is it like to be or to do something?", but that hardly fits Heidegger's definition of phenomenology as "the science of

the Being of entities—ontology."[16] Dreyfus' definition of Heidegger's phenomenology as, "an 'attitude' or practice in 'seeing' that takes its departure from lived experience,"[17] is not wrong, but is of limited help.

Under "The Preliminary Conception of Phenomenology," Heidegger himself defines it formally as "to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself."[18] Phenomenology as such, "does not subscribe to a 'standpoint' or represent any specific 'direction',"[19] avoids preconceptions,[20] and is "rooted in the way we come to terms with the things themselves," (Heidegger 1962, 27). It goes, citing Husserl's maxim, "to the things themselves."[21] It is a mode of revealing phenomena rather than a mode of reasoning *per se*. That means also that phenomenology goes astray when the assertions it produces, however true, are then used as premises from which further truths may be deduced with apodictic certainty. Phenomenology certainly does produce assertions and concepts, but however complex they may become, the concepts must remain bound up with the phenomena of their origins as "exhibited": phenomenology must be "self-critical".[22] This, again, has to do with the *how* without indicating *what* Heidegger proposes investigating, but, as it turns out we must at least touch on the "what" in order to understand the "how".

What Heidegger hopes to force into the open, to "show itself", is the being of entities, or at least the *meaning* of being. It would be futile to ask at this point what Heidegger means by "being" or by the "meaning", or *sense*, of "being". That is precisely what he does not know beyond a vague "pre-ontological" sense and the principle that being is always the being of some entity. We cannot, that is to say, identify the *object* of the research and directly query it as to its essence; neither can we attempt to locate an already understood object within a haystack of entities. Being is not in any sense an entity; it "is" the *reality* of entities, and Heidegger wants to discover what that "means". Rather, we are to engage in this method of allowing phenomena to show themselves, in particular allowing some entity to show itself along with its being, whatever that may turn out to mean. The entity to let show itself is that to which we are closest, to which

we have intimate access: ourselves, "Dasein". Dasein's being, however is ordinarily concealed covered over by the "appearances" and "semblances" of everyday life. That is to say, being appears in phenomena that are not themselves being but somehow point back to it, or being appears as semblances that may parade as being, but are not. Yet appearances and semblances *are*, that is they manifest, albeit misleadingly, the being that they conceal.[23] Thus the initial target is everyday existence, letting our own ordinary existing show itself in such a way as to reveal the being "behind" or "of" it. The extent to which Heidegger follows this program may be questioned, but in any case, the "how" of the phenomenology of *Being and Time*, is reflexive, a way of viewing ourselves. Thomas Sheehan, however, insists that Heidegger's central topic is "not 'being'—at least not in any of the usual meanings of that term—but rather what [Heidegger] calls the 'clearing' of and for being" where entities and their being, "can become actually manifest in human experience."[24] The "clearing", in turn, has something intimately to do with, or in some sense *is* Dasein.[25] That is, Dasein holds open and is the clearing in which entities appear in their being: Dasein, in one of Heidegger's formulations, is its own "there". Sheehan's treatment provides important clues to what Heidegger means by both phenomenology and Dasein. Dasein's own "opening" and "clearing", he maintains, is the subject matter for the phenomenology of *Being and Time*. I think he's right and suspect that, *Being and Time* represents the search for, rather than an exposition of, the "meaning of Being," which we neither know nor understand in advance, leading to discovery of the "clearing" in which entities may appear in their being. At this point, however, that is only a clue, while confirming the reflexive nature of Heidegger's phenomenology. Sheehan[26] and others also characterize phenomenology as correlation research, very roughly, concerned with the correlation between human reality (or possibility) and world; better, perhaps, between human activity and the meanings found or constituted in the world, or for Husserl, *noesis* and *noema*. This is not wrong, but we must understand that neither the correlations nor even the correlated terms themselves are entities laid out before us like specimens in the

laboratory. Rather the "correlations" are the engagements (for Heidegger: being there, appropriations, accommodations, *erignis*) we ourselves have, or are, in the world; we should not think in terms of the "addition of an object to a subject,"[27] or assume in advance a correlation of distinct terms. In any case, our question here is not the "question of Being," but more modestly, how to dive into this correlation/clearing/Dasein, ourselves, so as to elucidate what occurs "there": How does Heidegger access the phenomena that he so profoundly elucidates?

Heidegger indicates what I take to be a succinct, if at first cryptic, statement of his method on page six of *Being and Time*, where he writes, in effect, that the inquiry must interrogate itself and that we ourselves are the inquiry and the interrogation, hence we must be made transparent in our very being.

Husserl and Sartre

But all this still sounds more like the ideal of a method than the method itself. The "how" of letting phenomena show themselves in themselves is as yet anything but clear. How is interrogation to interrogate itself? What does one *do* in order to access and investigate Dasein's, i.e. my/her/our/humanity's, *own*, "there" or "opening of the clearing"? Heidegger credits Husserl with initiating the methodology so we turn there for enlightenment, specifically to *Logical Investigations* and *The Idea of Phenomenology*.[28]

Unlike Heidegger, Husserl takes consciousness as the entity to be elucidated. That approach greatly facilitates, one might even say makes possible, the explanation of the method. He also takes it that consciousness is intrinsically intentional, consciousness *of* something other than itself: he assumes a subjectivity facing a transcendent objectivity. Husserl, however, is not directly interested in the objects of consciousness, not even in whether or not they exist independently. Rather he is interested in the structures of consciousness itself, including or especially intentionality. Those structures are not to be discovered by introspection, however, which turns "inner" events into the objects of intentionality and thus misses the

intentionality and other structures of introspection themselves. Thus the empirical ego, the subject, is also not of direct interest, and along with the objects of consciousness is bracketed out of direct consideration in what Husserl calls "phenomenological reduction". It is necessary to the project that consciousness is also aware of itself and that this self-awareness of consciousness-of-something can be made explicit and articulated:

> "But while I am perceiving I can also regard this perception itself in an act of pure seeing, just as it is, ignoring its relation to the ego, or abstracting from that relation. The perception thus grasped and delimited in "seeing" is then an absolute perception, devoid of every transcendence, given as a pure phenomenon in the phenomenological sense. Thus to every psychological experience there corresponds, by way of the phenomenological reduction, a pure phenomenon that exhibits its immanent essence (taken individually) as an absolute givenness. All positing of a "nonimmanent reality," a reality not contained in the phenomenon and therefore not given in the second sense, even if it is intended in the phenomenon, is shut off that is, suspended."[29]

I understand the purpose here as not so much to take the object of intentionality out of consideration altogether as it is to bring the intentionality itself into the light. The point is not so much suspending *belief* in the reality of transcendent entities, as to avoid being *immersed* in them and losing sight of the immediate consciousness-*of* them.

As Sartre, eloquent as always, will put it later, consciousness is pre-reflectively conscious of itself as consciousness of something *else*,[30] belief, for example is awareness of belief[31] and "every positional consciousness of an object is at the same time a non-positional consciousness of itself."[32] Pre-reflective self-awareness, in turn, can be made explicit and articulable by phenomenological "reflection". Heidegger said virtually the same thing, without starting from consciousness, ten or so years earlier.[33] It is important to keep in mind that what Sartre means by "non-reflective," or

"non-positional" self-awareness of consciousness is not a second, distinct consciousness, but a constitutive feature of every consciousness. It is not that consciousness could or should be self aware, but that without self-awareness there is no consciousness at all.

A short diversion into Husserl's specific concerns in *Logical Investigations* may help to illustrate. Husserl was specifically pursuing the grounds of those operations by which we achieve certainty about entities and the logic by which we weave certainties into theoretical wholes, particularly in science. As human beings we perform these operations, and as scientists we refine that performance to high levels. But the grounds of such operations remain unclear and thus the sciences stand on less than firm foundations, according to Husserl. Such grounds can be elucidated, he believes, by exploring phenomenologically the ways in which consciousness assigns meaning to entities and relations among them. Since scientific knowledge, and truth and knowledge generally, is inescapably involved with linguistic expression, much of Husserl's work focuses on the structures of thinking and verbal expression—not in the form of semantics and grammar, however, but in terms of the "mental acts" which are associated with and give meaning to expression.[34]

All thought thinks about some state of affairs as its object, and thinking follows certain universal rules in the construction of knowledge. What is the structure of consciousness such that it takes objects in this way and that it follows these rules? What is the ultimate provenance of those rules? The difficulty in attempting to answer such questions is that we slip into thinking about the states of affairs and the rules rather than the thinking and the origins of the rules as such.[35] We know the rules of logic, for example, that they are right and how to follow them; but what is the status of this "knowing that they are right" and what is consciousness doing when it follows them? When I construct a proof, I do not mechanically follow logical rules—that would require randomly trying out a potentially infinite set of steps, essentially an AI search problem. That's not at all what happens. First, I have a prior sense (possibly wrong) that the conclusion follows from the premises.

Then *somehow* I "see" possible pathways and try them out—discarding those part way through when I "see" that they are futile. Similarly, in positing new theorems I do not randomly apply the rules of logic to prior axioms and theorems hoping something significant results. Rather I "see" possibilities and among all conceivable solutions, I "see" which ones may be real possibilities. In what does this "seeing" consist? What is consciousness really doing here? The difficulty in answering such questions, again, "lies in the unnatural direction of intuition and thought which phenomenological analysis requires."[36] We must learn to practice "reflection" (Husserl's quotes). The acts of consciousness which take states of affairs as objects of thought must themselves be made "objects of apprehension", apprehended in the act of taking objects.[37] One of his most important discoveries, at least as far as Heidegger is concerned, was of the "categorial intuition", that is, in intuiting an object we also intuit its being. In perceiving an existing inkpot, e.g. we also intuit "that it is",[38] its isness, so to speak. Again: the phenomenological glance does not intuit "that it is"; rather the phenomenological glance uncovers the intuition. As discovery rather than logical conclusion, identifying and articulating the phenomenal fact of the categorial intuition was possible only by making acts of consciousness themselves explicit.

Saying that acts of consciousness must be made the objects of apprehension, however, is an unfortunate way of putting it inasmuch as making consciousness-of-X the "object" in the usual sense of the word would displace X as the object of intentionality so that consciousness-of-X evaporates. What is required is to uncover, or "apprehend", consciousness-of-X, while maintaining X as the object; that is to say making consciousness-of-X's implicit *self* awareness explicit. For example, if I now think directly about *doing-a-proof*, I make *that* the object, and miss the desired phenomenological target. What is required is that I do the proof, letting that activity's non-reflective self-awareness become explicit. Another way of putting self-awareness is to say that consciousness is imminent to itself, and Husserl thus writes of "immanent" analysis, content, description etc., again emphasizing

the great difficulty of maintaining the "unnatural" phenomenological perspective.**39** Nevertheless, phenomenological description and analysis of *consciousness-of* must refer also to the object, not indeed as a transcendent entity, i.e. not positing it, but as a constitutive element of consciousness-of-something: there is no doing-a-proof without something to be proven. This may be expressed also in reverse order. Attending fully and without preconceptions to the subject matter, in this case the proof, reveals also consciousness, the *doing*, as constituent of the object, the *proof*; the target of phenomenology is then really the whole: doing-a-proof, that is, the "correlation". This is essentially the tack Heidegger takes in describing his phenomenology as letting entities show themselves in themselves, and in beginning his substantive exploration of Dasein by an exploration of the world. Attending to the *world* reveals also the entity who *has* a world. That approach allows Heidegger to avoid implications of introspection and reifications of consciousness and the subject. In other words, "without preconceptions" includes jettisoning entrenched subject/object assumptions so as to "let" phenomena simply appear.

To give a quick summary, the subject matter of phenomenology, "the thing itself," is experience rather than what is experienced (Husserl 2001, 86), but experience as a whole, thus including *also* what is experienced without being distracted by it, neither the entities encountered nor the entity who encounters, but the encounter itself. We can refine that a bit by pointing out that while Husserl's early phenomenological target, as presented here, was the theoretical attitude, Heidegger's was living in the world.**40**

The possible equivocation of "object" noted above illustrates another problem. As Husserl notes (Husserl 2001, 91), our language is suited almost exclusively to the description of transcendent states of affairs apprehended from the natural "direction of intuition and thought" such that we simply have no words—and perhaps no grammar and logic—with which to express our phenomenological discoveries and carry out our analyses. That fact accounts for Heidegger's nonstandard use of language—giving unusual meanings to terms and inventing new

ones: it's not just that he is proposing novel philosophical concepts or being poetic, but that he's working from within the phenomenological perspective.[41] What that also means is that the only way to understand Heidegger, or for that matter, Husserl, among others, is to enter into that perspective ourselves.

Back to Heidegger

In what I would call a more radical reduction, Heidegger suspends not only direct concern with the transcendent reality of entities and independent existence of the empirical ego, but also with consciousness itself. We cannot then explain his methods in terms of self-aware intentional consciousness. The broad outlines of the method nevertheless remain. He asserts in *Basic Problems* something very like Sartre's pre-reflective self awareness: "Dasein... is always already consciously with its own self, is disclosed for itself."[42] More, in *Being and Time* he writes that Dasein, the "entity which each of us is himself,"[43] is an entity such that "in its very Being that Being is an *issue* for it.... Dasein, in its Being, has a relationship toward that Being—a relationship which itself is one of Being. And this means further that there is some way in which Dasein understands itself."[44] Simply put, the "object" of the enquiry has to do with the enquirer, we ourselves,[45] yet not through introspection, "the ego bent around backward and staring at itself," rather, "the self is there for the Dasein itself without reflection and without inner perception *before all reflection*."[46] Substituting "consciousness" for "Dasein", these characterizations closely resemble Sartre's insistence upon pre-reflective-self-awareness, that self-awareness is constitutive of consciousness[47], and that, "consciousness of being is the being of consciousness",[48] though perhaps we should better say that Sartre's treatment resembles Heidegger's.[49] What of intentionality? Since, unlike Sartre and Husserl, Heidegger does not start with consciousness, or deal with it directly at all, he does not address intentionality by name in *Being and Time*, though there are analogues, for example, "being-towards", and, indeed, "being-in-the-world". He does discuss intentionality explicitly and in detail in *Basic*

Problems,[50] defining it as "the structure of directing-oneself-toward, of being-directed toward," and notes, "Our inquiry will concentrate precisely on seeing this phenomenon [intentionality] more clearly."[51] Later in the book, he virtually equates phenomenology, at least in part, with intuiting and interpreting intentionality.[52]

Similarly, his conception and adoption of phenomenological reduction, elucidates as much as differs from Husserl's.[53]

One effect of Heidegger's more radical reduction is to open up the field of inquiry beyond individual conscious acts to include the whole of "being-in-the-world", and of "being-with" others, shifting the focus from static consciousness of an object, to living out into possibilities of the world. "Being-in" for him "is a state of Dasein's Being; an existentiale",[54] that is constitutive of Dasein: Dasein does not exist as an isolated self-contained entity, but only as involved in a situation or environment.

It should by now be evident that what Heidegger means by "phenomenal facts", are those data that are intuited by what Husserl called the "pure seeing" of "pure phenomena" in the quotation cited above. The phrase is first used in *Being and Time* at p. 119 to refer to the way that events are actually experienced as opposed to "Theoretically concocted 'explanations'". For example, on page 218 Heidegger notes the "phenomenal fact" that when one makes an assertion about something not immediately present, she refers to the thing itself, not to a representation, as some psychological theories would "explain" such events. Phenomenal facts are data reported from within experience itself, describing neither what is experienced nor the experiencer, but experience, what remains after the "reduction".[55]

Findingness

Bracketing out consciousness along with subject and object, what we are left with, not as a merely analytic inference, but as a reduction or redirection of attention, is no longer knowledge, thought, and the like, but just naked being here, or as I shall put it, "*this-here*".[56] That we can *speak* of this-here allows us to expand that to "(self-aware)

this-here" able to describe itself. I introduce this concept for the sake of exposition, as evidently overlapping with Heidegger's "Dasein", but lacking its ambiguity. I find myself phenomenologically, bracketing out all content, *here* without any locational connotations, as just *this*. Heidegger himself begins with being-there/existence, "*dasein*". As with other phenomenological concepts, the self-awareness of *this-here* is not a first premise from which to make inferences, but an initial discovery from which to explore further. If the self-awareness were strictly a logical inference from *saying* "this-here", saying "(self-aware) this-here" would allow us to infer self awareness of self awareness in infinite iteration. Rather, this implicit self-awareness is immediately, imminently, evident, one of Husserl's "things themselves" or Heidegger's "phenomenal facts" (c.f. Sartre 1992, 12). But neither is *this-here*, or Dasein or self-awareness, an object set up for the philosopher as spectator.

(Self aware) this-here gives us a phenomenological starting place, but we still need something like a concrete procedure. I would suggest that Heidegger's *Befindlichkeit*, which, with Haugeland,[57] I translate "findingness", provides it. As Macquarrie and Robinson note, the neologism is based on the common German greeting "*wie befinden Sie sich*?" meaning, roughly, "How do you find yourself?", used much as the English, "How are you?" Their translation, "state-of-mind" is universally recognized as misleading and as Macquarrie and Robinson themselves note, "fails to bring out the important connotation of finding oneself."[58] Thornhauser[59] has an excellent elucidation of *Befindlichkeit* as Dasein's finding itself in the world and as constitutive of Dasein. Dasein finds itself and is, at least in part, that finding.[60] Heidegger associates the word closely with "mood", or "attunement".[61] For Heidegger, moods/attunements are clues to the actual lived existence of the Dasein who has them. What Heidegger means by what is translated as "mood" is not simply feeling or emotion and includes, especially, fear and anxiety. Fear manifests the existential fact of being threatened; anxiety the groundlessness of my being. "Attunement" importantly brings out the correlation of Dasein with states of affairs in the world (e.g. threat and

being threatened), and that attunement manifests as, or is, mood (fear) as a way of being-in.[62] Dreyfus' "affectedness" for *Befindlichkeit* has the advantage of suggesting both the relational and the feeling aspects of Dasein in the world[63]: Dasein is affected in its being by events in its environment. But for present purposes the emphasis is still too much on the feeling rather than the finding, potentially taking Dasein as a subject which has moods indicating inner states caused by external events. To do so is to indulge in "leveling" and reducing *Befindlichkeit* to psychology. As phenomenological procedure, I would shift the focus to the finding *qua* finding: I find myself. I find not an inner state, a mood, or a feeling, but *this-here*, existence. For Heidegger, "Dasein… has always found itself, not in the sense of coming across itself by perceiving itself, but in the sense of finding itself in the mood[/attunement] that it has."[64] That is, it does not find its mood, but *itself*. "Mood" here clearly refers to the finding involved in attunement; the mood "fear", again, is finding oneself threatened. Mood, "brings Dasein before the 'that' of its 'there'."[65] Findingness, in other words is the "(self-aware)" previously noted, and that means that it is constitutive of Dasein.[66]

Note that in attunement Dasein finds itself in situation. Similarly for us, performing phenomenological reflection, *this-here* finds itself, perhaps[67] constitutively, within a surrounding from which things that, as it were, extrude, though the nature of "within", "surrounding", and "things" remains unclear at this point. In every finding I find myself *this-here*, in relation to *something other*, some "that-there" within an indefinite environ that includes me as well though somehow in a different way. That is, I do not find myself a self-contained, self-subsistent consciousness, or other sort of entity, that only subsequently encounters other entities: relation-to would seem to be an essential feature of myself: there is no *this-here* without *that-there* (in fact we might have begun with the *that-there*). This suggests a reinterpretation of intentionality: It is not that I am, or have, self-aware-consciousness of transcendent entities, but that I am (self-aware) *toward* and/or *confronted by* entities. It would seem, then, that I *am* only *by virtue* of relations with other entities, though not *caused* by them. Heidegger

insists on something very similar: Dasein *is* only as Being-in-the-world and as Being-with, and finds itself, always and necessarily, in situation. Further, the immediate result of finding-myself within and towards comports with Heidegger's formulation of findingness (*Befindlichkeit*) as a unitary phenomenon with "understanding" (*verstehen*), where "understanding" means Dasein's pressing "forward into possibilities"[68] of being-in-the-world with something like competence to navigate those possibilities.[69] In other words, Dasein finds itself pressing into possibilities among entities within networks that it understands*;[70] *Equivalently*, Dasein understands* (networks of) entities among which it finds itself pressing into possibilities. This fleshes out somewhat what I meant by "within", "surrounding", and "things" above, yielding, if Heidegger is right, (self-aware) this-here-towards-possibilities among networks-of-entities, such that finding-oneself always implies understanding*. That finding-understanding* in turn, suggests the possibility, again if Heidegger is right, of understanding oneself, *this-here*, in terms of a field in which entities and their being appear—i.e. as the "clearing", corresponding in this respect to Heidegger's Dasein.

It will be objected that claiming this characterization of findingness as phenomenological discovery would require that one finds oneself finding oneself. In a manner of speaking, that is indeed what happens. In fact, what is most interesting phenomenologically is not Dasein and world, or *this* and *that*, considered as items found, but the finding that at first blush will be thought to bind them together but which is revealed to itself as (also) that from which they are elaborated. That will not be the end of the story, but initially, I find myself as this productive finding of a world as my world *and* as this beset finding, drawn out by an overwhelming alterity. The ambiguity indicates the importance of opening and elucidating the finding as well as the found.

It could be cogently argued that while we began with *this-here*, Heidegger began with the things, the *that-there*, especially ready-to-hand things and their interconnections, leading only subsequently to the finding of that for which the things are what and as they are: Dasein, overlapping

at least, with *this-here*. The difference simply reaffirms that Dasein and world, or, if you will, *this-here* and *that-there*, appear as inseparable, though as a starting place phenomenology emphasizes one or the other.

The finding versus the found

"I find myself." As phenomenology, this must not be taken only in the sense of realizing that I am in some situation, objective or subjective, as in finding myself in a traffic jam, or finding myself embroiled in a dispute, finding myself hungry. In that sense, one does not so much find oneself as one finds a state of affairs. As Heidegger puts it: "Dasein finds 'itself' proximally in *what* it does, uses, expects, avoids—in all those things environmentally ready-to-hand with which it is proximally *concerned*,"[71]: Dasein typically thinks of itself in the way that it thinks about things in its surroundings, yielding no "authentic" self-understanding. What I'm after here is rather finding strictly *myself* without the scare quotes: *this* existence that I am, *this-here*, finds itself. Any *prior* characterization of myself objectifies it as a thing in the world, already known or knowable, deflecting from *this-here*; any idea of myself, identity, self image, social role and so on, is as such precisely not *this-here* that finds and is found.

But putting it that way remains profoundly misleading on Heidegger's account. For him, finding myself as this predefined person in objective situation is an existentiale, i.e. constitutive of Dasein, of myself, and thus part of what is to be uncovered. Heidegger, I think, would say that the "self" that I find in the natural attitude is the appearance or semblance of the being of Dasein. That "self" and especially the natural-attitude finding of that self and understanding* of the world are not false, not to be discarded; they are rather the initial targets of Heidegger's phenomenology and take up much of the text of *Being and Time* (c.f. "average everydayness").[72] In my terms, if Heidegger is right, *this-here* finds itself inextricably in situation and as a defined empirical self, and only so. There is no stripping down to a pure unencumbered self except analytically; such is never found and cannot be the object of a search. That is to say, the naked *this-here* is always clothed, nevertheless, *this-*

here is *there* (one might say that the clothing may be bracketed out). The problem is that in the natural attitude we decompose the finding into external objects found by an internal object, the subject, losing sight of the finding itself. But findingness, on Heidegger's account, is constitutive of Dasein; I perpetually find myself in situation, and in a significant sense I am, Dasein is, that finding-understanding* albeit as producing appearances and semblances. What is to be found by phenomenology is then that very natural-attitude finding. Said differently, phenomenology retains and foregrounds finding-understanding* over what is found but without stripping away what is found, as that would dissolve the finding itself.[73] What I mean by "this-here", then, would not be encounterable as a found *object*, but rather may be foregrounded in and as findingness: In and as a whole finding-something. It is identified only by the abstraction of radical phenomenological reduction. On one level, I find myself hungry or delayed in a traffic jam, and must do so. But that includes that I find myself finding myself hungry, in a traffic jam, and it is the finding rather than the delayed, hungry self that is most of phenomenological interest. On another level, I *am*, at least in part and constitutively, the finding, and the finding finds itself *as* finding. Thus, *being* in a state of affairs involves *finding myself* in a state of affairs; phenomenology involves making finding-myself-in-a-state-of-affairs explicit.

Alternatively, and less confusingly, we could say that ordinary-everyday finding myself in a state of affairs is non-positionally aware of itself as such; phenomenology means allowing that non-positional awareness to emerge, foregrounding finding-understanding*. For example, when I'm writing I am aware that I am writing, though not thetically or intentionally; the object of intentionality is the topic I'm writing about, yet I am aware of myself as writing (or, the writing is aware of itself as writing), as typing on a computer. When hammering, the focus is on the head of the nail, yet I am aware of myself as hammering. Otherwise I would be unable to type, my fingers would tap randomly or not at all, the hammer would miss the nail or simply drop from my hand. I find myself writing, hammering. But the logic is unnecessary, the least bit of

reflection confirms that I am always aware of myself, and that least bit of reflection, foregrounding the finding, is the beginning of phenomenology. I find myself, and finding myself is constitutive of my very existence, according to Heidegger: "Dasein is its 'there' in such a way that, whether explicitly or not, it finds itself in its thrownness,"[74] and "The Being of the 'there' maintains itself" in finding itself and understanding*.[75] What phenomenology does is to make explicit and to describe, that finding and understanding* rather than, or alongside, what is found and understood*.

Speaking phenomenologically, I mean "I find myself" to refer to the finding rather than to the found.

A problem

But would allowing findingness to become explicit to the point of describing it, not potentially and profoundly alter the being-in-and-towards that is found? To revert to the language of consciousness: Does making the non-positional-self-awareness of consciousness-of-something, explicit and indeed thetic, not alter the consciousness itself? This is a serious objection to the characterization given here and it would seem that the answer must be "Yes". While doing a logical proof, for example, I am indeed acutely aware of the movements of doing-a-proof; for example, non-positional self-awareness performs a regulative function maintaining focus on the desired conclusion and managing the shifts among projecting that goal, implementing the prospective next step, and reviewing the prior hopeful steps and suspected missteps. That self-awareness, or findingness, while inexplicit and non-positional, functions as a sort of overview, binding these together in an intentionality within a sea of logic and proofs, as any logician may verify. Similarly, in the midst of a game, the footballer is hyper-aware of the other players, their roles on the teams and their positions and movements on the pitch, the movements of the ball, the plays that they have practiced, and so on, but also of herself within that nexus, her movements, momentum, skills, possibilities etc., as anyone who has played a sport may affirm. But if the logician attempts to make explicit and to articulate all that self-awareness while doing the

proof, the effort tends to fall apart. Similarly if the footballer were to make explicit the operations of her awareness and self-awareness ("now I'm watching my teammate kicking the ball, anticipating that she may pass it to me"), she wouldn't keep up with the game. Still, that findingness was undeniably there and is to at least some extent recoverable, or better, in a sense remains. I am able, as it were, to *relive* doing the proof and playing the game allowing the findingness to emerge explicitly after the fact without spoiling the game or the proof. In fact, I never find myself at an instant of time bounded by a past that no longer exists and a future that doesn't yet exist. We noted in passing above that bracketing out consciousness opens the phenomenological field beyond individual acts to include the whole of being in an environment. What happens is that I find myself engaged and as engagement in some task—but the *whole* task, not in the midst of time, but in the midst of work, for example a proof or game, from inception to projected completion. Playing, the footballer is not aware of a series of instants, snapshots, but of whole plays, whole trajectories and possibilities, etc. This is quite different from memory and anticipation; rather I find myself as single engagement in this single task, as it were in or as a *single* moment. The task, moreover, discloses itself to sustained phenomenological finding as overlapping and linked up with multiple engagements-tasks; I find myself as a whole as engagement in tasks even when I am not immediately performing them, but performing, say, phenomenological reflection. As a logician, I find myself engaged in logic as a task that includes the previous doing of a proof; as a footballer the previous games are part of the task that I remain engaged in, Football, no less on a subsequent day than during half-time: One does not stop playing at halftime—or between games. I mean this as a raw, preliminary phenomenological finding. Engaging Husserl's explorations of time consciousness, protention and retention, Heidegger's historicality and being toward death, or Levinas *autrui*, is well beyond the present scope. Still, to the extent that phenomenology depends on the "single moment" of extended tasks, it will have to examine that very temporality: The procedure of discovery depends on what is discovered, the finding must

find the finding, the interrogation must interrogate itself. But the point here is merely methodological—that phenomenological reflection while reliving the football game is reflection on playing it.

Conclusion

Convinced that understanding *Being and Time* requires that we engage in Heidegger's phenomenology and that engaging in that phenomenology would be fruitful for further exploration, I have here attempted a characterization. What procedure, gave him the raw material for the account given? For Heidegger's teacher, Husserl, it was a matter of consciousness reporting on its own activities, to put it simply. Those activities are always intentional, of or about something else, thus it is a matter of consciousness reporting on its relations with ---. This is possible in that consciousness is constantly and in every moment non-thetically, non-positionally aware of itself. Phenomenology makes that intrinsic self-awareness explicit and describes the acts of consciousness thus made visible. Heidegger, however brackets out consciousness as an assumed existent, hoping to burrow down, as it were, to being as such by letting entities show themselves as they are, in and from themselves, thus also in their being. The entity to which we most likely have such access is ourselves, "Dasein." Thus it becomes a matter of letting ourselves show themselves to us, as it were ourselves reporting on their own activities, in particular, on their relations with the world, "being-towards." I have suggested Heidegger's *befindlichkeit*, "findingness" as a way of understanding his phenomenology. We *find* ourselves constantly and in every moment and Heidegger's phenomenology makes that finding, as opposed to the self and world taken as independent entities, explicit. If our characterization is accurate, can it be said that Heidegger stays true to the method throughout *Being and Time*? Perhaps not, for example, the treatment of inter-personal relations seems inadequate: I find myself not only *with* others, but more, confronted by and confronting otherness that I cannot comprehend. Nevertheless, as Heidegger claims "findingness and understanding characterize the primordial disclosedness of Being-in-the-

world,"**76** and reading the book as and with finding and understanding may clarify much of what he was trying to do as well as providing tools for further exploration.

The ambiguity of Heidegger's "Dasein" pointed out earlier makes it is unclear whether the above should read "each letting herself show herself ," "letting ourselves show ourselves," or "letting human existence show itself." I hope in a subsequent essay to explore and clarify what Heidegger intends by "Dasein" using the procedure articulated here.

ENDNOTES

1   Stephen Evans has spent many years as a scholar and professor in Buddhist Studies in Thailand, teaching at several major universities.

2   Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 34. Page numbers are from *Sein und Zeit,* Tubingen: Niemeyer, given in the margins of the English translation.

3   I take *Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (GA24) as a supplement to *Being and Time*.

4   Except as noted otherwise, I use Macquarrie and Robinson's translations, even though in many cases better translations have been suggested. Given the plethora of such better translations, it may be less confusing to use those with which readers of Heidegger are universally familiar.

5   Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 42, 43.

6   Ibid., 9.

7   Ibid., 15.

8   John Haugeland, *Dasein Disclosed,* ed. J. Rouse (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 77, 81-82.

9   Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being in the World* (Cambridge. MIT Press, 1991), 144, 145.

10   Thomas Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger: A Paradigm Shift* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 130.

11   Thomas Sheehan, "*Das Gewesen*," in *From Phenomenology to Thought, Errancy, and Desire*, ed. B.E. Babich (Amsterdam: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1995).

12   Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 10.

13 Charles Guignon, "Heidegger's 'Authenticity' Revisited," in *Heidegger Reexamined; Dasein, Authenticity, and Death*, eds. Hubert Dreyfus and Mark Wrathall (New York: Routledge, 2002), 194.

14 Cf., e.g. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 220.

15 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 88.

16 Ibid.*,* 38.

17 Hubert Dreyfus 2002, "Volume Introduction," in *Heidegger Reexamined; Dasein, Authenticity, and Death*, eds. Hubert Dreyfus and Mark Wrathall (New York: Routledge, 2002), xi.

18 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 34.

19 Ibid., 27,

20 Ibid., 28, 34. But note that Heidegger later insists that understanding at all is made possible by "fore-having", "fore-understanding", and "fore-conception". In other words, avoiding preconceptions may be an unattainable ideal.

21 Ibid., 28.

22 Ibid., 36.

23 Cf. Ibid., 28-31.

24 Sheehan, "*Das Gewesen*," 157-8.

25 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 133)

26 Thomas Sheehan, "Dasein," in *A Companion to Heidegger*, eds. Hubert Dreyfus and Mark Wrathall (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005) 192.

27 Martin Heidegger, *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 64.

28 As Zahavi puts it, "comprehension of the Husserlian framework is indispensable if one is to understand and appreciate the *phenomenological* aspect of Heidegger's and Merleau-Ponty's thinking," Dan Zahavi, "Phenomenology," In *The Routledge Companion to Twentieth Century Philosophy*, ed. Dermot Moran (London: Routledge), 672. I omit here consideration of Husserl's *Ideas* as unnecessary to an understanding of what Heidegger was doing. Heidegger himself credits *Logical Investigations*.

29 Edmund Husserl, *The Idea of Phenomenology*, trans. Le Hardy (London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2010), 34.

30 John-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1992), 9-17.

31 Ibid., 121.

32 Ibid.,13.

33 Heidegger, *Basic Problems*, 159.

34 Edmund Husserl, *The Shorter Logical Investigations*, trans. J. J. Findlay (New York: Routledge, 2001), 86ff, 92ff.

35 Ibid., 89.

36 Ibid., 90.

37 Ibid., 90.

38 Ibid., 339ff.

39 Ibid., 90-91.

40 Husserl greatly expanded his horizons in later work, much of it not published until recently, long after his death.

41 Cf. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 15-16: When we express our pre-ontological self-understanding, we revert to ontical description suitable for objects, and thereby miss. Even traditional logic fails, but irrationalism speaks with a "squint", (Ibid., 129, 136).

42 Heidegger, *Basic Problems*, 111.

43 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 7.

44 Ibid., 12.

45 Ibid., 7.

46 Heidegger, *Basic Problems*, 159 .

47 Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, 12-13.

48 Ibid., 68.

49 *Being and Nothingness* strikes this writer as largely a Cartesian restatement of *Being and Time*, though it does make advances in elucidating the relation with Others.

50 Heidegger, *Basic Problems*, 58ff.

51 Ibid., 58.

52 Ibid., 114.

53 Ibid., 21.

54 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 54.

55 Cf. Ibid., 37.

56 "This-here", as the *da* "here/there" of "Dasein", must not be taken in a locative sense or as objectively positional in physical, social, temporal or any other kind of space (cf. Sheehan, *Making Sense*, 136-138).

57 Haugeland, *Dasein Disclosed*, 143.

58 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 134, Note 2.

59 Gerhard Thornhauser, "Martin Heidegger and Otto Freidrich Boll," in *The Routledge Handbook of Phenomenology of Emotions*, eds. Thomas Szanto and Hilge Landweer (London: Routledge, 2019).

60 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 134, 135.

61 "die Stimmung, das Gestimmstein." "Stimmung" typically used for "mood", originally meant the tuning of a musical instrument (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 134, Note 3). It is essential to keep the sense of attunement in mind.

62 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 136.

63 Dreyfus, *Being in the World*, 168ff.

⁶⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 136.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 136, "*Dasein vor das Daß seines Da bringt*," *das Daß*, translated "that-it-is" in Macquarrie and Robinson's translation, here altered to "that". I suggest that one does not find that something or other is, but just the *that*, or, if you will, the *this* of its *here*. In note 2 p. 135 Macquarrie and Robinson acknowledge that "*das Daß*" should more literally be translated simply as "that".

⁶⁶ Ibid., 139. We need not agree with Heidegger's apparant claim that every mood is such a finding to accept that we, as *this-here*, find ourselves and that such finding may take the form of something like moods.

⁶⁷ The actual phenomenological results presented, this-here, that-there, relation, are preliminary, supporting, hopefully giving additional clarity to, without fully confirming Heidegger's similar claims.

⁶⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 145.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 143.

⁷⁰ At least in the translation "understanding" sometimes refers to the more usual cognitive sense, sometimes to this "pressing forward into possibilities", an existentiale. Which is meant is not always clear. I shall flag use as an existentiale with an asterisk, "understanding*"; "Understanding" without the asterisk refers to the ordinary cognitive sense.

⁷¹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 119.

⁷² Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 43. This does not conflict with my prior claim that Heidegger starts with the world. Starting with the world *of Dasein* is his approach to Dasein's finding and understanding* itself in the world.

⁷³ This, of course, harks back to Husserl's bracketing: it's not that the object of intentionality is taken wholly out of consideration, but that the intentionality is foregrounded.

⁷⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 135.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 142.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 148.

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