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Summary

Sein und Zeit as reconstruction of the turn to authenticity

This study examines Martin Heidegger's major work, *Being and Time* (*Sein und Zeit*) in the light of the philosophical legacy of his mentor, Edmund Husserl. In it we argue that it was Husserl's thought that determined not only the problems posed by Heidegger in *Being and Time* but also the strategies proposed for resolving them. The fundamental concern of *Being and Time* can be described as the question as to the possible authenticity (*Eigentlichkeit*) of man (*das Dasein*). This question had become particularly urgent because of Husserl's revelation of the intersubjectivity and anonymity of the conscious self. In consequence of this revelation the sense of the concept of 'I' became so enigmatic that a re-examination of this concept was indispensable. Nothing less than a radical reconsideration of *Dasein's* mode of being was at stake. This explains the path Heidegger chose in *Being and Time*: by offering a universal elucidation of *Dasein's* self-understanding in everyday life, he reveals the sense and conditions in which *Dasein* can attain authenticity.

While taking up the *Leitmotiv* of Husserl's thought again in this issue, Heidegger does not do this uncritically. For one thing, he disagrees with his teacher on the interpretation of authenticity. Husserl interprets authenticity as the result of a change of perspective or phenomenological change in which blind faith in reality independent of the conscious self (*Seinsglaube*) was abandoned in favour of insight into one's own conscious existence as the last foundation of all reality. Heidegger criticised Husserl because he was not satisfied with the latter's description of the decisive change of perspective conditioning the attainment of authenticity. He pointed out that Husserl gives different explanations both of the cause and of the change in perspective, to the detriment of the clarity of the notion of authenticity.

Heidegger's success in reconstructing the turn towards authenticity is due to the fact that he stumbled on the key to it in Husserl's analysis of intersubjectivity. Husserl's revelation that intersubjectivity and anonymity of the conscious self found the givenness of reality as independent of consciousness gave Heidegger insight into the connection between the explication of one's own intersubjectivity and the attainment of authenticity. For the foundation of the appearance of reality as independent shows *ipso facto* how to break with the inauthenticity of *Seinsglaube*. This connection, found in Husserl, between insight into one's own intersubjectivity and the attainment of authenticity forms the basis of the reconstruction of the turn to authenticity undertaken by Heidegger in *Being and Time*.

In Heidegger's reconstruction of this turn the meaning of the concept of authenticity is drastically changed. Heidegger believes that the intersubjectivity and the anonymity of the conscious life are not, as in Husserl, to be regarded as signs of self-alienation but as conditions of the possibility of *Dasein's* concern for meaning (*Sinnbezogenheit*). As a result, Heidegger cannot agree with Husserl's interpretation of authenticity as the suspension of the intersubjectivity of *Dasein*. He suspects that this view springs from a secret desire to deny one's own finiteness and one's being committed to a way of bestowing meaning (*Sinngebung*) previously determined by others. In Heidegger's view, *Dasein* should not compete with the imaginary notion of an infinite subject, but understand its potential authenticity in the light of its own finiteness. For in that case the intersubjectivity of *Dasein* proves to be an integral part of its potential authenticity. Willingness to recognise one's own finiteness is in other words the crux of Heidegger's notion of authenticity.

Heidegger's method is inspired by insight into self-deception, which makes *Dasein* blind to anything that is reminiscent of finiteness. This inclination towards self-deception constantly leads Heidegger to consider the possibility that *Dasein's* views of itself – and this applied no less to philosophers – are deformed by a secret desire to deny human finiteness. This is why Heidegger employs close reading to establish what *Dasein* knows about itself but is not prepared to accept. In his analysis of the sense in which *Dasein* is capable of authenticity, construction and destruction go hand in hand: by revealing the distortions that the original experience of its own existence has undergone in traditional thought, Heidegger can break its power and prepare a return to this original experience. But although the deconstructions apply to the positions of philosophers as diverse as Descartes, Hegel and Kant, they appear to be directed mainly against Husserl, whose work, we remember, is a prime example of both a secret and obstinate denial of man's finiteness, in Heidegger's eyes.

The present study of the reconstruction of the turn towards authenticity undertaken in *Being and Time* has the following structure: after an introductory chapter on the thesis of this research and the organisation and scope of the study, the second chapter explains that the etymological analysis of the concept of phenomenology Heidegger gives in section 7 of *Being and Time* can be read as a secret criticism of Husserl's approach. This exploration is followed by the actual reconstruction of the turn to authenticity, which in this study is subdivided into three stages. The first preparatory stage is dealt with in chapters 3, 4 and 5 and comprises the first section of *Being and Time*, an analysis of the self-alienation which is *Dasein's* normal condition. This analysis is relevant, because it is the point of departure of the turn to authenticity. Accordingly, the way in which *Dasein* understands itself in everyday life is meticulously examined in order to ascertain how *Dasein* suppresses the sense of its own finiteness or potential authenticity.

The second stage reconstructs the turn from self-alienation to authenticity and covers the first, second and third chapters of the second section of *Being and Time*. Chapter 6 of this study treats of Heidegger's revelation that *Dasein* – thanks to the very structure of its existence – is always capable of making the turn from self-alienation to authenticity; chapter 7 discusses Heidegger's analysis of the way in which *Dasein* can be incited to authenticity by force of conscience.

The third stage is a discussion of the crucial question of how authenticity, once acquired, is related to the historicity of *Dasein*. This stage covers chapters 4, 5 and 6 of the second section of *Being and Time*. It is precisely because Heidegger regards intersubjectivity as the irrevocable structure of *Sinnggebung* that he is faced with the task of describing the relationship between the authenticity and the historicity of *Dasein*. Heidegger's answer to this question is guarded: first of all he shows that *Dasein's* historicity can never be the same as the intratemporality of a thing-like being. *Dasein* possesses its own intratemporality, which is not determined by dates of birth and death but by the factors *Schicksal* and *Geschick*, which define the specific way in which *Dasein* understands itself and its reality. Finally, Heidegger answers the question of how this intratemporality of man is related to the original temporality. Manoeuvring between Husserl's view of the transcendental Ego as the true origin of time and the idea of human intratemporality, Heidegger concludes that *Dasein* produces time inasmuch as it unfolds and explains the time in which it finds itself.

In the conclusion of this study it is stated that the key used for the interpretation of *Being and Time* has a great explanatory power. Read in the way proposed here, Heidegger's book is a tightly formulated exposition which corresponds with the relationship revealed by Husserl between *Seinsglaube*, the givenness of being independent of consciousness, and the intersubjectivity of the Ego. *Being and Time* opens, for example, with the description of this way of being's being given (*Bewandnisganzheit*) and traces this mode of givenness back to the intersubjectivity of *Dasein* (*das Man*), finally to accord this intersubjectivity a central place in the phenomenological turn. Furthermore, the new meaning Heidegger gives to the concept of authenticity can be explained

with the aid of this interpretation key, for it is Husserl's analyses that put Heidegger on the track of an understanding of authenticity in which the decisive criterion is not so much the break with intersubjectivity as the willingness to accept this intersubjectivity as inherent in one's own mode of being.

When this study concludes that the attainment of authenticity is ultimately a dead end, since it yields up no useful basis for a philosophical discourse on the sense of being, this negative result does not invalidate the interpretation key employed. On the contrary, it should be commended for revealing the necessity which prompted Heidegger first to continue work on Husserl's transcendental phenomenology and later to abandon it.

(Vertaling: Phyl Hyams)

