HEIDEGGER’S CONCEPT OF FUNDAMENTAL
ONTOLOGICAL TRANSCENDENCE IN THE LATE
1920s

By

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Abstract

In the late 20s Heidegger begins to speak continually of something called ‘transcendence’ and of its radical centrality to the problem of fundamental ontology. In particular he connects this problem back to the terse, enigmatic and somehow almost buried analysis of SZ §69. There has long been evidence for the importance of this problem for Heidegger, and there is mounting evidence for its centrality to the problem of division three of Being and Time.

And yet, as a question, transcendence has received even less dedicated attention than the similarly decisive problem of temporality. This thesis seeks to remedy the above deficiency by applying itself wholly to the problem of fundamental ontological transcendence.

This thesis is divided into three parts. The first offers a preliminary sketch for the problem by discussing Being and Time in general, along with the problems of the surrounding world in particular and the history of the concept of world. The second part is concerned with the unity of the problem and this means with the interpretation of transcendence as a radicalisation of the existential concept of world. The third part is concerned with the completeness of the phenomenon, thus it unfolds the previously won unity according to its connection with the problems of freedom, selfhood, historicity and the question of being. Throughout the whole analysis the phenomenon of transcendence will be clarified, and through this, the problem and the import of transcendence will be demonstrated.
Statement of Authorship

I certify that the following thesis is entirely my own original work and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or educational institution. All sources of information used in this thesis have been indicated and due acknowledgement has been given to the work of others.

Signed:

Adam Ronald Tate
Acknowledgements

Four years ‘and a bit’ is both a long time and a short time to work on a thesis. And of course, the more that one enters into this ‘time’ the more that the line between life and the work is blurred so that, in the end life is work and work is life. In conversation and discussion what was unthought becomes visible. In the solitude of work there arises an ever greater need for support. And so there is much to be thankful for. Here I will do my best to remember all of it.

In this regard I should like to thank my principle supervisor Robert Sinnerbrink of Macquarie University for his guidance especially for pointing out those phenomena which needed greater penetration and which offered more decisive possibilities. Perhaps the greatest of these boons was to teach me something of what it means to let oneself be mastered by the self-discipline of phenomenology. I should also like to thank my associate supervisor, Jean-Philippe Deranty – who is also of Macquarie University – for his aid in certain decisive moments of the early stages of my research.

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Of course, what is relied on in the work of a thesis is not necessarily contemporary with the formulation and execution of the work. In this regard, I should like to thank Robert Farrell, once of La Trobe University, who introduced me to Heidegger in my undergraduate years. I would also especially like to thank George Vassilacopoulos from La Trobe University under whom I was properly introduced to thinking. I now see, retrospectively, that his stamp has surreptitiously made its way into the form of this thesis. I would also like to thank my parents, Greg Tate and Gwendolen Marion Lever along with Amanda Tate and my grandmother Cath Jones for their support throughout my university studies. I would also like to thank my brother Michael Tate, especially for his help with the car – to be without a vehicle in sleepy Gosford would have been as trialling an affair as it was to see the old Charade go.

Throughout, when I reached the limits of my own capacities, I have relied on my peers for aid. In this regard I would like to thank Rachel Yuen-Collingridge, Mary Jane Cuyler, Susann Schuster, Toshiro Osawa, Brad Bitner and Daniel P. O’Connell for their aid and clarification on translation issues in the various languages I have had to wrangle with throughout. This help informed the approach taken by this thesis’ and did so not only by determining what made it into this thesis; it also determined what didn’t make it into the work and that which became less obtrusive. I would also like to thank Shawn Loht and Karen Embry for their aid, both in general philosophical problems and in matters of translation, and here I should especially like to thank Shawn for his editorial comments to some of my chapters. I would also like to thank Marco Crespo, Andrew Dunstall, Alison Beale and Altaf Hossain for our conversations and for sharing material with me. I would also like to thank Sofia Eriksson and James Unwin for their expertise and James for opening his library to my use. On a nostalgic note I would like to thank Dale Tweedie for his role in organising the ‘Friday night postgrad drinks that were’ and all those who attended. They ameliorated the difficulty of adapting to
my new surroundings and introduced me, in our lively conversations, to the meaning of being a ‘PhD candidate’. In turn, I would like to thank Pete Ferreira whose blog ‘enowning’ and Heidegger-compendium ‘Ereignis’ have pointed me towards texts, authors and problems in Heidegger research for many years now.

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When it comes to getting where the action is, I would like to thank Macquarie’s department of philosophy for their financial aid of my attendance of the 2011 Heidegger in Messkirch conference. I would also like to thank Alfred Denker and Holger Zaborowski for organising the conference and for accepting my paper. My attendance there constituted an event of renewal and a critical juncture for the grounding of my work. In this regard I would especially like to thank Karen Embry and Shawn Loht for their comments on my paper and Anne Monchamp for her help in its production. I would also like to thank Babette Babich whose provocations during our short conversations re-awakened me to various possibilities and tasks which had become dead for me. This re-awakening re-invigorated my subsequent work.

Finally I should like to acknowledge Heidegger research in general and pre-emptively apologise if I have at any point spoken unjustly or out of hand concerning this research. And in this regard I should like to be allowed the pretention of offering the following gesture of solidarity:

Φύσις μὲν κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ, λόγος δὲ κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ, Αἱδεγη δὲ κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ

1 There is, of course, an allusion to Herakleitus Fr. 123 here. For the sake of clarity, Αἱδεγη is a necessarily imperfect transliteration of ‘Heidegger.’
Abbreviations

Abbreviation Schema:

MFL (E/D) 100 / 124
= Metaphysical Foundations of Logic (E for English) p100 / Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz (D for Deutsch) p124

SZ (S, D) 100
= Being and Time (S for translated by Stambaugh) p 100 & Sein und Zeit (D for the standard German edition) p 100

CPR (E, D: A/B) 170 / 212
= Critique of Pure Reason A170, Kritik der reinen Vernunft A170 / Critique of Pure Reason B212, Kritik der reinen Vernunft B212

Accordingly, when separated by commas, this means that both editions referred to use the same pagination, when separated by slashes this indicates that the pagination differs.

For those texts where there is only one translation available E stands for English and D for Deutsch. Where there is more than one translation available D stands for Deutsch and other letters either stand for the surname of the relevant translator (in the case of Being and Time and Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics) or some other distinguishing feature. Exceptions are marked in the abbreviations list.

Where no letter codes are appended to the citation this always refers to the English translation unless there is none available. Thus, “BP 30” refers to the Basic Problems of Phenomenology p 30 whilst, since GA27 remains untranslated at the present time “EP 30” refers to Einleitung in die Philosophie p 30. Where a citation is too general to differentiate between editions (or it would be vacuous to specify which edition) such as in reference to sections (e.g. SZ §69c) this means that any edition is treated as supporting that which is referred to.

Works by Heidegger:

Being and Time:

SZ = Sein und Zeit
D = Deutsch; German (Gesamtausgabe)
EH = Erste Hälfte; First Half (the 1949 pre-Gesamtausgabe edition)
M&R = Macquarrie and Robinson
S = Stambaugh
S/S = Stambaugh with revisions by Schmidt
SZ I.1.i:
SZ = Being and Time,
I = capital Roman numeral to signify part (Teil).
1 = Arabic numeral to signify division (Abschnitt).
i = lower case Roman numeral to signify chapter.

Thus:
SZ I = Being and Time part one
SZ II.1 = Being and Time part two, division one
SZ I.3.iv = Being and Time, part one, division three, chapter four

Other Works:

AT: Aufzeichnungen zur Temporalität: aus den Jahren 1925 bis 1927 (Nachlass)
BP: Basic Problems of Phenomenology, or, Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie (GA24)
BCA: Basic Concepts of Ancient Philosophy, or, Die Grundbegriffe der antiken Philosophie (GA22)
Contributions: Contributions to Philosophy (from enowning), or, Beiträge zur Philosophie (vom Ereignis) (GA65)
CTD:¹ the Concept of Time: the first draft of Being and Time (in GA64)
CTL:² the Concept of Time: lecture for the Marburg theological faculty (in GA64)
DL: a Dialogue on Language (between a Japanese and an Inquirer) (in GA12)
EHF: The Essence of Human Freedom, or, Vom Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit: Einleitung in die Philosophie (GA31)
EP: Einleitung in die Philosophie (GA27)
ET: On the Essence of Truth (Pathmarks), or, Vom Wesen der Wahrheit (Wegmarken) (in GA9)
FCM: Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics (GA29-30)
HCT: History of the Concept of Time: prolegomena, or, Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs (GA20)

¹ Concept of Time: draft, thus CTD
² Concept of Time: lecture, thus CTL
HPS: *Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit* (GA32)

KPM: *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, or, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* (GA3)

  KPM (T) = *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* as translated by Richard Taft
  KPM (D) = Gesamtausgabe edition of *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*


L: *H&J*:4 *Heidegger-Jaspers Correspondence*

L: *H&L*:5 *Letter Exchange with Karl Löwith on Being and Time*

L: *H&M*:6 *Briefe an Max Müller und andere Dokumente*

L: *M&E*:7 *Letters to his Wife: 1915-1970*

LQT: *Logic: the Question of Truth*, or, *Logik: die Frage nach der Wahrheit* (GA21)

Mindfulness: *Mindfulness* (GA66)


PIK: *Phenomenological Interpretations of Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason*, or, *Phänomenologische Interpretation von Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (GA25)

PR: *the Principle of Reason* (GA10)

Turning: *the Turning*, or, *die Kehre* (in GA7)

QCT: *Question Concerning Technology* (in GA7)

SHF: *Schelling’s Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, or, *Schelling: Vom Wesen der Menschlichen Freiheit* (1809)9 (GA42)

S:WF:9 *Schelling: Über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit* (WS 1927/28) (in GA86)

Vita: *A Recollective “Vita” 1957* (in GA1)

VWG: *Vom Wesen des Grundes* (in GA9)

  VWG (ER) = *The Essence of Reasons* as translated by Terrence Malick

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3 Letters between Heidegger and Arendt, thus L:H&A
4 Letters between Heidegger and Jaspers, thus L:H&J
5 Letters between Heidegger and Löwith, thus L:H&L
6 Letters between Heidegger and Müller, thus L:H&M
7 Letters between Martin Heidegger and Elfride Heidegger, thus L:M&E
8 Previously published in German as *Schellings Abhandlung über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit* (1809)
9 Seminars on Schelling and the Wesen of human Freiheit, thus S:WF
VWG (EG) = The Essence of Grounds as translated by William McNeill
VWG (D) = Vom Wesen des Grundes in Wegmarken

WM: What is Metaphysics? (in GA9)
WT: What is a Thing? (GA41)
ZS: Zollikon Seminars: Protocols–Conversations–Letters (GA89)

Works by Husserl:

Ideas I: Ideas Towards a Pure Philosophy and Phenomenological Philosophy; First Book, or, Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie: erstes Buch
LI:I Logical Investigations, volume I.
LI:II: Logical Investigations, volume II., or, Logische Untersuchungen von Edmund Husserl: zweiter Theil, Untersuchungen zur Phänomenologie und Theorie der Erkenntnis

Works by Kant:

CPJ: Critique of Judgement, or, Kritik der Urteilskraft:
N.B.: Because it was difficult to find an English and a German edition with a common marginal pagination, CPJ (E) refers to the marginal pagination for the English edition used herein. This pagination is the Akademie pagination. CPJ (D) refers to the marginal pagination for the German edition used herein, which is from the 1799 edition (3rd edition) published by F. T. Lagarde.

CPR: Critique of Pure Reason, or, Kritik der reinen Vernunft

FSF: the False Subtlety of the Four Syllogistic Figures, or, Die falsche Spitzfindigkeit der vier syllogistischen Figuren erwiesen

GMM: Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals

Works by Plato:

Sophist: Sophist: or, on being; logical.

Phdr.: Phaedrus

10 The English edition listed above only contains pp 222-715 of the German edition. That is, the English edition published as “Logical Investigations, Volume II” begins with the third investigation of Logische Untersuchungen: zweiter Theil and contains the rest thereof. However, no references are made to the first or second investigations of Logische Untersuchungen: zweiter Theil in this thesis.
Works by Aristotle:

Anim.: On the Soul
Cat.: Categories
Met.: Metaphysics
Poet.: Poetics
Pr. Anal.: Prior Analytics

Other Abbreviations:

Ch. = chapter
cf. = Compare
esp. = especially
et passim = and many other places
et seq. = and those subsequent (used for sections or chapters rather than pages herein)
f. = and the next page
ff. = and the following pages
infra = footnote or marginal note (infra = below)
et infra = main text and footnotes and/or marginal notes
herein = this thesis (e.g. “cf. Part I herein”).
(modified) = translation modified
passim = scattered frequently throughout (or else, as a whole under certain circumstances)