

SINGULAR HISTORY

Reading Postmetaphysical History
in Heidegger and Gadamer

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ANIRUDDHA CHOWDHURY



Indian Institute of Advanced Study
Rashtrapati Nivas, Shimla

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Introduction

It is Jean-Francois Lyotard's definition of the Postmodern as "incredulity toward metanarrative" that perhaps best sums up the discourse and the predicament of the postmetaphysical history. According to Lyotard's famous characterization, the Postmodern announces a *crisis* in metaphysical philosophy which, within the *modern* discourse, "designate(s) any science that legitimates itself with reference to a metadiscourse of this kind making an explicit appeal to some grand narrative, such as the dialectics of Spirit, the hermeneutics of meaning, the emancipation of the rational or working subject, or the creation of wealth."¹ Lyotard's definition succinctly refers to the cultural changes that have taken place from the late nineteenth century onwards. The incredulity toward metanarrative that has had profound implication for the discourse of history especially, represents a tremendous erosion of the foundationalist assumptions of metaphysics. The challenges to the foundationalist assumptions include incredulity toward the concepts of transcendental philosophies and even ontological argument, toward the hitherto indispensable concepts such as universal, totality, and identity and this calls for, rather than a simple negation, alternative (strategically, that is) articulation of these concepts themselves.

However, the question remains, does the postmodern claim for a sharp periodic break with the modern do justice to the discourse of the "post" of the postmetaphysical? The point I need to make is that the postmetaphysical discourse, the articulation

of other lineages, as I have called it, cannot be simply concerned with the negation of the tradition of the metaphysical but, as Lyotard himself suggests, with the *crisis* in the metaphysical philosophy. Further, as a limit concept, which opens at the *closure* of metaphysics, postmetaphysics can be characterized as a discourse of extremity.² Even though the discourse of extremity makes postmetaphysics susceptible to the charge of nihilism postmetaphysics must be distinguished from nihilism in that it seeks to think the question of the ground more *radically* than what the modern metaphysics does through the concepts such universal, identity, subject etc. Postmetaphysics thinks the foundationalist concepts in the deconstructive cusp. A brief remark on this crucial point may be in order. The remark will hinge on the internal relation of hermeneutic phenomenology and deconstruction in Heidegger.

It would be the argument in the present work, indeed in contrast to Lyotard, that by recasting the transcendental philosophy through hermeneutic phenomenology Heidegger, along with Nietzsche, inaugurates the postmetaphysical/the postmodern turn in hermeneutics (the latter Lyotard relegates to metanarratives) and Western ontology. Which is to say, there is a necessarily hermeneutic moment (hermeneutic circle) in the postmetaphysical negotiation with the closure of metaphysics (its own limit, so to speak). As I shall attempt to argue, the Copernican revolution in hermeneutics has, as its essential aspect, a decentering phenomenon, a turn from subjectivity to being-there (deconstruction of subject), which originally joins the two 'posts' of the postmetaphysics and the postmodernism.

To couch it in broad strokes, the infinite effort of the Husserlian phenomenology is to seek a priori conditions that make possible any and every experience. Phenomenology is tied to modern philosophies in that both seek this condition in transcendental, knowing subject. Although it is undeniable, as Heidegger concedes, that through his conception of phenomenological reduction Husserl crucially thinks ontological questions, at the end of the reduction the object in the world (natural attitude) and the subject appear to be the part of the

structure of the transcendental subject. Reduction establishes the transcendental subjectivity as constitutive of intentional experience. Although Heidegger recognizes that the Husserlian phenomenology prepares the ground for the question of being (the ontological hermeneutic question) Heideggerian shift from the subject in subsistence, which Heidegger would broadly term *Vorhandenheit*, to Dasein makes it impossible to ground entities in subjectivity as such. Nonetheless, Heidegger does not abandon the transcendental argument *tout court*. By way of its ontological essence, being-there is more originary than the formal structures of consciousness. The priority of existential transcendentalism (Heidegger) over the transcendental subjectivity (Kant and Husserl) consists in grounding the question of essence in the question of being of entities. It is a transcendentalism without a subject, a deconstructive, postmodern transcendentalism.

This radical transmutation of the a priori introduces history into the transcendental conditions, which Husserl could not recognize because of his subjectivist bias, and which the metaphysical tradition “forgets” and thus fails to resolve. The deconstructive aspect of hermeneutic history (co-belonging of hermeneutics and deconstruction) consists in retrieving the experiences of the original finitude of being, what Heidegger calls, in temporal terms, *awhileness* of temporal particularity, or what he later terms temporal presencing, which is the core formula of the hermeneutics of facticity—a postmetaphysical and a postmodern hermeneutics (pace Lyotard).

It is in the context of his discussion of historicity that Heidegger famously introduces the term *Destruction* in section 6 of *Being and Time*, the term that is the precursor of deconstruction in Heidegger and Derrida. I shall elaborate on the historicity as the eminent mode of being of being-there (Dasein) in so far as the historicity is grounded in existential temporality of Dasein. Suffice it here to cite Heidegger’s remark: “Historicity means the constitution of being of the “occurrence” of Dasein as such; upon its ground something like “world history,” and belonging historically to world history is possible ... Dasein “is” its past in the manner of its being which, roughly expressed, on each occasion

“occurs” out of its future.”³ It is to disentangle the historicity of Dasein as temporality and to retrieve the original metaphysical “sources” of being, the original experience of the finitude, from the “sclerotic tradition” that, according to Heidegger, has concealed these sources that Heidegger purports to *destroy* the history of ontology in the unpublished second part of *Being and Time*. The original historicity of Dasein remains distorted in the metaphysical tradition as long as the “sources” are sought in the substantivity of man and in the transcendental subject. To the concept and task of destruction belong, co-originally, ontological hermeneutics and deconstruction. And herein lies the *positivity* of the deconstructive task. For destruction has nothing to do with the relativizing of the ontological standpoints nor with the negative sense of disburdening ourselves of the ontological tradition. Deconstructive task has the affirmative hermeneutic element (hermeneutic circle). “It should stake out the positive possibilities in that tradition, and that always means to stake out its *limits*” (BT 22). Destruction, in Heidegger, signifies the positive task of wresting the original question of the finitude and historicity of being from the tradition. Hermeneutic-phenomenological *construction* is the methodological corollary of destruction.⁴

It is the notion of singularity, as distinct from the universal-particular dyadic relation, that constitutes the *telos* of the hermeneutic practice of postmetaphysics. More precisely, I shall attempt to argue that singularity is the key theme in the discourse of ontological hermeneutics as it is articulated in Heidegger and Gadamer. Singularity, it must be asserted, is not tantamount to the notion of identity, let alone totality. The concept of singularity, or better singular-universal, to use the expression in order to distinguish the concept from any particularism, is inseparable from the notion of alterity and the essential non-self-identity of ‘identity.’ As I shall argue through Heidegger, it is not the unrepeatable uniqueness that characterizes the singular, but the relation of difference and repeatability and refers to the trace of radical exteriority, more

exterior than the conceptual opposition of the exterior and interior. The singular is the singular heteronomy of the instant, which the Heideggerian notion of onto-ontological difference designates. To repeat, singularity does not imply an identity, but, as I shall argue through Heidegger and Gadamer, a relation of (non-relational) otherness and a mode of singular eventality.

The fundamental concern of the project of singular history is whether or not the discourse of history can be reconciled with the singularity and eventness of happening, whether the discourse of history is necessarily totalizing. If, moreover, hermeneutic history cannot abandon fully the notion of totality the question remains can the totality be articulated in finite, weak terms? More accurately for our purpose, can the notion of phenomenological horizon be couched in singular term, which retains the essential alterity of the Thou? These are some of the pressing questions to be addressed in our readings of the ontological hermeneutics of Heidegger and Gadamer.

The postmetaphysical discourse has had profound implications for history in general—both as *res gestae*, the past that historical investigation tries to interpret and as *historia rerum gestarum*, the past as it is interpreted in the historical account. It is now evident, for example, that the past of history, in and for itself, does not contain anything of significance independent of the textual construction of the historian's devices. Although it should not mislead us to supposing that all we are left with is sheer relativism of the historian's fictive effort postmetaphysical history has to avoid the disinterested objectivism of the great age of history. Ontological hermeneutics, in Heidegger and Gadamer, in order to distinguish itself from both objectivism and relativism, insists on the unity of the reality of history and the historical understanding, as the unity belongs to the historical being-there of Dasein, to Dasein's modes of historicity. It is important to insist on this key theme of hermeneutic history because the *sameness* of the understanding and the object of understanding does not mean that there is homogeneity between the knower and the known. Rather the sameness designates the modes of

historicity of Dasein. Crucially, as we will see in our reading of Gadamer, alterity belongs to the sameness of understanding and the object of understanding.

However, even though it may be argued that the postmetaphysics marks a break with the nineteenth century premium on history, especially with *Hegel*, it would be wrong to interpret this retreat from historicism as the dissolution of the historicization as such. It is true that some of the crucial markers of modern historicism—its disinterested objectivism and even ontologization of history—have come under profound suspicion. But this suspicion, which is concerned with the remainders, supplements and excesses of ontological/epistemological interpretations, does not imply an erosion of the question of history as such but only of a certain forms of historicizing. Post-metaphysics wants to apprehend history in the post-Hegelian cusp, where the premium is less on totalization, than on singularity, less on identity than on difference and alterity.

In this context, a brief remark on Hegel's concept of history may be in order because it is from Hegel and the German Idealist tradition that postmetaphysical tradition from Nietzsche onwards has attempted to distance itself. Ontological hermeneutics is also a thought that thinks through Hegel against his grain. Against a certain naïve and frontal anti-Hegelianism in the tradition of the Post-metaphysics (the Poststructuralist and the Postmodern) it is imperative, I believe, to insist, at one and the same time, that Hegel is the thinker of finite historicity *par excellence* and that he disavows the finitude in the transparency of speculative concept and the absolute identity of reason and history in the form of spirit's homecoming, where reason unfolds in the act of gathering into itself, where radical finitude is recuperated in the interiority of subject of idealism. I shall attempt to argue, in the context of my reading of Gadamer, that in his concept of experience (*Erfahrung*) Hegel represents most eminently the finite historicity, which Gadamer would call inner historicity of experience. Without going into the details, suffice it here to remark that experience in Hegel's phenomenology of consciousness, as it is articulated in the Introduction to

Phenomenology of Spirit, has something eventful about it. Hegel thinks experience as the *reversal* of the certainty of consciousness. As a reversal of itself consciousness undergoes the negation of its fore-understanding. For the natural consciousness (*Dasein*) this experience is its death; natural consciousness undergoes a pathway of despair and suffering, but this suffering is also its education (*Bildung*) since consciousness as such is the notion of its own negation which Hegel calls determinate negativity. The determinate negativity means that the negativity is not simply nugatory, it retains the truth of negation whereby a transition is made by which complete succession of shape emerges. But the fundamental point to remember is that determinate negation is a process of continual renewal of truth through the reversal of certainty. If determinate negation signifies an essential finitude of experience then that finiteness consists in the inner historicity of human existence. The reversal that consciousness undergoes is not nugatory, rather it leads us to the openness of horizon.

What is the historiographic analogue of this finitude of experience in the context of Hegel's phenomenology? Here it would be proper to refer to the subtle distinction between Schelling and Hegel. Both articulate a philosophy of history where reason unfolds itself in the form of a unity of freedom and necessity through destiny or providence. For both, in this sense, history is a theodicy. But although Schelling espouses in history that unity of subjective and objective which is the absolute he, as Jean Hyppolite remarks, fails to show how this absolute is brought to reflect itself or to manifest itself in the particular form of history. Schelling simply presupposes a pre-established harmony between the objective and the determining subjectivity through a higher term which, in this sense, is raised above history.⁵ For Hegel, unlike Schelling who remains within the philosophy of nature and intellectual intuition, spirit and absolute is history in so far as absolute cannot be conceived as alien to consciousness and reflection, which leads Hegel to argue that absolute is not only substance but also subject. This is the historiographic analogue to Hegel's concept of experience. Reason unfolds itself in history by reflecting back on itself,

which indicates the finiteness of reason in history. This finitude explains Hegel's tragic view of history. The ruse of reason presents itself in history as tragic conflict between man and his destiny which is perpetually renewed. It is this conflict that Hegel thinks through at the very heart of absolute.⁶ Thus, absolute is unthinkable without the torment, the patience and the labor of the negative. This finiteness of the historical development of consciousness which the concept "spirit is history" implies distinguishes Hegel's philosophy of history.

But Hegel also disavows the finiteness and historicity of absolute. The disavowal is implicit in Hegel's very articulation that history is the unfolding of World Spirit leading up to the absolute system in which reason assembles and gathers into itself the exteriority of the world. As Adorno would argue in *Negative Dialectics*, what Hegel calls spirit is the negativity of the social. The coercive primacy of the social totality over the particular is hypostatized by Hegel as world spirit. By hypostatizing the social as spirit Hegel covers up the essentially antagonistic nature of the social totality.⁷ This is the political implication of Hegel's claim that history is the self-externalization and homecoming of spirit where reason is at home in its otherness, where non-identity is reconciled with identity. In theorizing history as a single, meaningful and all-encompassing process Hegel consolidates the metaphysical frame. Thus, Hegel, while thinking the finiteness at the very heart of the absolute, nonetheless disavows that finiteness through his conception of history as the unfolding of world spirit.

Ontological hermeneutics thinks time and history in the post-Hegelian cusp. While both Heidegger and Gadamer think Hegel's concept of experience and its inner historicity (Gadamer's word) as finite *par excellence* they will distance themselves from Hegel's speculative elevation of experience in to the transparency of concepts. But, by the same token, in thinking through the finiteness of experience of Hegel's concept of determinate negation both Heidegger and Gadamer would perhaps contend that for Hegel speculative history remains an

open-ended process, incomplete through and through. Freedom that history realizes remains finite.

The concept of finite freedom remains central to the argument of *Being and Time*. It is not my intent here to elaborate on the concept of finite freedom. Suffice it here to remark that it is the finite temporality of Dasein, rather than consciousness, which forms the ground of freedom. In that sense, historicity, whose condition of possibility is Dasein's temporality, is the space of finite freedom. As we will see, in resolute repetition, in affirming the finitude of being-toward-death, Dasein faces its own most, singular, time, its singular freedom which Heidegger characterizes as finite. In defining historicity as singular occurrence-with or being-with (*Mit-Dasein*) in the *singular community* Heidegger would articulate the historical character of freedom.

Hermeneutics is a tradition of thought that reflects on the concept of understanding in the broadest sense of the term. The originality of ontological hermeneutics, whose Copernican Revolution is initiated by Heidegger and carried forward in an original manner by Gadamer, lies in its situating the concept of understanding in the singular occurrence of being-in-the-world. The latter signifies, as we will see, the original co-belonging of facticity and existentiality. That is to say, historicity of Dasein is not an overcoming of facticity. Rather, as we will insist more than once, facticity implies what Heidegger calls awhileness of time of Dasein, which thus bursts asunder the teleological schema of speculative history. The awhileness of the temporal particularity, which, according to Heidegger, characterizes the hermeneutics of facticity, informs Dasein's irreducible situatedness in tradition. As Gadamer would say, it is the finitude of historical commonality, in the form of tradition, which is the true ground of understanding. Tradition or the finitude of commonality, however, is never a self-evident fact, but is based on the polarity of strangeness and familiarity. According to Gadamer, the true locus of hermeneutics is this in-between. It is this limit space of in-between, from which stems the ambiguity

of tradition, that grounds the historical being-there of man and our understanding, which historicizing can never cross over.

The boundary concept of tradition would lead us to the concept of *horizon*, a key term in the history of phenomenology. In the present study the concept of horizon takes on a key position. In contrast to a certain position in the postmetaphysical thought which sees in the concept of horizon a negation of the singularity of the existent and the other, I shall argue that the horizon of life and understanding, which is temporality, is itself something singular and what belong to it are eventness and alterity. Horizon is singular in that the horizon addresses to our *being-now* in the Moment, if I may couch it in the Heideggerian term. Horizon, in Heidegger and Gadamer, is temporality of Dasein, which is ecstatic i.e. outside itself. Horizontal thus means characterized by a horizon given with the ecstasis itself. Horizon is thus not unalterable, but, as ecstatic, it is itself outside itself. This is precisely the dimension of singular-universal horizon. In speaking of the fusion of horizons as singular Gadamer would reconfirm that in the singular horizon the singularity of Thou is retained in the most eminent sense. Even though in his concept of fusion of horizons Gadamer still makes a distinction between the historical horizon and the horizon of the present the singular-universal of the horizon becomes meaningful only in relation to the being-now of the present. The horizon, to repeat, retains the essential relation to Thou, relation of being-with. This is the ethical dimension of hermeneutic, postmetaphysical, history. Heidegger's term for such irreducible being-with is destiny which means nothing other than the finite being-with or occurrence-with in a singular community of the now.

Notes

1. Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), xxiii.
2. I borrow the term discourse of extremity from Allan Megill's influential *Prophets of Extremity: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1985).

3. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh; revised by Dennis J. Schmidt (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010), 19. Hereafter, cited parenthetically in the text as BT followed by the appropriate page numbers.
4. Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 22.
5. Jean Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Samuel Cherniak and John Heckman (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 29.
6. Jean Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure*, 30-31.
7. Theodor Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E.B. Ashton (New York: Continuum, 1973), 316.

CHAPTER I

Singular History: Finitude, Temporality and Historicity in Early Heidegger

The notion of historicity is central to the argument of *Being and Time*.¹ Yet, the chapter containing the analysis of historicity, with which the published part of *Being and Time* is concluded, is often treated by scholars as nothing more than an appendix to the *magnum opus*. But without the notion of historicity we would utterly misunderstand the overall project of *Being and Time*. For the notion of historicity not only balances the individualistic emphasis of the work but articulates temporality itself as the possibility of what Heidegger would call historical repetition. It is Heidegger's point, in *Being and Time*, that historicity is constitutive of the essential being of Dasein. Heidegger is not primarily concerned with formulating a speculative history or a new historiography as such. Rather, Heidegger's task is to think of the historical as the crucial feature of the existential ontology of Dasein. Historiography itself is grounded in the historicity of Dasein.

Historicity, in Heidegger, is the finite principle *par excellence*, which I would like to call *singular*. It will be my argument that finitude and singularity remain inseparable in Heidegger's analysis of history and historical repetition. In resolute repetition, in affirming the finitude of being-toward-death, Dasein finds itself facing its own most, singular, time. Singularity of being-historical is not, however, a principle that is in opposition to facticity, rather it enounces, as we will see, what Heidegger calls the awhileness of its temporal particularity which, according to

Heidegger, is the defining feature of the hermeneutics of factual Dasein. In the existential ontology facticity is not denied or 'overcome;' rather there is an unity of facticity and existentiality in that fundamental ontology reveals the *originary distinction* between being and beings (ontico-ontological difference) which, as a prior clearing, forms the horizon of ontology itself. Unveiling of being is the truth of being *of* being. Which is to say that ontic and ontological truth belong together, as a modality, on the basis of their relation to the distinction between being and beings. In *Being and Time* this prior clearing, this distinction between being and beings, appears as temporality. Ontico-ontological difference, as temporality, is the ground of historicity.

A word of explanation on the title of the chapter is in order. The chapter seeks to focus on the work of early Heidegger, which culminates in *Being and Time*. I follow a rather traditional distinction between the early and the late Heidegger. The latter does not so much focus on the existential-ontological analysis of Dasein as rather on the question and history (epochality) of being itself. I focus on the early Heidegger's revolutionary hermeneutic phenomenology from which later Heidegger distances himself.

In the first section of the essay, I shall attempt to develop the concept of what I would like to call hermeneutics of finitude or facticity. It is my considered belief that without a proper understanding of the hermeneutic concept of being-in-the-world, as a part of his overall conception of hermeneutics of facticity, it would be well-nigh impossible to understand Heidegger's phenomenological-hermeneutic formulation of temporality and historicity. The implication of our discussion of hermeneutics of facticity is that Dasein exists in a relation of *modality*, rather than a simple opposition, of ontic and ontological. An elaborate discussion of the ontico-ontological mode of Dasein (its facticity) will prepare the background of the discussion of the related concepts of temporality and historicity. The second section will be devoted to the discussion of temporality and historicity. Repetition is the *mode* of the historicity of Dasein. In resolute repetition, Dasein holds

together its thrownness (being-born) with the being-toward-death. It is in this sense of “occurrence” that Dasein *is* historical. Historicity designates the singular co-occurrence of Dasein (together with the others) which takes place in the singular “community,” which I would like to call *singular history*.

A finite Hermeneutics: Life and Facticity

Any discussion of Heidegger’s hermeneutic historicity must depart from Heidegger’s critical engagement with Dilthey’s historicism in both *Being and Time* and the earlier writings and lectures. For it was Dilthey who, though ultimately concerned with the problem of methodology proper to human sciences, extended the scope of hermeneutics beyond the methodological concern of epistemology to the ontological problem of *life* itself. This is what Heidegger recognizes in Dilthey’s remarkable effort, which makes Dilthey a predecessor of Heidegger’s path-breaking intervention in the form of ontological hermeneutics. It should be pointed out, at the very outset, that on each occasion Heidegger engages with Dilthey *positively* and criticizes Husserl for misinterpreting Dilthey in view of a sort of normative philosophy in order to put him down as a relativist, which, according to Heidegger, is alien to Dilthey’s hermeneutic work.² In his 1925 essay, titled, ‘Wilhelm Dilthey’s Research and the Struggle for a Historical Worldview,’ Heidegger reflects on Dilthey with exceptional rigor. A brief discussion of some of the crucial themes of the essay will provide an essential background for understanding Heidegger’s own articulation of hermeneutic historicity. The discussion will also provide a transitional link to what we, following Heidegger, call the hermeneutics of facticity.

Before turning to Heidegger’s text let us remark that what distinguishes Dilthey’s *Geisteswissenschaften* is not primarily epistemological methodologism characteristic of scientific explanation, but lived experience of understanding. The “object” of understanding is the life itself in its singularity. This is what Heidegger recognizes in Dilthey. Heidegger begins his remarks by reflecting on what he calls the struggle of the *historical*

worldview. “Here struggle means a struggle for the attainment of such a position from out of one’s knowledge of the historical character of the world and Dasein.”³ Only when history is so conceived that one’s own life reality is seen within the historical context can it be said that life understands the history in which it finds itself. This *historical* life situation of Dasein not only refers to the present in which it stands, but also has a decisive futural sense. According to Heidegger, Dilthey’s historical thought implicitly raises the question in regard to the *sense* of history, to be more precise, “sense of historical being itself,” and what existential goal can be derived from it for the future. It was Dilthey who had a truly radical awareness of the problem.

Even though Dilthey’s initial formulation of the question of history began with his reflections on history of sciences the ultimate theme, from the very inception, is a question about the concept of *life*. In distinction from natural sciences, the sense of history refers to life itself. “When the history of the historical sciences is investigated, life itself is investigated with respect to its knowledge. As knowing, life investigates itself in its history. The knower is known.”⁴ Dilthey’s real problem thus lay in situating historical reality in its own reality, in the self-knowledge of human knowledge itself. “*Historical knowledge is a distinct form of self-knowledge.*”⁵ Under the heading of psychology Dilthey sought to gain an “*originary access to life.*” In contrast to analytical psychology, Dilthey’s concern, Heidegger points out, was the human being as a spiritual being, and the psychical “structures as the primary and vital unity of life itself and not as the mere classificatory schemata for understanding life.”⁶ “Psychical life is originally always given in its wholeness.”⁷

Heidegger recognizes that Dilthey succeeded to penetrate to the sense of the being historical, that is, “historicity rather than the historical, being rather than beings, reality rather than the real.”⁸ Yet, according to Heidegger, Dilthey did not pose the question of historicity itself in properly ontological terms, even though he comes close to the *sense* of historical being or life. In the rest of the essay Heidegger devotes some dense pages to the ontological problem of being-there [Dasein] of life itself.

In a manner that anticipates *Being and Time*, Heidegger, in this essay, situates the concept of the life as a whole, which, for Dilthey, provides the ontological context of historical research, in the structure of being-in-the-world, and being-toward-death which as the “limit situation” reveals the being-whole of Dasein or life. I will refer to the essay later in the context of Heidegger’s discussion of historicity as it is laid out in *Being and Time*. The brief remarks on Heidegger’s ontological framing of Dilthey’s concept of life offers us a proper perspective on Heidegger’s own articulation of hermeneutic phenomenology as what he calls the hermeneutics of factual life of Dasein to which I shall turn now.

Before turning to a more elaborate discussion of the hermeneutics of factual life in *Being and Time* let me read briefly Heidegger’s crucial perspectival remarks on hermeneutics in *Ontology—The Hermeneutics of Facticity*. In the lecture, Heidegger defines hermeneutics as the self-interpretation of facticity. In the very beginning of the lecture Heidegger designates facticity as characterizing the “being of “our” “own” Dasein. More precisely, this expression means: *in each case “this” Dasein in its being-there for a while at the particular time* (the phenomenon of the awhileness of temporal particularity, cf. “whiling,” tarrying for a while, not running away, being-*there-at-home-in...*, being-*there-involved-in...*, the being-there of Dasein) in so far as it is, in the character of its being, “there” in the manner of being.”⁹ What is remarkable in Heidegger’s designation is that the facticity as the “how” of the own-most being of the being-there, which needs to be distinguished from any idea of object of intuition and, by extension, from the object of cognizance and knowledge, is couched in temporal terms. The temporal characterization of factual life, its temporal awhileness, indicates hermeneutically “a possible path of being-wakeful. Not a regional demarcation in the sense of an isolating contrast.”¹⁰ Heidegger further remarks that if by “life” we designate “a mode of “being,” then factual life means: our own Dasein which is “there” for us in one expression or another of the character of its being, and this expression, too is in the

manner of being.”¹¹ What does the expression “being-wakeful” mean in the context of Heidegger’s formulation of hermeneutics? Heidegger would say that the phenomenon of wakefulness is to be thought as being part of hermeneutics (of factual life) itself. Heidegger distinguishes his sense of hermeneutics from “its modern meaning,” that is, from doctrine about interpretation; rather it means “a definite unity ... of the interpreting of facticity in which facticity is being encountered, seen, grasped and expressed in concepts.”¹² When looked at from the side of its “object,” hermeneutics reveals that this object having-been-interpreted belongs to its very being. “In hermeneutics what is developed for Dasein is a possibility of its becoming and being for itself in the manner of understanding of itself.”¹³ Interpreting itself is the possible how of the character of being of facticity.¹⁴

The radical wakefulness of the hermeneutics of facticity means nothing other than the fact that the being of that life *is* in the how of what Heidegger would call, in temporal terms, being-possible. In Heidegger’s terms, the being-possible which Dasein (facticity) *is* existence. I shall return to the concept of existence as marking the essential aspect of facticity soon. The important point that Heidegger makes, in this context, is that the being-possible of facticity is part and parcel of fore-having and fore-meaning of interpretation. Hermeneutics is not an arbitrary device that can be fabricated artificially, but belongs to the very being-possible of facticity. “It must be reckoned with in a decisive way. What is revealed in it is how the anticipatory leap forward and running in advance should be undertaken and can only be undertaken. The anticipatory leap forward: not positing an end, but reckoning with being-on-the-way, giving it free play, disclosing it, holding fast to being-possible.”¹⁵ What Heidegger is pointing at is, in hermeneutic terms, the interpretive circle to which we must come the right way. We may refer here, in advance, to Heidegger’s comment on interpretive circle in paragraph 63 of *Being and Time*. In that paragraph Heidegger argues that the charge of circularity and arbitrariness of fore-meaning and fore-having, fails to recognize that the “circle” of

understanding, instead of being a tautology, belongs to “*a basic kind of being of Dasein*” and this being is constituted as care. We read:

Talk about the “circle” in understanding expresses the failure to recognize two things: (1) That understanding itself constitutes a basic kind of being of Dasein. (2) That this being [Sein] is constituted as care. To deny the circle, to make a secret of it or even to wish to overcome it means to anchor this misunderstanding once and for all. Rather our attempt must aim at leaping into this “circle” primordially and completely, so that even at the beginning of our analysis of Dasein we make sure that we have a complete view of the circular being of Dasein. (BT 301)

The hermeneutic “circle”, which is founded on the ontic-ontological modality of being of Dasein, is not only not arbitrary, but it is also not, to couch it in the terms of *Being and Time*, objectively present (*vorhanden*). Only a prior anticipatory leap can open the “circle” for us. The necessity and possibility of anticipatory leap belong to the temporal dimension of the circle.

Hermeneutics arises out of a fundamental experience and “here this means philosophical wakefulness, in which Dasein is encountering itself.”¹⁶ As this self-encountering, Heidegger reminds us, “philosophy has no mission to take care of universal humanity.”¹⁷ “Philosophy is what it can be only as a philosophy of “its time.” “Temporality.” Dasein works in the how of its being-now.”¹⁸ Radical wakefulness cannot be calculated in advance, but has to be developed in each case as the definite and decisive possibility of concrete facticity. The *singular* wakefulness of Dasein, its temporal “awhileness,” is what Heidegger would call *historical possibility*.¹⁹

Let me turn to the discussion of facticity in *Being and Time*. The discussion will focus on the concept of being-in-the-world and will make clear Heidegger’s break with the Cartesian notion of substantiality. What the term indicates, for Heidegger, to put it rather succinctly, is the sense of something that is capable of “*remaining constant*” (BT 90). The latter also indicates something purely on hand, or broadly being-on-hand. According

to Heidegger, the idea of being as constant presence lies at the basis of the modern understanding of being of things and being of man, which, for Heidegger, “blocks the possibility of bringing to view attitudes of Dasein in a way which is ontologically appropriate” (BT 96). Heidegger posits his definition of Dasein and factual life in opposition to the substantialist character of being of things and being of man.

What is Heidegger’s justification in conceiving Dasein as the privileged mode of access to the question of being? According to Heidegger, Dasein is disclosive of the radical experience of being in that “in the being of this being it is related to its being” (BT 41). The accepted translation of Dasein is being-there. But Heidegger’s characterization of Dasein, being-there, should be more properly translated as being-its-there. “The Dasein is its Da, its here-there, in which it is here for itself and in which others are there with it...”²⁰ The prefix Da of Dasein indicates that a relation of exteriority, rather than a substantiality, characterizes Dasein, which is confirmed by Heidegger’s onto-ontological characterization of Dasein as being-thrown, to whose modality we will return later. The decisive determination of Dasein lies in an understanding relation to its being, in that it exists as understanding of being. Heidegger’s employment of understanding (*Verstehen*), as an onto-ontological or pre-ontological category, broadens the scope of hermeneutics beyond the scope of conceptual knowledge. Understanding of being is Dasein’s concrete knowledge, which is related to Dasein’s existential situation. This concrete, situational, knowledge is then grounded in Dasein’s “possible ways for it to be” whose ontological significance is decisive for the argument of *Being and Time* (BT 41). Ontologically, that definition means that the question of its being or of its understanding of its being is to be developed out of the structure of existentiality of existence. Dasein is radically disclosed to itself in an understanding, that is, existential way. That is to say, ontologically, Dasein is not an instance of a genus of beings as objectively present. Rather, an “always-being-my-own-being [Jemeinigkeit]” characterizes Dasein (BT 42). Thus, we are led to the problematic of Dasein’s

facticity. Heidegger prepares the way to the discussion of facticity by reflecting on the existential being-in that is constitutive of being of Dasein. The crucial aspect of the concept of being-in lies in *Ich bin* (I am) which means I dwell. The implication of this translation, which goes beyond etymological play, is that being-in-the world, as existential, rather than being the adjacency of two objectively present beings called Dasein and “world,” is essentially related to the possible ways of Dasein’s to be. This is the meaning of being that is already indicated in our discussion of facticity. The question that still needs to be asked is how does Heidegger define facticity? In Heidegger’s definition, “[t]he factuality of the fact of Dasein, as the way in which every Dasein actually is, we call its facticity ... the concept of facticity implies that an “innerworldly” being has being-in-the-world in such a way that it can understand itself as bound up in its “destiny” with the being of those beings which it encounters within its own world”(BT 56). This hermeneutical-existential definition of facticity implies that it cannot be interpreted as relations of being-on-hand. The question of existence is broached only through existence itself, and, as Heidegger writes, “the ontic distinction of Dasein lies in the fact that it *is* ontological”(BT 11).

There is a methodical stepping back, in *Being and Time*, from the structure of consciousness to the existential, ontological, structures through which entities are determined in their being. In this methodical retreat, the phenomenological transcendentalism, instead of being simply dissolved, is grounded fundamentally in, and thus displaced into, the originary phenomenon of factual structures of being-in-the-world. The crucial point, in this context, is that in formulating the hermeneutics of facticity Heidegger moves beyond not only the concept of mind or “spirit” developed by speculative idealism but also the thematic of pure transcendental consciousness in the Husserlian transcendental reduction. Further, the crucial implication of the concept of facticity is that being-in-the-world, as a unity, “has already dispersed itself in definite ways of being-in, perhaps even split itself up” (BT 57). And this is why

Heidegger employs care (*sorge*) as the fundamental structure of Dasein. Care or being *concerned* about its own being *is* Dasein itself.

Let me read more closely Heidegger's statements on the structure of being-in-the-world. It is true that the hermeneutics of facticity implies a significant critique of the modern metaphysics of the *immanent* subject. However, the critique of immanence does not lead Heidegger to seek transcendence in the "object" or in things outside of Dasein. Rather, the originality of Heidegger's phenomenology lies in locating transcendence in the "subject." In this context, let me refer briefly to Heidegger's 1929 essay 'On the Essence of Ground.' In this influential essay Heidegger raises the question of transcendence in the context of the problem of intentionality or Dasein's intentional comportment with things. Transcendence means surpassing [*Uberstieg*] and that which surpasses and dwells in this surpassing is the transcendent. Also, there is in each case *something* that is surpassed in this surpassing.²¹ Transcendence, Heidegger suggests, pertains to *human* Dasein and it pertains to human Dasein not as one comportment among others, but "belongs to human Dasein as the fundamental constitution of this being, one that occurs prior to all comportment."²² Heidegger further remarks that if the term "subject" is chosen to designate the Dasein that we ourselves are, then the transcendence designates the essence of the subject. To be a subject means to be being in and as transcendence. However, transcendence cannot be thought in terms of "subject-object relation." Rather, transcendence is prior to the subject-object relation and constitutes the very being of Dasein. The beings, however they are individually determined, are surpassed in advance as a whole. Yet, it is not beings *toward which* Dasein as such transcends, but the being-in-the-world. Here, I would like to refer briefly to Heidegger's 1927 lecture course at the University of Marburg, entitled, *The Basic Problem of Phenomenology*. In this text, in explaining the problem of transcendence, Heidegger rigorously introduces the conception of a phenomenological *horizon* in the form of what he calls the antecedent transposition of Dasein. It is only on the basis

of an “antecedent transposition” that Dasein can come back to itself from the direction of things.²³ What does the antecedent transposition mean? This refers again to Heidegger’s notion of the apriority of being-in-the-world. In Dasein’s comportment with others and things is already implied something like an “antecedent understanding of world, significance.”²⁴

The worldliness of the world is defined as the meaningful referential totality which Heidegger calls relevance. “Relevance is the being [Sein] of innerworldly beings, for which they are always already initially freed” (BT 82). The *a priori* disclosure of the totality of relevance contains an ontological relation to the world. It is understanding, as the being of Dasein, that prediscovers the being of the being-in-the-world. “If the kind of being of being-in-the-world essentially belongs to Dasein, then the understanding of being-in-the-world belongs to the essential content of its understanding of being” (BT 84). The relational totality of reference or significations, which is prediscovers in Dasein’s self-understanding, is what Heidegger calls *significance*. Thus, if the antecedent understanding of the world or significance reveals the worldliness of the world it also marks Dasein’s finitude as the “dependency upon being referred belongs essentially to its being [Sein]” (BT 86).

To continue, the notion of the antecedent understanding of being-in-the-world, its *apriority*, leads Heidegger to conclude that being-in-the-world *as* Dasein is the *transcendent*. What it means is that instead of locating transcendence in the sphere of “object,” in that which lies simply outside the subject, Heidegger locates transcendence in the “subject,” that is, in the self-understanding of Dasein itself. But, as we have noted, the transcendence that marks the self-understanding of Dasein or being-in-the-world is essentially finite, which is attested not only by the theme of dependency on reference but also by Heidegger’s further discussion of attunement and the project character of understanding.

The original modes of being-in whereby Dasein discloses itself as in the world are attunement, understanding and articulation. Dasein discloses the world in an *attuned* way, projects it in an

understanding way. These basic modes of Dasein cannot in any way be interpreted as “free floating.” Rather, they are part and parcel of Dasein’s factual life and its referential structure. In section 29 of *Being and Time*, the referential structure of Dasein is indicated *ontologically* as attunement (*befindlichkeit*) whose *ontic* manifestation is familiar to us: mood (*stimmung*) or being in a mood. Mood, in Heidegger’s description, is the primary disclosure of the world and is more originary than any disclosure as knowing. “In this “how one is” being in a mood brings being to its “there”” as in mood, says Heidegger, being is manifested as being delivered over to ... (BT 131), which Heidegger famously terms, ontologically thrownness (*Geworfenheit*). “We shall call this character of being of Dasein which is veiled in its whence and whither, but in itself all the more openly disclosed, this “that it is,” the thrownness [Geworfenheit] of this being into its there; it is thrown in such a way that it is the there as being-in-the-world” (BT 131). To repeat, because of the thrown character of the factual Dasein existential analysis of Dasein cannot be couched in terms of the objectively present entity. “Facticity is not the factuality of the factum brutum of something objectively present, but is a characteristic of the being of Dasein taken on in existence, although initially thrust aside. The that of facticity is never to be found by looking” (BT 132). At this stage of his analysis of attunement and thrownness, Heidegger links, in a hermeneutic manner, the phenomenon of being thrown to Dasein’s mode of factual being as being possible, to which I shall return shortly. To translate this, however, in ontic terms, there is a time lag that marks Dasein’s being-in. Dasein, Heidegger would suggest, is ontologically, as a *possibility*, ahead of itself and ontically lags behind itself. The attunement and thrownness manifest this ontico-ontological distinction and asymmetry of the being of Dasein.

Now, the dynamic potentiality in the concept of facticity, which distinguishes facticity from the factuality of a stone, is articulated through the conception of the *project* character of Dasein and its *possibilities* (being-possible), whose ontological hermeneutic significance is decisive in *Being and Time*. Equiprimordially

with attunement, says Heidegger, understanding constitutes the fundamental *mode* of the being of Dasein. Understanding, as existential, is related to Dasein not as objectively present being, “but being [Sein] as existing” (BT 139), which has the modality of being-possible. “Dasein is always what it can be and how it is its possibility” (BT 139). For Heidegger, being-possible, as existential, is distinct from logical possibility and from a conception of possibility that is not yet actualized possibility, only a possibility. Rather, being-possible is primordial. Also, in a way distinct from any free-floating potentiality of being, being-possible as the ontico-ontological mode of Dasein always finds itself in the definite mode of attunement and possibility. Which means that “Dasein is a being-possible which is entrusted to itself, it is *thrown possibility* throughout” (BT 139). And because of its character of attunement and being thrown Dasein has always already gone astray and “is thus delivered over to the possibility of first finding itself again in its possibility” (BT 140). Dasein is abandoned to the possibility, which it is (BT 139). However, this being abandoned does not indicate a lack or privation in Dasein’s being-in, which can then be filled or sublated. It means that Dasein is its own ground, thrown ground, as potentiality-of-being, but *not* of its own accord. “Even though it has not laid the ground itself, it rests in the weight of it, which mood reveals to it as burden” (BT 273). How *is* Dasein its own ground? In other words, the question asks, why does understanding always penetrate into the thrown possibility that is disclosed to it? Heidegger’s answer: “Because understanding in itself has the existential structure which we call project [Entwurf]” (BT 140). Dasein is its own ground by projecting into the thrown ground which is *care*. Project projects into the potentiality-of-being of Dasein. “Project is the existential constitution of being in the realm of factual potentiality of being” (BT 141). Dasein is thrown into the mode of being of projecting (BT 141). In projecting, understanding does not thematically grasp the possibilities themselves upon which it projects. Rather, in projecting, project already throws the possibility before itself and lets it *be* as possibility (BT 141). In that sense, the projected possibility, in

the realm of factual being, is not only transcendent to actuality, but to the possibility itself. The transcendence *of* possibility (double genitive) is what is essential to Dasein. What this means is that the projective understanding is, in its nature, finite.

Heidegger has specified the sense of the finitude of understanding of being in terms of the concept of care or concern. Care fills in the significance of finitude, so to speak. The hermeneutic wakefulness becomes meaningful in the context of the finite structure of care. In section 39, Heidegger raises again the question how to determine the totality of the structural whole of being-in-the world, that is, the self-understanding of Dasein existentially and ontologically. This is to ask the ontological unity of existentiality and facticity, namely, whether facticity belongs essentially to existentiality. How can we grasp the structural whole of the everydayness of Dasein in its totality, that is, in its unity of existence, being entangled (falling prey) and facticity? A “comprehensive” interpretation, Heidegger cautions us, cannot consist of piecing together elements, since the question of Dasein’s existential character is essentially different from the being of something objectively present. Everyday experience of the surrounding world, in its ontico-ontological orientation to the innerworldly beings, cannot present Dasein primordially for ontological interpretation. Moreover, the being of Dasein cannot be deduced, says Heidegger, from an idea of human being. If attunement and understanding constitute Dasein as a being of disclosedness, is there an understanding attunement of Dasein in which it is disclosed in the primordial way? In Heidegger’s phenomenological and ontological analysis, it is in the phenomenon of *Angst* that the primordial totality of being of Dasein is indicated. And it reveals itself as *care*.

The threatening nowhere that *Angst* exhibits disrupts the totality of relevance discovered within the world of things at hand and is “what is absolutely un hoped for and not to be perdured—what estranges” (BT 181). However, it would be Heidegger’s point, the outside that is disclosed in *Angst* belongs to the being-in of Dasein. In *Angst*, Heidegger writes, “Being-in enters the existential “mode” of not-being-at-home [Un-

zuhaus]. The talk about “uncanniness” [“unheimlichkeit] means nothing other than this” (BT 183). But how does *Angst* answer the quest for the primordial totality of being of Dasein as the unity of facticity and existentiality? Heidegger’s answer is that that about which we are anxious is thrown being-in-the-world; that for which we have *Angst* is our potentiality-for-being-in-the-world. *Angst* discloses the fundamental, ontological character of Dasein as existentiality, facticity, and falling prey. And Heidegger’s crucial suggestion is that *care* is the name given to the unity of existentiality, facticity, and entanglement (falling prey). To reiterate, *care* is the constitution of the being of Dasein (as understanding of being) which projects upon its ownmost potentiality-for-being. “Being free for its ownmost potentiality-for-being ... shows itself in a primordial, elemental concretion in *Angst*. But ontologically, being toward one’s ownmost potentiality-for-being means that Dasein is always already ahead of itself in its being” (BT 185). Being-ahead-of-itself characterizes the whole constitution of Dasein *not* as an isolated, worldless “subject,” but as being-in-the-world itself. Heidegger thus formulates being-ahead-of-itself as the unitary structure of “being-ahead-of-itself-in-already-being-in-a-world” (BT 185). It means that as primordially a whole existing is always factual. Further, as factual, Dasein is always immersed, thrown, entangled in definite possibilities to be taken care of. Does it mean that the shock of alterity of *Angst* that reveals possibility *as* possibility is neutralized? What it means, instead, is that being-in-the-world, as primordially a whole, is itself outside itself, is finite in its very constitution. It also indicates that the being-in-the-world, as primordially a whole, is ontic-ontological *difference* itself. “This being fills in the significance of the term *care*, which is used in a purely ontological and existential way” (BT 186). As the structure of being-ahead-of-itself-already-in-the-world, *care* is already factual and yet, Heidegger suggests, is an existential *a priori* (BT 187). *Care* is the *a priori* structure of ontic-ontological difference itself.

The *a priori* and finite structure of ontico-ontological difference that *care* exhibits is further enumerated in the

discussion of conscience as the call of care in the Division II of *Being and Time*, more precisely, in the discussion of *who* is called or summoned, and *who* calls. Conscience in Heidegger, it must be kept in mind, is an existential phenomenon of *Dasein*, and the ontological analysis of conscience is distinct from any psychological and moral description and classification of experience. As a phenomenon of *Dasein*, the ‘fact’ of conscience cannot be derived from inductive, empirical proof (BT 249). Conscience discloses and belongs to the existential phenomena which constitute the *being* [*Sein*] of the *there* as disclosedness. The analysis of conscience reveals it as a *call* which is a mode of discourse (BT 249-251). To call *as* discourse belong not only the possibility of calling or summoning but also a possibility of *listening*. They belong together originally. *Dasein*’s being lost in the public interpretations of its own possibilities is existentially possible because *Dasein* as understanding being-with can *listen* to others. How can the failure to hear “its own self” be stopped and another kind of hearing be possible? Another possibility must be given by *Dasein* itself. “The possibility of such a breach lies in being summoned without any mediation. ... That which, by calling in this way, gives us to understand, is conscience [*Gewissen*]” (BT 261). The call as a mode of discourse, Heidegger suggests, must be distinguished from any image or representation, “like the Kantian representation of conscience as a court of justice” (BT 261). The “voice” of the call is silent and unrepresentable, is that “which can factually never be found.” “In the tendency toward disclosure of the call lies the factor of a jolt, of an abrupt arousal. The call calls from afar to afar. It reaches him who wants to be brought back” (BT 261). To what one is brought back in being summoned? Heidegger’s answer: “To one’s *ownself*” from being uprooted from the *theyself* (BT 262-263). Heidegger further distinguishes the self that is constituted in being summoned by the call from the solipsistic inwardness so that the self is nothing other than being-in-the-world.

Although in Conscience the *Dasein* is the caller and the one that is summoned as *Dasein* calls itself in conscience, there is

strictly speaking, a non-contemporaneousness in Heidegger's description, between the call and being summoned. The jolt or the shock of hearing the call *immediately* introduces a distance in the being-in of Dasein. And conscience is a response to that distance. If the call comes from Dasein and yet, as Heidegger says, from afar, then that distance belongs to Dasein. To interpret strongly, in the call (and the response to the call) Dasein dwells in the differential and opening line of Dasein and its other. Dasein calls itself in conscience. Yet the call is essentially involuntary. "it' calls, against our expectations and even against our will. On the other hand, the call without doubt does not come from someone else who is with me in the world. The call comes from me, and yet over me" (BT 265). "It calls," coming from *and* beyond Dasein, opens up the radical non-contemporaneousness in the being-in of Dasein in that the caller is not Dasein as objectively present entity nor is it someone who is with Dasein in the world. In the call, there is, as it were, a reversal and a repetition-with-displacement of intentionality from "subject" to "object." In the radical modification of the inauthentic they-self, the Dasein is singularly constituted as self, which is self *as* other.

However, the non-identity of the caller does not justify looking for the caller in a being unlike Dasein. Dasein exists factically. And the facticity is to be distinguished from the factuality of something objectively present. It is the thrownness into existence, if we may recall, that permeates the project character of factual Dasein. Attunement brings factual Dasein authentically before its "that it is," and as the being that it is, Dasein has to be its potentiality of being. It is the factual Dasein, as thrown into existence, in the uncanniness of *Angst*, that calls itself in conscience. The factual Dasein calls as conscience from the thrown ground of existence. "The 'it calls me' is an eminent kind of discourse of Dasein. The call attuned by anxiety first makes possible for Dasein its project upon its ownmost potentiality-of-being" (BT 266-267). In that way, in the call and being summoned there is the unity, even if uncanny, of facticity and existence, which is the structure of care. This also means that in being uprooted from the world, the Dasein

as being-in-the-world is constituted as singular, yet as non-contemporaneous with itself. Worldliness of the world reveals itself *as such*. The unity of facticity and existence, in the thrown mode of attuned projection, proves that conscience reveals itself as the call of care. Heidegger thus articulates the finite structure of care as the call of conscience: “(T)he caller is Dasein, anxious in thrownness (in its already being-in ...) about its potentiality-of-being. The one summoned is also Dasein, called forth to its ownmost potentiality-of-being (in its already-ahead-of-itself ...). And what is called by the summons—out of falling prey to the they (already-being-together-with-the-world-taken-care-of)—is Dasein. The call of conscience, that is, conscience itself, has its ontological possibility in the fact that Dasein, in the ground of its being, is care” (BT 267).

The being of Dasein is care. The latter is a finite unity of facticity, existence and falling prey. The unity of the thrownness and the project character means that Dasein is the *being* of its ground. Explication of the structure of the being ground of Dasein would reveal the essential finitude that the ontic-ontological difference designates. How *is* Dasein its own ground? Heidegger’s answer: by projecting on the potentiality-of-being and possibilities into which it is thrown. The thrownness, which is in itself passive as it never happened to Dasein as an event, permeates the project character throughout. The self, that is, Dasein, which for sure has to lay the ground of itself, can never gain power over the ground. Dasein is a being that is ontologically ahead of itself and yet ontically lags behind its possibilities, lags behind the ground. Dasein is its non-created ground over which it never gains power from the ground up. This is the finitude of ontic-ontological difference that care is concerned about. In other words, what care is concerned about is the non-being that permeates the being ground of Dasein. “Being the ground [Grund-Seiend], it itself is a nullity of itself. Nullity by no means signifies not being present or not subsisting, but means a not that constitutes this being of Dasein, its thrownness” (BT 273). That is to say, Dasein is not itself the ground, but as a projective self, it is the being of its ground. Dasein is the *being not* of its ground. Being

the nullity of its ground does not mean a privation or lack as compared with an ideal that Dasein fails to attain. “Care itself is in its essence thoroughly permeated with nullity” (BT 273). But we should interpret the statement as meaning care being permeated by the nullity of ontic-ontological difference. The fact that its being is an issue for Dasein is not the ultimate basis of care. Rather, if we may follow Gadamer, what makes possible the projective understanding of being is the fact that there is a “there,” a clearing in being, that is, the distinction between being and beings.²⁵ This prior clearing would appear as time.

Temporality, Historicity and Repetition

It is my argument that Dasein exists in a relation of *modality*, rather than simple opposition, of the ontic and the ontological. This modality is the basis of Heidegger’s characterization of being of Dasein as care. As a self-projective being, Dasein projects upon its potentiality-of-being. Dasein *is* being-possible, which means, phenomenologically, that “Dasein is always already ahead of itself in its being” (BT 185). Being-ahead-of-itself-in-already-being-in ... is primordially a whole. But the whole that is designated by care is a unity of facticity, existence and falling prey. The structure of care implies the modal extremity of Dasein. And the modal character of Dasein is at the basis of Heidegger’s conception of time.

Being and Time discloses that time, i.e. the temporalizing of original temporality, is the power of being, in as much as temporality constitutes the horizon of the understanding of being, and thus, defines being temporally. The temporal analyses of *Being and Time* not only provide the ground for the finitude of being but also are the most important expression of the attempt to “overcome” the sense of being in the traditional approaches of substance and subject.

One of the paradigmatic points made in *Being and Time* is that the being of Dasein, care, is “whole” in an authentic sense only when Dasein holds and relates to the possibility of death

concluding its being. Dasein “is” such a “relation to its end” and “is” in this pregnant sense finite. Dasein comes forward to itself in its ownmost possibility of being toward the possibility of the impossibility to be and holds it out as a possibility, withstands it. In such essentially futural anticipation Dasein at the same time has gone back to the thrownness unto death. Through this anticipation and return Dasein is summoned out of being lost in what Heidegger calls the they-self.

In section 45 of division II of *Being and Time* Heidegger, in preparing the discussion of the temporal structure of care, raises the question of how to articulate the primordial whole of Dasein in our hermeneutic fore-sight and fore-having. Is not Dasein, as *existentiell*, originally in-authentic and fragmentary? Since everyday Dasein is, after all, between birth and death how is it possible to bring Dasein as a whole to view? But the idea of existence also includes authentic potentiality-of-being which is made visible as a mode of care (BT 216). The aporia leads to the heart of ontico-ontological difference. Without renouncing, in advance, the aporia, Heidegger prepares the passage through it by constructing what Heidegger calls being-toward-death. Without going into an elaborate discussion of being-toward-death let me mention some of the crucial aspects of the structure, as it leads to the discussion of temporality.²⁶

Death is an existential phenomenon and, as ontologically conceived, should be experienced and understood “as my own” in contrast to witnessing the death of others. Death, in its extremity, *singularizes* Dasein. Another essential aspect of Heidegger’s account of the existential conception of death is that Dasein does not simply come to an end nor is it fulfilled in the end. Rather it exists in such a way that it not-yet *belongs* to it (BT 234). Heidegger distinguishes the not-yet from something outstanding (something lacking) which is yet to be actualized and argues that Dasein is *always already its not yet* as long as it is (BT 235). By grounding the being-toward-the-end in the phenomenon of *already* not-yet of Dasein Heidegger reverses, by a shift of terrain, any teleological understanding

of the concept of death and, by implication, of the temporality of Dasein. Instead of being a fulfillment, death remains as the *already* receding (thus *always coming*) possibility *belonging* to Dasein.

So what is Dasein's proper relation to death? The answer lies in Heidegger's concept of death as *Possibility*. Dasein relates, singularly, that is, to possibility as *imminence*. In taking upon death as possibility "Dasein stands before itself in its ownmost potentiality-of-being. In this possibility, Dasein is concerned about its being-in-the-world absolutely. ... As a potentiality of being, Dasein is unable to bypass the possibility of death. Death is the possibility of the absolute impossibility of Dasein" (BT 241). This relation to death as possibility, which is distinct from awaiting or expecting death, is what Heidegger calls anticipation. Being-toward-death as anticipation reveals Dasein's ownmost possibility of authentic existence. How does the authentic existence *before* death resolve the aporia we referred to? Heidegger offers the answer in this very important remark:

Death is a possibility of being that Dasein always has to take upon itself. With death, Dasein stands before itself in its *ownmost* potentiality-of-being. In this possibility, Dasein is concerned about its being-in-the-world absolutely [schlechthin]. Its death is the possibility of no-longer-being-able-to-be-there. (BT 241)

By taking upon death as its possibility, Dasein stands before its ownmost potentiality. But what is ownmost turns out to be, paradoxically, nothing other than the possibility of its no longer being Dasein, of the impossibility of Dasein. In being-toward-death there is thus a coincidence of being and non-being. In Dasein's being-toward-death non-being enters the mode of being-in of Dasein.

However, in order to complete the phenomenological exposition of the being-whole of Dasein existential analytic needs existentiell attestation. It is in resoluteness or better in the anticipatory resoluteness that Heidegger finds the existentiell attestation. Heidegger characterizes the authentic understanding of the call of conscience as wanting to have

a conscience which, as the self-understanding of Dasein's ownmost potentiality of being, is a mode of *disclosedness* of Dasein (BT 283). Three elements—the attunement of *Angst*, the projective understanding of one's ownmost being-guilty, and discourse as reticence—constitute the authentic *disclosedness* of Dasein. And it is under resoluteness that the three elements are gathered together. “The eminent, authentic disclosedness attested in Dasein itself by its conscience—the reticent projecting upon one's ownmost being-guilty which is ready for anxiety—we call resoluteness [*entschlossenheit*]” (BT 284). What resoluteness, as an eminent mode of the disclosedness of Dasein, discloses is, equiprimordially, the whole of the being-in-the-world, being-in, and the self. What Dasein resolves upon in resoluteness is prefigured in Dasein's existential structure of “potentiality-of-being in the mode of heedful concern” (BT 286). Thus, the existential project of Dasein's potentiality-for-being-an-authentic-whole and the existentiell attestation of this same phenomenon in resoluteness are the same.

That the resoluteness is to be distinguished from ‘subjective’ decision on the part of Dasein and its *temporal* character from an ‘objective’ teleology are attested in Heidegger's cautious remark that resolution does not arise out of an external relation, that “resoluteness “exists” only as a resolution that projects itself understandingly” (BT 285), and *only* the resolution can answer the question in regard to the ‘object’ on which resolution resolves itself. Resoluteness is resolute only in being resolute *for its time*, that is, only in *anticipation*. Which means that the resoluteness is *unchosen* in itself. Further, the resoluteness is not an overcoming of irresoluteness but has the *modal* relation to irresoluteness. “Even resolutions are dependent upon the they and its world. Understanding this is one of the things that resolution discloses, insofar as resoluteness first gives to Dasein its authentic transparency” (BT 286).

Does the concept of anticipation disavow the thrown mode of being-in of Dasein? On the contrary, instead of actualizing the already actual possibility, anticipation, as temporal mode of

the being-in of Dasein, first makes the possibility *possible*. In anticipation Dasein arrives at its own extreme possibility,

“that of giving itself up” to its ownmost time. Heidegger’s characterization of being-toward-death as nonrelational does not, however, mean that in resoluteness Dasein is detached from the world. In being individualized to its core, “Resoluteness brings the self right into its being together with things at hand, actually taking care of them, and pushes it toward concerned being-with with the others” (BT 285).

Anticipation or anticipatory resoluteness is not an overcoming of the thrown mode of Dasein’s potentiality-of-being. The thrown character of Dasein permeates the anticipatory project through and through. Nor is anticipation a fictitious possibility imposed upon Dasein, but rather is a *mode* of the potentiality-of-being existentially attested in Dasein. As a *moment* of modalization, anticipation brings Dasein to what Heidegger, borrowing from Karl Jaspers, calls “limit situation” (BT 295). The singular time of Dasein, attested in anticipatory resoluteness, is not an overcoming of death, but “frees for death the possibility of gaining power over the existence” (BT 296). Heidegger’s analysis would disclose the anticipatory resoluteness as the *originary experience* of temporality. It is the originary temporality that makes possible the anticipatory resoluteness, and Dasein experiences the originary temporality in resoluteness. It is to Heidegger’s discussion of originary temporality that we must turn now.

The discussion of temporality in section 65 of division II of *Being and Time* is not only preparatory to Heidegger’s conception of historical repetition, but is itself a repetition of the existential analytic, leading to the ontology of repetition. Thus the method and the content of analysis converge, which is the core formula of *Being and Time*.²⁷ Heidegger prepares the hermeneutic basis of the discussion by asking the two tier question: what is meaning (*sinn*) and what is being asked in the question of meaning? Already in Division I Heidegger raises the question of the meaning of being and seeks the answer in the projective

being of Dasein. It is a hermeneutic circle: the meaning of being lies in the being of Dasein, which already presupposes being in general. In raising the question again Heidegger reasserts the identity: “The meaning of being of Dasein is not something different from it, unattached and “outside” of it, rather it is self-understanding Dasein itself” (BT 310). Since time will be determined as the meaning of being of Dasein the identity and sameness of time and Dasein are reconfirmed. But the structure of the sameness appears to be much more complicated.

In hermeneutic terms, as Heidegger argues, there is a distinction between being of being and the meaning of that being. The distinction, by implication, refers to two levels of projection. Heidegger defines meaning as “the upon which of the project in terms of which something becomes intelligible as something” (BT 146-147). Thus, there are, implicitly, two levels of projection: primary and secondary. “Meaning signifies that upon which the primary project is projected, that in terms of which something can be conceived in its possibility as what it is” (BT 308). The upon which of projection makes possible the projection, that is to say, makes possible the possibility itself. Strictly speaking, there are thus, implicitly, three elements of the hermeneutic projection: being, the projection of being upon its being, and the upon which of that projection. The crucial move from the primary project to the second level, suggests Heidegger, leads hermeneutics “beyond being.”²⁸ The beyond being is temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*), or more precisely, futural temporality.

As we have seen, anticipatory resoluteness is “the being toward one’s ownmost, eminent potentiality-of-being” (BT 310). Heidegger’s crucial argument is that this *coming-toward* or *letting-come-toward-itself* makes possible anticipatory resoluteness and the coming-toward is the primordial phenomenon of the *future* (BT 311). The phenomenon of future (coming-toward) must be distinguished from a now that is *not yet* actual, or from a now that is *no longer* since identifying the future with the not yet now or no longer now would turn the being of Dasein into something objectively present. It is anticipation that makes

Dasein authentically futural, and it is the future, as *already* coming toward oneself, that makes anticipation itself possible. When I expect a possibility, I come from this possibility toward that which I myself am. This coming-toward-itself from one's ownmost possibility, which is implicit in Dasein's existence and of which expecting is a specific mode, is the *primary concept of the future*.

Anticipation means, let us recall, to take over being-guilty, to take over the thrown ground of nullity. But the thrown mode of being means that futural Dasein can *be* only in the *way that it always already* was, only in its having-been (the past). In retaining or forgetting something Dasein always comports toward what it itself has already been. It concomitantly retains its own self in *what it always has been*. That which we *are* as having been has not passed away; Dasein *is* as long as it has been. However, it is Heidegger's point that Dasein can be its having-been only because it is futural. It is from the future that Dasein returns to its having-been (BT 311).

Where is the *present* in Heidegger's articulation of temporality? According to Heidegger, it is the *futural* having-been that releases the present from itself (BT 311). This releasing of the present is what Heidegger describes as *making* present or *enpresenting*. "Only as the *present* [*Gegenwart*], in the sense of making present, can resoluteness be what it is" (BT 311). The present in the existential sense is not the same as presence in the sense of being extant. Only as making present is Dasein futural and past (having-been) in the particular sense. "Resolute, Dasein has brought itself back out of falling prey in order to be all the more authentically "there" for the disclosed situation in the "Moment" [*Augenblick*]" (BT 313). "This unified phenomenon of the future that makes present in the process of having-been is what we call temporality" (BT 311).

In *Being and Time* Heidegger refuses to employ such terms as "future," "past," and "present" as they grow out of what Heidegger would call inauthentic understanding of time (BT 312). Rather, the authentic structure of care, namely, ahead-of-itself-already-being-in as being-together-with has its ground

in originary temporality. Ahead-of-itself is grounded in the futural temporality; already-being-in is known as having-been, and being-together-with is made possible in making present or enpresenting. Heidegger's point is that if *ahead* means not-yet now, and if *already* means no-longer now then the being of Dasein would turn into something objectively present (BT 312). On the contrary, "The "before" and the "ahead of" indicate the future that first makes possible the fact that Dasein can be in such a way that it is concerned about its potentiality-of-being ... Its primary meaning is the future" (BT 313). As futurally having-been, authentic temporality temporalizes itself and first arouses the present. "The primary phenomenon of primordial and authentic temporality is the future" (BT 314). Even though as being-toward-the-end Dasein exists in the thrown mode of being-in, the thrownness does not mean coming to a stop, rather means that "it *exists finitely*" (BT 315). The finitude and the closure of the future mean nothing other than the fact that that Dasein exists in one's ownmost nullity (BT 315). The closure of the future, its finitude, opens the *possibility* of being-open as being-toward-the-end.

Temporality is already a complex phenomenon. As projected, Dasein futurally comes *back* to itself, and, as factual thrown being, Dasein carries the past with it as having-been. The already complex character of temporality is what Heidegger calls "ekstatikon par excellence" (BT 314). "Temporality is the primordial, "outside of itself" in and for itself" (BT 314). Heidegger calls future, past and present the three *ecstates* of temporality. They belong together intrinsically with co-equal originality. The term "*Ecstatic*" here does not mean ecstatic state of mind. The common Greek term Ekstatikon means stepping-outside-self. It is not that Dasein is at first something extant as a thing and thereafter is outside itself. Instead, within its own self, it is nothing other than the outside-itself. In *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger calls the Ekstatikon the *horizontal*. "That toward which each ecstasis is intrinsically open in a specific way we call the horizon of ecstasis"²⁹ "Horizontal" means "characterized by a horizon given with the ecstasis

itself”³⁰ Heidegger further remarks that phenomenological intentionality of Dasein is itself conditioned by the horizontal-ecstatic temporality. “The Dasein’s essential determination by which it intrinsically transcends is likewise connected with the ecstatic-horizontal character.”³¹ The concept of horizontal-ecstatic temporal unity of “toward” (future), “back to” (having-beenness) and “together with” (present) is the decisive contribution of *Being and Time* to ontological hermeneutics.

Immediately before introducing the central idea of temporality as *ekstatikon*, Heidegger makes the crucial remark that “Temporality “is” not a being [Seiendes] at all. It is not, but rather temporalizes itself” (BT 314). How will we interpret this statement which complicates further the identity of Dasein and time? Temporality’s *not a being* should suggest an originary co-belonging of being and what Heidegger calls beyond being. The structural co-belonging is not identity, but is itself difference or alterity which is ‘older’ than being and non-being. The ‘mediating’ difference or alterity is ‘what’ is beyond being and is temporality itself. The quotation marks the bind that language cannot escape. We cannot avoid saying, Heidegger writes, that temporality “is” the meaning of care; and yet it cannot be said that it *is*, since temporality is not being (BT 314). The bind is the necessary failure of language and itself points to the aporia of ontic-ontological difference expressed, in this case, in language.

Although one of the paradigmatic thesis in *Being and Time* is that, as ecstatic mode, time is *one*, the structure of temporality as beyond being and *already* being indicates that there is a more originary hetero temporality implicitly at work in the text of *Being and Time*. We should also take seriously Heidegger’s repeated insistence that the future has *priority* in the ecstatic unity of time. As ecstatic, the future fills in the significance of care which is *being-toward-death*. But, the priority of the future, the *already-to-comeness* of the future, indicates its already absolving or withdrawal. The prior withdrawal of the future, the withdrawal that belongs to its singular priority, referring to an immemorial past, is what makes the future already closed and time finite. Finitude is the relation of a (non-relational) passivity

of the future and the irrevocable past, which introduces a disjuncture in the present.

Now, what is to be seen is precisely how, given the discussion of Dasein's temporal mode of being, Dasein's historicity is understood, with which the published part of *Being and Time* is concluded. Prior to the discussion of historicity Heidegger, as we have seen, has established that temporality constitutes the *horizon* of the authentic existence of Dasein. Now, the analysis of the historicity would show "that this being is not "temporal" because it "is in history," but that, on the contrary, it exists and can exist historically only because it is temporal in the ground of its being" (BT 359).

In this context, in section 72, Heidegger again raises the question of the being-whole of Dasein. Is the whole of Dasein with respect to its authentic *being-whole* [*Ganzsein*] captured in our existential fore-having? Dasein's being-toward-death is only one end of Dasein and just *one* of the ends that embraces the totality of Dasein. Another "end" is "birth." What remains unnoticed, Heidegger concedes, is not only the being-toward-the-beginning, but also the way Dasein "stretches along between birth and death" (BT 356). And the stretching along is the aspect of Dasein's historicity. How are we to determine the stretching along, or "connectedness," between birth and death? Is Heidegger reverting back to the notion of constant presence that he has criticized? This stretching along is not a sequence of experiences in time, nor is stretching a *presence*. Dasein does not first fill up an objectively present path or stretch "of life," but stretches itself along in such a way that its own being is constituted *beforehand* as this stretching along. Dasein is present *only* as it stretches between birth and death. Conceived existentially, birth [Geburt] is never something past that is the *no longer* present nor does death have the kind of being that is *not yet* present. "Both "ends" and their "between" are as long as Dasein factually exists, and they are in the sole way possible on the basis of the being of Dasein as care" (BT 357). "As care, Dasein is the "between"" (BT 357). Heidegger calls this specific movement of stretching

along the *occurrence* [*Geschehen*] of Dasein (BT 358). To expose the structure of occurrence and the existential and temporal conditions of its possibility means to gain an ontological understanding of historicity (BT 358). Through the concept of occurrence of stretching along Heidegger relates Dasein's being historical to the finite potentiality of being whole of Dasein. Thus, according to Heidegger, the condition of possibility of Dasein's historicizing, the occurrence of stretching, is found in the existential-ontological constitution of historicity, which is rooted in temporality.

In the concluding part of *Being and Time*, Heidegger's aim is to find the entry point for the primordial question of the essence of history or the existential historicity. In contrast to what Heidegger calls the vulgar interpretation of history, the historicity that emerges from Heidegger's ontological hermeneutic account is what I would like to call *singular history* which is prefigured in the conception of *singular, finite, time* of Dasein that we have characterized. But this phenomenon of singular history has been concealed by the way Dasein's history is ordinarily interpreted.

Heidegger begins his account by reflecting on various meanings and uses of the term history ["Geschichte"] and historical ["Geschichtlich"]. History [Geschichte], when conceived as being [Seiende] that is not objectified, refers to *being* historical in which *past* has preeminent use. Past, in this use, means what is no longer present or does not have effect on the "present." The historical sense of the past may also signify that past still has effect on the "present", in the sense that "one cannot evade history" (BT 361). In another sense, history is not a past, but is in "the nexus of a becoming" or a context of events that moves through past, present and the future. This meaning of history includes the notions such as "making history" or "epoch making" that defines a "future" (BT 361). In this usage past has no priority. Yet in another sense, history, as distinct from nature, refers to the transformations and destinies of humankind, human institutions, "spirit" and "culture." Finally,

history refers to that which is handed down by tradition (BT 361).

The four meanings of history refer to the occurrence of existing Dasein in time in such a way that the occurrence is taken to be historical. All these four meanings are interrelated in that they are related to human being as the “subject” of events (BT 361). How to determine the historical occurrence? Is the occurrence a succession of processes in time? Is Dasein factually present beforehand and then becomes historical? Or, is the being of Dasein constituted by occurrence, so that only because Dasein is constitutionally historical are there events and destinies ontologically possible? According to Heidegger, Dasein is *primarily* historical in its being. The assertion that Dasein is primarily historical does not refer to the ontic fact that human beings are atoms in the mechanism of world-history, but poses the problem “why, and on the basis of what ontological conditions, does historicity belong to the subjectivity of the “historical” subject as its essential constitution” (BT 364)? Heidegger’s aim is not to offer a speculative view of history in the manner of Hegel, nor is Heidegger primarily interested in the science of historiography, nor with the historian’s craft either. His primary concern is to show how historicity is grounded in authentic being of Dasein and in its temporality. In this manner Heidegger radicalizes Dilthey’s effort to ground historical science in *life* as such. The knowledge of life, for Dilthey, is the self-understanding of life. The knower is known. This notion of the self-understanding of life is interpreted, in Heidegger, as the understanding of the authentic being of Dasein. However, this means, for Heidegger, that the interpretation is *not* the retrospective and resigned act as it is in Hegel (Owl of Minerva taking its flight only after the dusk) or even in Dilthey. For Heidegger, the self-understanding is the *temporal* being of Dasein, its singular “awhileness.” It is in this sense of temporality that the understanding has to be considered as *historical*.

How then are we to conceive the historicity of Dasein? According to Heidegger, if we may repeat, Dasein always has its

“history” because the being of Dasein is constituted by historicity in that its very being is understood as care whose ontological meaning is temporality. In that sense the historicity of Dasein is a concrete elaboration of temporality. Heidegger introduces three conceptual terms which are thought in terms of Dasein’s authentic temporality: heritage, fate, and destiny. But we should not be misled by the ordinary understanding of these terms that would be justifiably open to post-metaphysical suspicion. These conceptual terms must be read on the basis of the temporality of the being-in of Dasein.

In projecting on its potentiality Dasein returns to its factual, thrown situation which Heidegger would now call heritage. Heritage is defined by Heidegger as *handing oneself over* to traditional possibilities, “although not necessarily as traditional ones” (BT 365). In heritage, Dasein’s thrownness is *repeated in terms of temporality*, which the active expression handing oneself down to resoluteness implies. This giving oneself to its finite heritage in anticipatory resoluteness brings Dasein to its *fate*. The intrinsic relation of Dasein’s heritage and fate is interpreted by Heidegger as the occurrence of Dasein “that lies in authentic resoluteness in which it hands itself down to itself, free for death, in a possibility that it inherited and yet has chosen” (BT 366). In the simplicity of its fate Dasein is not a victim of its situation. On the contrary, fate *singularizes* the historical being of Dasein as its finite *possibility*.

More crucially, I submit, the conception of the finitude of fate articulates freedom in its finite adumbration. *Fate is Dasein’s finite freedom*. Freedom is finite as it is not consciousness but the finite temporal being of Dasein that is the ground of freedom. “In this way it takes over the *powerlessness* of being abandoned to itself in that freedom, which always only *is* in having chosen the choice” (BT 366). Despite Heidegger’s rhetoric of choice and decision fateful freedom is something *unchosen* in itself. It is not the infinite possibility of Dasein, but its finitude that characterizes the freedom of the *fateful* choice. The finite freedom is an occurrence of Dasein as *occurrence-with*, which Heidegger calls *destiny*, a word that would play a

central role in the later Heidegger's reflections of the destining of being. In *Being and Time*, destiny is Dasein's finite being-with-one-another in its *singular* "community" ("generation"), which constitutes the authentic occurrence of Dasein. It is in this precise sense that Dasein is historical. Historicity of Dasein lies in its co-occurrence that takes place in the *singular community* of being-with-one-another. The terms such as community and destiny thus should not mislead us to treat them as relationship based upon kinship. On the contrary, community and its destiny is grounded, as it is clear by now, in singular occurrence-with, or being-with (*Mit-Sein*), which, as I have shown elsewhere, is an *autonomous* relation and resists being conceived on the basis of Dasein's self-relation alone.³²

The singular co-belonging of fate and destiny and the co-belonging of the heritage of the individual and the heritage of the community make up the authentic historicizing of Dasein. Heidegger articulates the finite historicity of Dasein in the following italicized lines:

Only a being that is essentially futural in its being so that it can let itself be thrown back upon its factual there, free for its death and shattering itself on it, that is, only a being that, as futural, is equiprimordially having-been, can hand down to itself its inherited possibility, take over its own thrownness and be in the Moment for "its time." Only authentic temporality that is at the same time finite makes something like fate, that is, authentic historicity possible. (BT 366)

In this remarkably dense passage, the three ecstases of time are translated into the unity of the three moments of history: *futural having been in the Moment*. The concept of Moment is Heidegger's rejoinder to the notion of the present as substantive self-presence. The Moment is Dasein's resolute gathering against the inconstancy of dispersion and is in itself "a steadiness that has been stretched along" (BT 371). The futural having-been that, in affirming death, returns to its own most being is in the *Moment* for its singular historicity. To get rid of a misconception once and for all, the Moment is not an assertion

of Dasein's virility; it rather designates Dasein's "powerlessness" that Dasein must take over in order to stay with its being as the movement of finite possibility, which is the sole meaning of authentic historicising.

The fateful, singular, historicising is 'actualized' in historical *repetition* [*Wiederholung*]. Why repetition? Actualization takes the form of repetition precisely because temporality which is the horizon of Dasein (as care) *is itself outside itself*. That is why repetition is the mode of the temporalizing of time. Repetition unravels the fact that the temporality is the "concealed ground" of Dasein's singular historicity (BT 367). Heidegger would claim that Dasein does not first become historical in repetition, but as temporal takes itself over in its history.

Repetition is reclamation of the thrown being of Dasein in anticipatory resoluteness. As reclamation and rejoinder, repetition is explicitly handing down to itself its ownmost *possibility* that has been there for it. As we have seen, future has priority in Heidegger's conception of temporality. In a manner reminiscent of Kierkegaard, Heidegger thus argues that repetition does not actualize what has been already an actual possibility. Repetition, as essentially futural, does not revive the actuality of the past, but retrieves the *other* possibility. Here is Heidegger's argument:

The handing down of a possibility that has been in repeating it, does not, however, disclose the Dasein that has been there in order to actualize it again. The repetition of what is possible neither brings back "what is past," nor does it bind the "present" back to what is "outdated." Arising from a resolute self-projection, repetition is not convinced by "something past," in just letting it come back as what was once real. Rather, repetition *responds* to the possibility of existence that has-been-there. (BT 367)

As futural, repetition is historical in the sense that repetition does not repeat the past in its identity (as it really was) but *produces* what is historical possibility for the first time. Repetition is thus an *appropriation*, an event of appropriation,

through which the other possibility of Dasein is reclaimed *as* possibility.

As fateful destiny, if we keep in mind the expression's finite significance, repetition first manifests to Dasein its own singular "awhileness" of history. That repetition singularizes Dasein in its ownmost temporality is confirmed in Heidegger's claim that repetition, as a response belonging to the Moment, is "the renunciation [Widerruf] of that which is working itself out in the today as "past"" (BT 367). That which is renounced as the past is nothing other than the meaning of a past that belongs to past as objectively present. Renunciation is also a *rejoinder*. What emerges with the act of renunciation of "past" is the *new meaning* of past in its futural possibility. Futural repetition, in conformity with the occurrence of anticipatory resoluteness, is what Heidegger emphatically calls *authentic* historicity. The authenticity of history, as it should be clear by now, is not a timeless truth, but a finite truth of being in relation to the hermeneutic modality of ontic and ontological, of authenticity and inauthenticity, resoluteness and irresoluteness.

Heidegger concludes the chapter on historicity by reflecting on authentic historiography, which he grounds in existential historicity of Dasein. Here I intend to remark briefly on Heidegger's historiographic reflection, especially, his remarkable appropriation of Nietzsche as his sole historiographic precursor.

Heidegger states the existential 'origin' of historiography in this italicized remark: "the historiographical disclosure of history is in itself rooted in the historicity of Dasein in accordance with its ontological structure" (BT 373). What this remark implies is, rather than abstracting the concept of historiography from a certain factual procedure of the sciences, methodologically and ontologically *projecting* the *idea* of historiography in terms of the historicity of Dasein, i.e. in terms of temporality as such. Every thematization characteristic of sciences is limited by the hermeneutic project structure of Dasein, and, Heidegger further remarks, if historiography is concerned with disclosing the "past," then that disclosure is possible only if the "past" has always already been projectively disclosed in general (BT

374). Historical work “presupposes historical being toward the Dasein that has-been-there, that is, the historicity of historian’s existence” (BT 374).

It is in this context that Heidegger significantly remarks that if historical repetition reveals Dasein that has-been-there in its possibility it manifests the “universal” in what is unique (BT 375). This is how Heidegger comes close to the articulation of what I may call singular-universal dimension of Dasein’s possibility. For, as Heidegger himself states, its theme is neither singular occurrence, nor a free floating universal. Rather it is the possibility of Dasein that has been factually existent that makes the possibility singular, more precisely, singular-universal. We have already stated above that hermeneutics of facticity reveals Dasein in its being-now, in its particular awhileness.

Here, Heidegger appropriates, briefly but crucially, Nietzsche’s suggestions for three aspects and modes of a futural historiography, which survive Nietzsche’s demolition of history in his second *Untimely Meditations*, entitled, ‘On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life’: monumental, antiquarian and critical. As we have seen, Dasein exists as futural in the resolute disclosure of a chosen possibility, in historical repetition. In repetition, in coming back to itself, Heidegger remarks, Dasein is open for the “monumental” possibilities of human existence (BT 376). Historiography is monumental as it arises from repetition, from historicity. Authentic historiography is “antiquarian” in that in the appropriation of the possible in repetition is prefigured the possibility of preserving that has-been-there (BT 377). Further, temporality of Dasein consists in the unity of future and having-been as the present, as what Heidegger calls the Moment. But as the latter is interpreted on the basis of the futurally repetitive understanding of the possibility authentic historiography (Heidegger’s term) ceases to make the today present (BT 377). Authentic historiography, as monumental-antiquarian, is necessarily a critique of the present, as it disentangles itself from the publicness of the today (BT 377). Heidegger’s articulation of authentic historicity,

as grounded in futural temporality, is the foundation of the possible unity of the three kinds of historiography.

It is part of my argument that finite historicity, whose mode of being is historical repetition, has to be characterized as singular. But the singularity also has to be distinguished from solitariness of Dasein. Rather, it is precisely through his grounding of historicity in occurrence-with of the singular community, in the awhileness of its time, that Heidegger would claim that historicity is rooted in the singular being-in-the-world. As we have seen previously, it is being-in-the-world itself that *is* transcendence. Transcendence *of* being-in-the-world and its finite singularity explicates the *ontico-ontological difference* as the meaning and horizon of the authentic being whole of Dasein. Ontico-ontological difference means, in this context, the primordial unity of facticity and existentiality, and the differential unity of the ontic and the ontological. That is what is implied by the transcendence of being-in-the-world. In this precise sense, history is not a totality transcended by eschatology and metaphysics; it is transcendence itself.

This is where Heidegger appropriates Dilthey's insight that we have referred to earlier, namely, that *life* is the ultimate reference of historical understanding, that in knowing, life investigates itself. Heidegger's point, as we have noted, is that death marks the limit of life. In the resolute repetition, in the affirmation of being-toward-death, life itself is affirmed as the meaning of being-historical of Dasein. The fundamental character of life is historical. In other words, "Time constitutes the whole of my Dasein and also defines my own being at every moment. Human life does not happen in time but rather is time itself."³³

Notes

1. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh; revised by Dennis J. Schmidt (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010). Hereafter, cited parenthetically in the text as BT followed by the appropriate page numbers.
2. For Heidegger's critique of Husserl in regard to the latter's mistreatment of Dilthey, see chapter 2 of Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to*

- Phenomenological Research*, trans. Daniel O. Dalhstrom (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2005).
3. Martin Heidegger, 'Wilhelm Dilthey's Research and the Struggle for a Historical World' in *Supplements*, ed. John van Buren (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 149.
 4. Heidegger, 'The Struggle,' 155.
 5. Heidegger, 'The Struggle,' 155.
 6. Heidegger, 'The Struggle,' 156.
 7. Heidegger, 'The Struggle,' 157.
 8. Heidegger, 'The Struggle,' 159.
 9. Martin Heidegger, *Ontology –The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, trans. John van Buren (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999), 5.
 10. Heidegger, *Ontology*, 5.
 11. Heidegger, *Ontology*, 5.
 12. Heidegger, *Ontology*, 11.
 13. Heidegger, *Ontology*, 11.
 14. Heidegger, *Ontology*, 12.
 15. Heidegger, *Ontology*, 13.
 16. Heidegger, *Ontology*, 14.
 17. Heidegger, *Ontology*, 14.
 18. Heidegger, *Ontology*, 14.
 19. Heidegger, *Ontology*, 15.
 20. Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 300-301
 21. Martin Heidegger, "On the Essence of Ground," trans. William McNeill, in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 107.
 22. Heidegger, "On the Essence of Ground," 108.
 23. Heidegger, *The Basic Problems*, 161.
 24. Heidegger, *The Basic Problems*, 296.
 25. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, second revised edition, Trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (New York: Continuum, 1993), 257.
 26. For an elaborate discussion of the structure of being-toward-death, see chapter 1 of Aniruddha Chowdhury, *Post-deconstructive Subjectivity and History: Phenomenology, Critical Theory, and Postcolonial Thought* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2014).
 27. For an illuminating discussion of the relation of Dasein's temporality and its being as repetition, and also for the relation between Kierkegaardian "repetition" and Heideggerian "retrieval," see chapters 1 and 3 of John D. Caputo, *Radical Hermeneutics: Repetition, Deconstruction, and the Hermeneutic Project* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).

28. Heidegger, *The Basic Problems*, 282.
29. Heidegger, *The Basic Problems*, 267.
30. Heidegger, *The Basic Problems*, 267.
31. Heidegger, *The Basic Problems*, 268.
32. See chapter 1 of *Post-deconstructive Subjectivity and History*.
33. Heidegger, 'The Struggle,' 169.

CHAPTER II

Otherness of the Historical: Hermeneutic History in *Truth and Method*

Gadamer's intervention in philosophical hermeneutics can be viewed as a fecund response to Heidegger's breakthrough in hermeneutic phenomenology. As we have seen, for Heidegger historicity, which is the essential aspect of the hermeneutic phenomenology, is rooted in the singular occurrence of being-in-the-world. By grounding historicity in the occurrence-with of the singular community Heidegger could claim that historicity of man is rooted in the singular being-in-the-world. It is precisely through his conception of singular historicity of Dasein, rooted in the co-belonging of facticity and existentiality (hermeneutics of facticity), that Heidegger would overcome the scientific methodologism of previous hermeneutic philosophy, especially that of Dilthey, even though Heidegger retains the radical potential of Dilthey's notion of *Erlebnis*, namely, in knowing life investigates itself. But in Dilthey life philosophy was never fully freed from the methodologism of his presuppositions. It is Heidegger's revolutionary breakthrough in hermeneutics that finally frees hermeneutics from the methodologism of human sciences and historicism. It is to this new aspect of hermeneutics initiated by Heidegger that Gadamer's *Magnum Opus* is devoted.

My principal contention in this chapter is that Gadamer develops, through his criticism of the nineteenth century historicism and his own articulation of what he calls the inner historicity of experience, whose hermeneutic analogue is our

irreducible situatedness in tradition, a notion of singular-universal dimension of history. I shall attempt to enounce the thesis through a close re-reading of Gadamer's difficult notion of historically effected consciousness as the fusion of horizons of understanding, which constitutes the enigmatic core of Gadamer's idea of hermeneutic history. The fusion of horizons is a singular constellation of past and the future through the enpresenting of the present in the Moment, if I may couch it in Heidegger's language. The singular constellation, it will be my argument, presents history as a space of alterity, as a space of occurrence-with. In that eminent sense, historically effected consciousness has something evental about it, which is analyzed by Gadamer, most significantly, in his theorization of hermeneutic experience which takes on a key position in Gadamer's text. Drawing on both Martin Buber and Hegel Gadamer articulates experience as the relation to the Thou and as absolute recognition of the other which Hegel thinks and disavows at the same time. In the relation of I-Thou the Thou has a certain primacy over the I. It refuses our fore-meaning and fore-understanding and engenders a *new* experience. It is the same with historical understanding where we are brought up short by the experience of the historical past and encounter its evental alterity. Inner historicity of experience is not the space where everything returns; it is not the space of the self-same identity, but the relation of occurrence-with or being-with the other.

Aporias of Historicism: Historical School, and Dilthey

The first section of the second part of *Truth and Method* considers the history of hermeneutics of the nineteenth century and in that context engages extensively with what we may call the aporias of historicism whose principal figures, for Gadamer, are Ranke, Droysen, and Dilthey. Both the historical school and Dilthey exhibit a situation of *crisis* between the universal history and absolute knowledge, between hermeneutic historicity and a certain Hegelian Philosophy of history. With regard to the

nineteenth century German historical worldview, Gadamer writes that “Its birth certificate, as it were, is its rejection of the aprioristic construction of world history.”¹ According to Gadamer’s reconstruction of this history, it was Herder’s critique of the enlightenment view of history that had the decisive influence on the development of the historical world view. Against the teleological view, and the paradigmatic position accorded to the Greek antiquity, both of which positing a criterion that is beyond history, Herder maintained that to think historically meant to acknowledge that each period of history has its own uniqueness.

Further, it is the basic assumption of the historicism that the philosophical notions such as idea, essence, freedom never find adequate expression in history but must be thought through the immanence of historical process itself. This is not a shortcoming, but indicates history as an independent way to truth (TM 202). It is not any particular content, but “the formal idea of the greatest variety” which is the mark of the universality of history. It is this denial of aprioristic (and supra historical) view of history that leads the historical school and Dilthey to ground history in literary hermeneutics, which Gadamer finds “fatal.” Yet, according to Gadamer, the denial of the aprioristic view is itself not without its metaphysical presuppositions, which becomes evident in the hermeneutic history of the historical school and, more acutely, in Dilthey (TM, 201). Though they stand against the idealistic view of spirit in history they are, according to Gadamer, nonetheless related to it. When Herder’s, and later, Ranke’s notion of the immediacy of each epoch to God is related to the notion of continuity (Zusammenhang) of history the metaphysical presuppositions of historicism come into view. Ontological notion of the structure of continuity of history, whose criterion, according to Ranke, is success, thus retains a teleology, albeit without telos (TM 203).

The aporia of the historical school becomes evident in Ranke’s paradoxical claim that even though history can never have the unity of a speculative system it is not without its internal coherence and unity. In his reflections on Ranke, Gadamer

follows the aporia in detail. On the one hand, against Hegel Ranke maintains that “the links that create historical continuity are “scenes of freedom”” (TM 204), which means that “in the infinite web of events there are particularly significant incidents in which historical decisions are, as it were, concentrated” (TM 204). And in this free decisions of historical significance is manifested something like a historical whole. Historian’s task is to clarify the unique and free character of events. On the other hand, the notion of the coherence of historical wholes brings Ranke significantly close to Hegelian thinking. Gadamer cites this significant text from Ranke:

The writing of history follows the scenes of freedom. This is its greatest attraction. But freedom involves power, germinal power. Without the latter the former disappears, both in the world of events and in the sphere of ideas. ... Beside freedom stands necessity. It consists in what has already been formed and cannot be destroyed, which is the basis of all new activity. What has already come into being coheres with what is coming into being. But even this continuity itself is not something arbitrary to be merely accepted, but it has come into existence in one particular way, and not another. It is, likewise, an object of knowledge. A long series of events—succeeding and simultaneous to one another—linked together in this way constitute a century, an epoch” (TM 204-05).

The argument of universal history is expressed in a very condensed form in this passage, and Gadamer’s commentary on this passage is equally dense. Gadamer’s point is that Ranke’s formulation takes on a world historical character and comes very close to Hegel. There is an inseparable *relation* between freedom and power in Ranke’s formulation, which, according to Gadamer, cannot be thought as contradiction. “For power that is more than its expression is always freedom” (TM 206). The power that has a decisive role in history is not mechanical power, which is why Ranke uses the term “germinal power.” The relation of power and freedom does not designate a relation of causality. For Gadamer, “The resistance that free power encounters is itself freedom ... By excluding many things as impossible, it limits action to the possible. Necessity itself comes

from freedom and is itself qualified by the freedom that reckons with it" (TM 206). The use of the category of power allows one to think of the coherence of history as a primary given, a unity of history as a text. But we should be aware that here we are concerned not with nature but with "historical being." In Ranke's formulation, the rise of new historical period or epoch is made possible by what has already been formed, what cannot simply be destroyed. Ranke's argument is that it is not the plans and views of the actors that constitute the meaning of events, "but historical effects that reveal the historical powers" (TM 207). But the freedom from which they come are limited by the situation into which they come. Moreover, individualities that are operant in history are characterized by the historical reality that stand over against them, which is why individualities are not subjectivity, but are living power (TM 207).

Both Ranke and Droysen reject the speculative philosophy of history. The historical events and epochs are singular and cannot be derived from apriori historical principle or from a divine plan. Yet, Ranke accepts the world historical coherence simply as a fact. Gadamer locates a contradiction, or better, an aporia, in this gesture. Gadamer's question is that if the goal and plan in history is not accepted what justifies the proposed unity of world history? Ranke does not offer answer to this question. He assumes the unity simply as a fact. Rejection of the philosophy of history and the affirmation of the singularity of each historical period leads Ranke to employ the insight of the literary hermeneutics which places a singularity of a text within author's life-context and within the broader literary tradition. Likewise, the historian places each period within the context of universal history. However, crucially, the rejection of the speculative history is supplemented by the recourse to theological argument. Singularity of each event and period is justified by its being accessible to omniscient divine view. Gadamer quotes Ranke: "I imagine the Deity—if I may allow myself this observation—as seeing the whole of historical humanity in its totality (since no time lies before the Deity) and finding it all equally valuable" (TM 210). Here the idea of an

infinite understanding leads to “the original image of historical impartiality” (TM 210). The imperative of empathic knowledge makes the historian acquire a priest-like status. As Gadamer explains Ranke’s theodicy:

“Immediacy to God” is for the Lutheran Ranke the real content of the Christian gospel. The re-establishing of the immediacy that existed before the fall does not take place through the church’s means of grace alone. The historian has a share in it too, in that he makes mankind, which has fallen into history, the object of his study, and knows mankind in the immediacy to God which it has never entirely lost. (TM 210-11)

Thus, the rejection of the Hegelian conception of the unity of world history leads the historical school to ground universal history in theology. However, the break with idealism is not as obvious as it appears to be. As Gadamer argues, in Ranke’s universal history the universe is raised to a consciousness of itself in a manner close to German idealism even if the consciousness, in this context, is not a conceptual consciousness. Rather, it is an empathic, co-knowledge of the universe, in the background of which Ranke’s famous remark that he would like to extinguish himself should be understood (TM 211). Gadamer links Ranke’s religious thought to pantheistic conception of life where “life thinks and thought lives” (TM 211). “In being understood, the phenomena of historical life are seen as manifestations of universal life, of the divinity” (TM 211). Ranke, in spite of his rejection of speculative philosophy, finally insists on the self-transparency of being, which forms the basis of the consciousness of himself as a historian.

“The tension between aesthetic hermeneutics and philosophy of history,” writes Gadamer, “comes to a climax with Wilhelm Dilthey” (TM 218). It would not be wrong to say that with Dilthey we enter the spiritual domain of Gadamer’s work. In a later text, Gadamer endorses Leo Strauss’s remark that for Heidegger it is Nietzsche, while for Gadamer it is Dilthey, who forms the starting point for critique.²

To begin with, it is Dilthey's insistence on the essential historicity of experience and of human sciences, in opposition to the modern philosophical premium on suprahistorical assumptions (as in Descartes and Kant), that forms the consistent epistemological background of Dilthey's work. Human life and knowing are embedded in historical situation and are thus essentially finite. There is a hermeneutic circularity in human knowing, namely, in knowing life knows itself. It is in this manner of articulating understanding that Dilthey extends hermeneutics beyond the scope of Schleiermacher. Texts must be understood within the horizon of historical life world. Since historical life world is always a finite whole, historical understanding is never a complete fact, but an infinite task of interpretation so to speak, even though Dilthey took pain to distinguish his position from historicist relativism.

Gadamer's criticism consists in the fact that Dilthey found it impossible to reconcile his attempt to analyze the human sciences in terms of the experience of life with "his firmly held Cartesian conception of science" (TM 258), which is evident in the contradiction between his conception of historicity of lived experience and his effort to ground the human sciences methodologically. On the one hand, Dilthey took pain to provide an epistemological foundation for the historical school's revolt against Speculative idealism. On the other hand, he saw in school's empiricism a lack of logical consistency. This led Dilthey to a kind of epistemological methodologism. This methodologism is the ground of Dilthey's apparently Kantian attempt of a critique of historical reason. Thus, just as Kant had provided the answer to the question how pure science was possible, Dilthey saw it his task to answer the question how historical experience can become a science. Yet, Dilthey took pain to distinguish his project from the dominant neo-Kantianism which failed to distinguish historical experience from the experience of nature, which Dilthey found profoundly mistaken. In contrast to the model of natural science and the consequent empiricism that Neo-Kantianism failed to criticize, "What we call experience (*Erfahrung*) and acquire through

experience is a living historical process; and its paradigm is not the discovery of facts but the peculiar fusion of memory and expectation into a whole” (TM 221). This peculiar fusion rests “on the inner historicity” that belongs to experience. I shall return to Gadamer’s crucial discussion of experience (*Erfahrung*) later. Suffice it here to mention that, for Gadamer, Dilthey remains the foremost thinker of experience or lived experience (*Erlebnis*) which is where immediate certitude is to be found (TM 223).

The problem for Dilthey is then how the knowledge of continuity that is immediately certain is possible. This notion of the immediacy of lived experience not only makes Dilthey’s divergence from the neo-Kantians acute but at the same time poses the problem of epistemological grounding of human sciences with a new starting point. The new paradigm therefore is no longer, as with the neo-Kantians, how our ideas accords with the external world but how the knowledge of the historical world is always a world formed by the human mind itself. Here, Dilthey finds support in the great work of Giambattista Vico (TM 222). We may recall that against Cartesianism and mathematical knowledge of nature based on it, Vico asserted the primacy of the man-made historical world. We can know the reality only because we have made it. Acceptance of Vico’s humanist principle thus makes possible for Dilthey to couch the new paradigm in terms of *Erlebnis* in which the possibility of the identity between consciousness and object—the postulate of speculative philosophy—is evident (TM 222).

Yet, the question remains how the individual’s experience can turn into historical experiences, since “in history we are no longer concerned with coherent wholes that are experienced as such by the individuals or are re-experienced as such by others” (TM 222). This is a decisive question for Dilthey because the problem of historical coherence that is not experienced by any individual marks the transition from a *psychological* to a *hermeneutic* grounding of the human sciences (TM 224). Dilthey found the solution to the question of trans-individual, historical coherence in the concept of structure through which he sought

to overcome the limitations of the historical school. As Gadamer explains Dilthey's methodological point, "Logically "structure" is distinguished by its referring to a totality of relationships that do not depend on a temporal, causal succession but on intrinsic connections" (TM 223). The concept of structure, in this context, is akin to the principle of hermeneutic circle: every part of the lived experience expresses and has significance for the whole. And this shifts the problematic from the psychological to the hermeneutic ground of experience, which is made possible by replacing real subject with the logical subject. Individuality is not negated by statements on such logical subjects which historians always makes when referring to deeds and destinies of people, but included in it with only part of their being. The question is how such statements are epistemologically justified. Dilthey finds the solution of the problematic historical subject in grounding the latter in his paradigmatic philosophy of *life*.

Now, according to Gadamer's account, for this justification Dilthey is indebted to Husserl's *Logical Investigation*. "Dilthey's concept of the structural quality of the life of spirit corresponds to the theory of intentionality of consciousness in that structure is not merely a psychological fact but the phenomenological description of an essential quality of consciousness" (TM 225). In Husserl's terms, the correlative of this intentionality—the intentional object—is an ideal unity rather than a psychological component. "It constitutes a unity that is intelligible in itself, a unity of life that is expressed in every one of its manifestations and hence can be understood in each of them" (TM 225). What is formed in such unity is something like a *singular* configuration which is independent of the system of cause and effect (TM 225). For Dilthey, unlike Husserl, such ideality of significance was less a result of purely *logical* investigations than an expression of *life*. As Gadamer interprets Dilthey, "Life itself, flowing temporality, is ordered toward the formation of enduring units of significance, life interprets itself. Thus, life constitutes the real ground of human sciences" (TM 226). However, and this is also crucial, such unity of life is not a psychological fact but is rather a historical articulation through and through. In that way

Dilthey's hermeneutics of life retains the historical world view albeit in its singular articulation.

However, the question remains is Dilthey's break with speculative idealism as obvious as it appears at first sight? The question becomes pressing when Dilthey characterizes historical life as "thought-forming work of life" (TM 227). However severe Dilthey's criticism of the idea of progress of civilization is the original identification of thought and life makes it difficult for Dilthey to escape teleological schema characteristic of speculative history. Gadamer notes that in his later years Dilthey began to speak of spirit in place of "life." In his later years the Hegelian concept of objective spirit assumes a central place in Dilthey's writings. It is true that Dilthey still criticizes Hegel for the abstract conceptual account of objective spirit. It is also remarkable, Gadamer argues, that Dilthey includes art, religion and Philosophy within objective spirit while in Hegel they belong to absolute spirit. Which means that the only real difference between Hegel and Dilthey is that whereas for Hegel the homecoming of spirit takes place in philosophical concept, for Dilthey spirit is not so much a concept as historical expression (TM 229). The density of expression rather than transparency of concept marks Dilthey's real difference from Hegel. Thus the notion of absolute spirit and the dissolution of all alienness and differences characteristic of spirit nonetheless exist for Dilthey, but it exists as historical consciousness, not as speculative concept.

Nonetheless, the question that needs to be asked is how can the notion of absolute spirit be reconciled with historically finite consciousness? Gadamer asks several aporetic questions at the end of the first section of the chapter on Dilthey. Is not the fact that consciousness is historical through and through a barrier to its reaching fulfillment in historical knowledge? If Dilthey does not accept Hegel's superseding of historical finitude by absolute knowledge then does not the constant alteration of historical context preclude attaining objectivity (TM 231)? In short, Gadamer's questions reveal the conflict between the demand for objectivity in historical science and Dilthey's life philosophy.

As we have seen, Dilthey would respond to the demand for objectivity by means of his notion of structure. Through the notion of hermeneutic structure which corresponds to old hermeneutic principle of the unity between the parts and whole, historical sense could transcend the prejudices of one's own time and place. The hermeneutic notion of the structure, or structured whole, allows Dilthey to retain the historicism of the historical school. Rejection of Hegel's apriorism does not prevent Dilthey from affirming the notion of "inner infinity of mind" which could be the basis of "the sovereignty of infinite understanding" which, according to Dilthey, is positively fulfilled in historical reason itself (TM 232). At any rate, Dilthey did not regard the finitude of historical man as any impairment of the possibility of knowledge in human sciences. Yet, the question remains if the absolute identity of consciousness and object cannot be achieved by finite, historical consciousness how is it possible for historical consciousness to transcend the finite present and achieve objective historical knowledge?

Gadamer believes that Dilthey offers only indirect answer to these questions. The answer partly lies in Dilthey's notion of the immanent reflexivity of life itself. The historical consciousness takes a reflective stance toward both itself and the tradition in which it is situated. "Historical consciousness is a mode of self-knowledge" (TM 235). For Dilthey the profound connection between life and knowledge is an "*original datum*" (TM 236). Which shows that Dilthey grounds both objectivity of scientific knowledge and philosophical self-analysis in the natural tendency of life, and genuine community between scientific knowledge and life-philosophy. The latter becomes "philosophy of philosophy." (TM 236). Dilthey grounds this unity in historical self-reflection. "Hence it is open to the objection of relativism" (TM 236). However, Gadamer locates an ambiguity in Dilthey's thought here, which has its basis in "an inner disunity of his thought," a disunity between his life-philosophy and his unresolved Cartesianism (TM 237). In the latter, it is not only philosophical prejudice that is to be superseded, but the tradition itself, the self-knowledge of life itself. Gadamer

thus finds the standpoint of reflection to be incompatible with life-philosophy. Finally, Dilthey's thought remains loyal to the "special ideal of scientific enlightenment" which, for Gadamer, remains incompatible with the immanent reflexivity of life.

Phenomenological historicity, and the question of tradition

The ambiguity of Dilthey stems from the fact that his grounding of human sciences in the experience of life was never reconciled with his Cartesian conception of science. In Dilthey, the reflective moment dominates the historical consciousness. It is this methodologism that must be overcome in order to be able to arrive at the appropriate hermeneutics of human sciences. It is Heidegger's revolutionary notion of historicity of understanding and interpretation that offers Gadamer the means to go beyond the impasse of historicism. For despite his pioneering critique of methodologism through the notion of life-world Husserl remains too close to Dilthey. As James Risser notes Gadamer's point succinctly: "Whereas Dilthey wants to 'derive the structure of the historical world from the reflexivity inherent in life,' Husserl wants to 'derive the constitution of the historical world from conscious life.'" "What is common to both is not only the epistemological schema in which the concept of life is articulated, but also ... the omission of the "Thou" within the schema of the experience of life."³ With Heidegger, the hermeneutic problem and the concept of life-philosophy are freed from its epistemological framework. It is to this new aspect of hermeneutics initiated by Heidegger that Gadamer's *Magnum Opus* is devoted (TM 257).

To be precise, Gadamer appropriates Heidegger's radical hermeneutics on two related levels: temporality of being and understanding, and Heidegger's famous representation of the hermeneutic circle. "It was no longer with the same intention as Husserl that Heidegger undertook to interpret being, truth, and history in terms of absolute temporality. For this temporality was not that of "consciousness" nor of the transcendental Ur-I"

(TM 257). It is temporality rather than consciousness that, as horizon, determines the experience of being. Time is not only the horizon of being, but Heidegger's thesis is that being *is* time, which, according to Gadamer, bursts asunder the whole subjectivism of modern philosophy (TM 257). The temporality of being appears, in *Being and Time*, as a prior clearing in being—i.e. onto-ontological difference itself. In grounding phenomenology in temporality of being, which is the characteristic of “hermeneutics of facticity,” Heidegger goes beyond both the speculative idealist conception of mind and transcendental consciousness of Husserlian reduction.

Heidegger's advance over Dilthey is important to Gadamer precisely because Heidegger broadens the scope of understanding by grounding it on the temporality of being. True, for Dilthey too, all understanding is ultimately self-understanding (of life). But by grounding understanding on the being of Dasein Heidegger attains “a fundamentally new position with regard to the aporias of historicism” (TM 259). Thus, “understanding is not a resigned ideal of human experience adopted in the old age of spirit, as with Dilthey; nor is it, as with Husserl, a last methodological ideal of philosophy in contrast to the naivete of unreflecting life; it is, on the contrary, the original form of the realization of Dasein, which is being-in-the-world” (TM 259). Gadamer remarks significantly, in strict conformity with Heidegger, that understanding is the movement of *transcendence* itself (TM 260). As we have seen in the previous chapter, in projecting, understanding does not thematically grasp the possibilities themselves upon which it projects. Rather, in projecting, project already throws the possibility before itself and lets it *be* as possibility (BT 141). In that sense, the projected possibility, in the realm of factual being, is not only transcendent to actuality, but to the possibility itself. It is in this sense of transcendence that we should understand Gadamer's significant remark that the *Da* of Dasein signifies a finite *event* rather than a present.⁴ Let me follow the argument more closely.

Even though, as Gadamer argues, historical knowledge is possible on the basis of the fore-structures of Dasein that does

not mean that historical knowledge is a projection of a plan; on the contrary, knowledge remains adapted to the singularity of the object. Yet the thing is not a *factum brutum*, but partakes in the *same* mode of being of Dasein. The sameness of the understanding and the object of the understanding do not, however, mean that there is a “homogeneity” between the knower and the known, rather the sameness signifies that “both have the mode of being of historicity” (TM 261). We can have historical knowledge and re-present the past because we are ourselves historical. This contraposition of the homogeneity and the sameness of the historical would be of utmost significance in our context. The *sameness* of the historicity of understanding is not something homogeneous but designates a relation of event and alterity. Historicity designates the same *as* the other. This is the difficult aspect of Gadamer’s conception of tradition. Belonging to a tradition, in Gadamer’s famous representation, to which I shall return shortly, means nothing other than the historical finitude of Dasein and its futural *possibility* that is transcendent to our fore-structures of understanding and signifies the relation of alterity.

Gadamer’s insistence on singularity and otherness in regard to the historical understanding becomes explicit in his appropriation of Heidegger’s conception of fore-structure of hermeneutic endeavor. In Gadamer, as in Heidegger, the fore-structure of understanding has a positive ontological significance. All understanding presupposes hermeneutic pre-understanding and fore-projections on the part of the reader of a text. The reader necessarily projects anticipatory fore-meaning for the text in advance. There is no neutral vantage point from which to articulate the meaning of a text or event. The initial meanings of the text arise out of the fore-projections. Broadly speaking, the meaning is determined by one’s life-situations. Life-world, as Husserl has famously interpreted the philosophical import of the term, presents a non-objectified horizon of meaning and is prior to the operation of the transcendental subjectivity. Transcendental ego is shown to be already ‘in’ the life-world.

This is also the radical implication of the hermeneutic circle. “The point of Heidegger’s hermeneutical reflection is not so much to prove that there is a circle as to show that this circle possesses an ontologically positive significance” (TM 266). And yet it is of utmost importance to be on guard against arbitrary fancies and habits of thought and to fix one’s gaze “*on the things themselves.*” The hermeneutic understanding must be distinguished from the subjective interpretation. Only when we are concerned about the singularity and the alterity of the text the reading can overcome the hidden prejudice of subjective projection and constitute the new meaning of the text. Constitution of meaning of a text thus becomes a *task* rather than a conscientious decision. Hermeneutic understanding remains an infinite task because working out appropriate, anticipatory projection has to be constantly confirmed by the thing itself. Thus, the task of reading is not to give up projection and take a so called neutral position but to work through the projection by remaining “open to the meaning of the other person or text” (TM 268). “The hermeneutical task becomes of itself a questioning of things and is always in part so defined” (TM 269). It is the hermeneutical sensitivity to the alterity of other person or text that guarantees successful constitution of meaning. “The important thing is to be aware of one’s bias, so that the text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth against one’s own fore-meanings” (TM 269).

Gadamer not only distinguishes self-understanding from forms of self-consciousness and self-possession but argues that it is an understanding that always places itself in question and encompasses all recognition of oneself in the other, of oneself *as* the other, if I may couch it in this manner, which opens up in dialogue.⁵ Thus, Gadamer’s notion of the *same* mode of being of historicity of understanding and object of understanding, of the knowing and the known, becomes in the end meaningful only as *a relation of alterity* to the thing and the other. In understanding, Gadamer would say, one encounters the singularity and the otherness of the other. It is only in this sense of eventality and alterity that we must understand Gadamer’s famous re-

presentation of what he calls belonging to a tradition. “It is the tyranny of hidden prejudices that makes us deaf to what speaks to us in tradition” (TM 270). According to Gadamer, historicism, as the successor of modern Enlightenment, makes this error:

Historicism, despite its critique of rationalism and of natural law philosophy, is based on the modern Enlightenment and unwittingly shares its prejudices. And there is one pre-Judice of the Enlightenment that defines its essence: the fundamental prejudice of the Enlightenment is the prejudice against prejudice itself, which denies tradition its power. (TM 270)

It is in his critique of the Enlightenment position on prejudice, authority and tradition that Gadamer applies Heidegger’s notion of the thrown projection of Dasein. In Gadamer’s use, prejudice, authority and tradition are of a piece and point at the mode of being of historicity which is suppressed by the Enlightenment conception of autonomous reason. The mode of being of historicity, or the sameness of Dasein and the world signify, as we have seen, not the homogeneity but the *historical being-there* of Dasein.

During the modern Enlightenment the concepts of prejudice, authority and tradition acquire, for the first time, a negative connotation. But for Gadamer these concepts need not be taken in its negative sense as a necessary distortion of truth, but should be conceived as our situatedness in finite time and place of the world. In fact, as Gadamer argues, prejudice means “a judgment that is rendered before all the elements that determine a situation have been finally examined” (TM 270). The Latin term *praejudicium* which means disadvantage is a derivative. But the negative connotation depends precisely on the positive validity, the value of the provisional decision as a prejudgment (TM 270).

The relentless effort of the Enlightenment lies in its linking prejudice and superstition to unexamined authority, which is formulated in Kant’s famous motto: Have the courage to make use of your *own* understanding. Against dogmatism the Enlightenment seeks to understand tradition not on the basis

of a supposed authority but under the seat of reason alone. The only adequate ground of knowledge is the detached, unbiased view of things. The written tradition of Scripture, like any other historical document, can claim no absolute validity and should be put under unbiased scrutiny. It is not tradition but reason that is the source of authority. As a social and intellectual movement, the Enlightenment thus understands itself as freeing itself from all authority and tradition assuming thereby a detached view point on all social practices. In opposition to authority and tradition the Enlightenment posits the truth of autonomous reason.

Before proceeding to Gadamer's rehabilitation of authority and rethinking of tradition let me state more clearly what Gadamer does *not* propose to do in his critique of the Enlightenment. That Gadamer's project in his critique of Enlightenment is to articulate the *mode of being historical* of Dasein rather than a simple reversal of the Enlightenment would be clear from his exposition of the identity between the project of Enlightenment and its romantic critique. For it is Gadamer's point that in its revivalist urgency and restorative achievement romantic movement nonetheless offered a "mirror image" of the Enlightenment toward which its criticism was directed (TM 274). In spite, or rather, because of its opposition to Enlightenment romanticism shares the fundamental schema of the philosophy of history with the Enlightenment: "the schema of the conquest of mythos by logos" (TM 273). Romanticism, precisely because it disparages the notion of progress, considers the schema as self-evident. "It shares the presupposition of the Enlightenment and only reverses its values, seeking to establish the validity of what is old simply on the fact that it is old ..." (TM 273). Romantic reversal of the values of the Enlightenment thus perpetuates the abstract opposition of myth and reason. In a style reminiscent of Horkheimer's and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* Gadamer writes that "All mythical consciousness is still knowledge, and if it knows about divine powers, then it has progressed beyond mere trembling before power (if this is to

be regarded as the primeval state), but also beyond a collective life contained in magic rituals ..." (TM 274).

It is Gadamer's point that the modern Enlightenment largely determines the rise of the historicism of the nineteenth century, but not directly, but through the refractions of the romantic revaluations. Thus, "the fact that it was romanticism that gave birth to the historical school confirms that the romantic retrieval of origins is itself based on the Enlightenment" (TM 275). Gadamer's critique of the autonomous reason of the Enlightenment does not operate on the same level of a reversal that only conceals the hidden identity. What the identity of the terms of opposition conceals or rather suppresses is the mode of being of historicity.

Gadamer's point is that there are not only justified prejudices as belonging to our fore-structures but the notion of authority in which the Enlightenment locates the source of prejudice is not simply blind obedience to commands. The significant aspect of Gadamer's rehabilitation of authority is its link with what we may call the primacy of the other. Here is the relevant passage:

Admittedly, it is primarily persons that have authority; but the authority of persons is Ultimately based not on the subjection and abdication of reason but on an act of acknowledgment and knowledge—the knowledge, namely, that the other is superior to Oneself in judgment and insight and that for this reason his judgment takes precedence—i.e. it has priority over one's own. (TM 279)

What this passage implies is that in dialogue and in the space of tradition it is the other's voice that should have primacy over the self. The mode of the historicity of tradition involves the primacy of the other. The authority is not an abdication of reason but rather depends on an act of reason which, "aware of its own limitation, trusts to the better insight of others" (TM 279). According to this argument, authority is no longer a matter of blind obedience, but of knowledge and recognition.

The Enlightenment's effort to free individuals from the self-incurred tutelage finds its target in tradition and posits

reason against tradition as such. For Gadamer, there is no unconditional antithesis between tradition and reason. Both the Enlightenment and the romanticism posit the abstract antithesis between reason and tradition and hypostatize tradition itself. For Gadamer, tradition is not a hypostatized entity, but is that in which *truth comes to speech*. Tradition is essentially a space of language through which we find ourselves situated in a world. Both the Enlightenment's critique of tradition and romanticism's rehabilitation of it miss this linguistic aspect of tradition and thus lag behind their true historical being. As Risser correctly points out, tradition for Gadamer is not a name for a collective subject such as Hegel's "objective Geist" but only signifies our historical mode of being and its unsurpassability.⁶ In tradition in the Gadamerian sense, as Risser further remarks, we are confronted with the voices of the past as *voices of the other* that make a claim upon us.⁷

Further, if the notion of tradition presupposes our historical consciousness of the primacy of whole over the part of the present, then that whole or totality must be conceived in a weak and finite sense. As Gadamer writes, "The concept of the whole is itself to be understood only relatively. The whole of meaning that has to be understood in history or tradition is never the meaning of the whole of history" (TM xxxv). If tradition presupposes a totality, then that must be understood "as an effective moment of one's own being" (TM xxxv). The Enlightenment's critique of tradition, by suppressing our mode of historicity, misses the element of effective history.

We should still consider how Gadamer's rethinking of tradition is actualized in the practice of historical hermeneutics. Let me restate Gadamer's argument in regard to the prejudice. If a certain prejudice is essential to hermeneutic fore-having, fore-sight and fore-meaning and work almost like a transcendental conditions of understanding, how shall we then distinguish between a legitimate prejudice and a false one, a prejudice that enables understanding from the one that obstructs it? Is there a neutral criterion whereby we can judge and distinguish between a true and a false prejudice? Gadamer's response would

be negative. Gadamer's critique of historicism would be that by trying to displace prejudice as such with methodological objectivism historicism would consolidate the Enlightenment's prejudice against prejudice and thereby suppress our irreducible historical situatedness. But the question of the distinction between the true and false prejudice is still necessary in the practice of historical hermeneutics. It is through the notion of temporal distance that Gadamer would attempt to solve the problem.

As we have seen, for Gadamer, Heidegger's existential grounding of the hermeneutic circle forms the decisive turning point in the history of hermeneutics. In contrast to the romantic hermeneutics that articulates the circular movement of understanding as running backward and forward along the text and ceasing when the text is understood, in Heidegger's description of the circle the text remains permanently determined by the anticipatory movement of understanding. In contrast to a formalist notion of the circle, the existential circle "describes understanding as the interplay of the movement of tradition and the movement of the interpreter" (TM 293). This interplay is what Gadamer calls commonality that binds us to the tradition. It is this commonality that is an essential aspect of our hermeneutic pre-understanding and fore-understanding, which "is fulfilled in the commonality of fundamental, enabling prejudices" (TM 295). Herein lies Gadamer's advance over Dilthey. It is not subjectivity, as Romantic hermeneutics saw it, but the finitude of historical commonality that is the true ground of understanding. The commonality belongs to the finitude of the circle as Heidegger understood it. The finitude of the commonality of understanding means that this commonality of tradition is never a self-evident fact but is "based on a polarity of familiarity and strangeness, a polarity that cannot be overcome or reduced. "The true locus of hermeneutics is this in-between" (TM 295). The true significance of temporal distance for understanding lies in the movement between familiarity and strangeness, which constitutes the ambiguity of tradition. The temporal distance must be understood in an ontologically

positive way and the hermeneutic task is *not* to attempt to overcome the temporal distance but to positively engage with it. The notion of temporal distance and the ambiguity of tradition mean that understanding is not simply re-productive but a productive act that is grounded in the *being-now* of Dasein. “Time is no longer primarily a gulf to be bridged because it separates; it is actually the supportive ground of the course of events in which the present is rooted” (TM 297). Thus, unlike the assumption of historicism which suggests that what we need to do is to transpose ourselves into the spirit of the age and move toward historical objectivity, temporal distance is not something that has to be overcome but has to be worked through as a positive and productive condition for understanding.

It is often the case that the true meaning of a text, its intrinsic content, appear only when it is separated from the contingent circumstances that gave rise to it. The relative closure of a historical event allows us to have a holistic picture of an event or a text. The temporal distance allows us to exclude the subjective prejudices of the observer. Not only certain sources of error are excluded but new sources of understanding are constantly emerging, which convey unsuspected meanings. But it is Gadamer’s point that temporal distance makes the understanding an infinite task precisely because the being-now of the interpreter continues to determine the understanding through a breach of time so to speak.

Broadly speaking, it is to Heidegger’s rethinking of being *as* time that Gadamer’s notion of temporal distance owes its significance. More precisely, Heidegger’s description of the notion of *de-distancing* seems to me to be the immediate precursor of Gadamer’s use of the idea of temporal distance. What the two concepts share in common is the phenomena of being open and of closure. Already-being-ahead, being abandoned to the nothingness *of* being means that Dasein is at the same time open and closed off, which is the phenomenal characteristic of de-distancing.

It is in the context of the temporal character of spatiality of Dasein that Heidegger refers to this least discussed but crucial

concept. Dasein *is* spatial only as care, in the sense of factually entangled existing (BT 350). Dasein is never in space in the sense of being objectively present. Rather, Dasein takes space in the sense *spacing* or making room which Heidegger distinguishes from “representation” of something spatial. Making room or spacing is constituted by directionality and de-distancing. Because Dasein as temporality is ecstatic and horizontal in its being, it can factually make spacing of space (BT 351). De-distancing is the factual mode of temporal spacing which is the spatial correlate of temporal enpresenting. The expression de-distancing thus should be understood in an active and transitive sense (BT 102). Heidegger uses de-distancing as an existential, which discovers, in the first place, remoteness itself which is a categorical determination of beings unlike Dasein. De-distancing, as an existential, can be understood as a kind of double negative which means, rather than negation and overcoming of distance, a distancing *of* distance (double genitive) which produces as its effect, as it were, directionality itself. Directionality is a mode of de-distancing. Dasein, as thrown possibility, as de-distancing, according to Heidegger, *dwells* in the farness from itself of what is at hand. The de-distancing or farness of itself of what is at hand is temporal in that the distance is not a measurable distance and is not categorially determined. This originary line or location of de-distancing is ‘what’ Dasein can *never cross over* (BT 105). Dasein dwells in the line of de-distancing.

Likewise, in Gadamer, temporal distance is something that historical understanding can never cross over, but has to constantly work through it. According to Gadamer, often it is temporal distance that can solve question of Hermeneutic critique, namely how to distinguish “true prejudice” which conditions our understanding from the false ones by which we misunderstand (TM 298-299). Thus hermeneutic training would also include historical consciousness (TM 299). It is through the breach of temporal distance that something addresses us, and it addresses us historically (TM 299). It addresses us as *question*. The latter opens up possibilities and keeps them open. In questioning, Gadamer would say, our own prejudice is put at

risk and called into question. But that does not mean that we are finally able to give up all prejudices. In questioning, through temporal distance (that belongs to our being-now), when we give full play of our prejudices we are able to experience the other's claim to truth as well and make it possible for him to have full play himself (TM 299).

The naivete of historicism lies in the fact that it does not undertake this reflection and thus forgets its own historicity. Gadamer would say that the temporal distance or temporal de-distancing is what in the end constitutes the historicity of our understanding. It constitutes the unity of reality of history and historical understanding. Gadamer refers to this unity as "history of effect" (*Wirkungsgeschichte*). We read:

The true historical object is not an object at all, but the unity of the one and the other, a relationship that constitutes both the reality of history and the reality of historical understanding. A hermeneutics adequate to the subject matter would have to demonstrate the reality and efficacy of history within understanding itself. I shall refer to this as "history of effect." Understanding is, essentially, a historically effected event. (TM 299-300)

How will we interpret the concept of the efficacy of historically effected event? In distinction from, say, Dilthey for whom historical understanding is an action of subjectivity reaching a methodological objectivism, the historically effected consciousness means our becoming aware of our own hermeneutic situation and the productivity of temporal distance. Historically effected consciousness is the true expression of our finitude; it refers us to the ambiguity of tradition. For to understand a historical phenomenon from a temporal distance means being always already affected by history, which is the meaning of the efficacy of history always at work in historical understanding.

Gadamer takes historicism and its critical methodologism to task for concealing the fact that "historical consciousness is itself situated in the web of historical effects" and thereby failing to recognize the presuppositions that govern the historical

understanding (TM 300-301). In this, historical objectivism resembles statistics which forgets that its so called objectivity depends on the legitimacy of the questions asked. The denial of effective history on the part of the “naïve” historicism means “an actual deformation of knowledge” (TM 301). However, the recognition of our historicity does not mean an overcoming of history, nor is historically effected consciousness such that we arrive, in the manner of Hegel’s absolute knowledge, at the transparency of a concept. On the contrary, historically effected consciousness is an element of understanding itself, which involves appropriate fore-meaning and fore-having characteristic of hermeneutic situation.

Historically effected consciousness is primarily consciousness of our thrown situation, of our historical being-*there*. In that sense, our hermeneutic situation belongs to our entangled facticity. The concept of situation entails that we cannot take a neutral and objective view of it. Our knowledge of a situation is thus never finished. “To be historically means that knowledge of oneself can never be complete” (TM 302), which does not indicate a deficiency in reflection but shows the situatedness of our being-there. This is what Gadamer, following Hegel, calls “substance” that underlies our subjective intentions and actions and limits (and opens) the possibility of understanding a tradition in its historical alterity (TM 302). Historically effected consciousness is both a consciousness of being affected by history and a consciousness *of* the effect. Historicity designates the unity of both. But in this unity consciousness does not transcend the historical limits imposed on itself, but works through the finitude of its understanding.

But we need to still ask how historical understanding is possible in the situation of its finitude? Gadamer’s response lies in his employment of the concept of *horizon*, a key term in the history of phenomenology. Through a horizon our thought is not only tied to its finite determinacy, but our range of vision gets expanded as well (TM 302). To be able to work out right horizon means to acquire the right horizon of inquiry in regard to the tradition. In the context of historical understanding, the

right horizon enables one to see the past in its own terms and not in terms of contemporary criteria and prejudices. This is the old hermeneutic requirement: to transpose oneself into the context of the other in order to understand him. Likewise, the task of historical understanding entails transposing oneself into the historical past through which tradition becomes intelligible without thereby necessarily involving an agreement on the subject matter itself. Failing to transpose ourselves into the historical horizon in which the traditionary text is situated we would misunderstand the singular, hermeneutic, message of the text itself. In historical understanding, as in a simple conversation, we get to know the context and meaning of a historical past or another person without necessarily reaching an agreement in regard to the content of understanding. But what does it really mean to transpose oneself into the context of the other? Is it a right description of hermeneutic endeavor that we transpose ourselves into an alien horizon? Does it imply that the horizon of the past is closed to the present? Are we then speaking of two different horizons?

According to Gadamer, we cannot speak of two different horizons, and a closed horizon is nothing but an abstraction. On the contrary, the idea of horizon entails that it is movement and it moves with us. Which implies that the historical movement of human life can never have a closed horizon. The horizon of the past is in motion. More precisely, the relationship of past and present, seen as a movement, is something singular. "Everything contained in historical consciousness is in fact embraced by a single historical horizon. Our own past and that other past toward which our historical consciousness is directed help to shape this moving horizon out of which human life always lives and which determines it as heritage and tradition" (TM 304). The idea of horizon is singular in that the horizon addresses to *ourbeing-now* in the Moment, if we may couch it in the Heideggerian term. In that sense, we do not really transpose ourselves to an alien past whose horizon is closed to us. To put it in the Heideggerian term again, the horizon is singular as the temporality which is the meaning of this horizon is ecstatic, i.e.

outside itself. “Horizontal” means “characterized by a horizon given with the ecstasis itself.”⁸ That is precisely the dimension of singular horizon. It is singular in that there is a singular articulation or constellation of past and future through the enpresenting of the present in the Moment (being-now).

That is why Gadamer can couch the singularity as the formation and *fusion* of horizons. In my reading of Gadamer, the term fusion only refers to the *singular* articulation that is *ecstatically horizontal*. Only in this ecstatically singular sense we can conceive the hermeneutic understanding (hermeneutic circle of understanding) as fusion of horizons. In that sense, it would be wrong to say that the concept of the phenomenological horizon implies a negation of the singularity of the other. Gadamer would say, in a manner distinct from Martin Buber as it were, that only with the concept of the singular horizon we can do justice to the singularity of the Thou. Historical understanding can be compared to the encounter with the singularity of the Thou because it teaches us that we could not know by ourselves (TM xxxv). But in transposing ourselves into the horizon of the past, in its singular articulation, we also put *ourselves* in his position (TM 305). Thus, Gadamer could still speak of fusion of horizons that transcends to the higher level of the universal (TM 305). But, to repeat, his meaning of the term fusion becomes meaningful only when it is articulated in singular term. The universal also is not a reflective concept but is akin to something like a paradox of the singular-universal. In the latter the singularity of the Thou is re-confirmed. “A truly historical consciousness always sees its own present in such a way that it sees itself, as well as the historically other, within the right relationships” (TM 305). As I read Gadamer, he can still speak of the fusion of horizons as singular-universal in order to emphasize the distinction between historical horizon and the horizon of the present. But in the singular-universal horizon (a non-reflective concept) is retained the being-now of the present. Even though in the fusion of horizons the present has no privileged status it remains productive in the hermeneutic circle of living tradition and interpretation. “There is no more an

isolated horizon of the present in itself than there are historical horizons which have to be acquired. Rather, understanding is always the fusion of these horizons supposedly existing by themselves" (TM 306). What is involved in this fusing of horizons as singular-universal is the concept of *experience* as the effected event to which I shall turn now.

Historicity of Experience

Let me first briefly state the textual context in which Gadamer develops the dialectical and historical conception of experience which proves to be central to his hermeneutics. It is in the context of the critique of the conception of reflection that Gadamer articulates his conception of experience. The decisive question for Gadamer is that if historically effected consciousness cannot be reduced to reflective philosophy then what sort of consciousness is this? Also, part of the question is can reflection be easily set aside? The question cannot be underestimated since, according to Gadamer, hermeneutics from Schleiermacher to Dilthey were ultimately based on the complete limitlessness of historical horizon and on the abolition of finitude. Hermeneutics finds its consummation in the speculative dialectic of Hegel, in the forms of speculative reflection.

But, the crucial question is that historical hermeneutics itself is subject to the critique of reflection? Gadamer thus takes pain to distinguish historical hermeneutics from the speculative reflection and still seeks to retain the truth of Hegel's thought since, as Gadamer concedes, the principles of speculative reflection proved itself to be superior to its critics. "Polemics against an absolute thinker has itself no starting point. The Archimedean point from which Hegel's philosophy could be toppled can never be found through reflection. The formal superiority of reflective philosophy is precisely that every possible position is drawn into the reflective movement of consciousness coming to itself" (TM 344).

It should be kept in mind that Hegel's speculative dialectic is no less critical of the argumentative formalism characteristic of what he calls "external reflection" than the Platonic argument against the formalism of the Sophists. This is why Gadamer thinks that the thought of historically effected consciousness has to be defined "with an eye to Hegel," and yet against his grain. Since the life of the mind is itself only by being at home in its otherness and since this reconciliation is the historical activity of the mind, as Gadamer argues, the activity of the mind is not a formal overcoming of the self-alienation, but an historical *experience*.

Historically, effected consciousness has the structure of experience (*Erfahrung*). It is difficult to see how this is so since experience seems to be the most obscure concept, obscured, as it were, by the natural sciences. Science, according to Gadamer, takes no account of the historicity of experience as the science (including the human sciences) objectifies the experience by its methodical procedure based on the strict subject-object division. Objective validation of experience rests on the general repeatability of experience (and experiment). Experience is validated by its repeatability and confirmation in the new experience. In hermeneutic terms, this methodical procedure hollows out inner historicity of experience, its undergoing and unfolding in time.

In the tradition of hermeneutics Dilthey remains one of the foremost thinkers of experience which he called *Erlebnis* or lived experience. As distinct from strict subject-object division that structures scientific experience, for Dilthey, human subject is irreducibly involved in the experience and can never stand outside of temporality and observe it in a detached manner. For Gadamer, however, Dilthey, despite his fecund criticism of British empiricism, remained oriented too much to the methodical procedure of science and took no account of the inner historicity of experience (TM 346). Perhaps, Gadamer is too harsh on Dilthey for the latter's unresolved Cartesianism which extricates the observer from his historical situation.

There is something evental, albeit negative, in the structure of experience conceived as *Erfahrung*. Experience as event is negative of our fore-understanding so to speak and is productive of *new* experience as it broadens the horizon of our hopes and expectations. I shall speak of the event, or what I would like to call the event of otherness soon. Gadamer, however, does not so much speak of event as of the dialectical character of experience, which he, following Hegel, would call determinate negation.

The eventality of experience, in Hegel, consists in *reversal* of consciousness, reversal of certainty of experience, if I may couch it in the language of *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Experience retains the *truth* as the reversal of certainty. In the section, titled, 'The Concept of Experience (*Erfahrung*) and the Essence of the Hermeneutic Experience,' Gadamer reads Hegel on consciousness in the Introduction of *Phenomenology*. Here, Gadamer works along the lines of Heidegger's reading of Hegel in the famous essay 'Hegel's Concept of Experience,' first published in *Holzwege* (1950).

In order to understand Hegel's concept of experience in the Introduction of *Phenomenology* it is crucial to remember that Hegel draws a distinction between two levels of consciousness—between immediate existence or natural consciousness and consciousness as such. What marks the difference is the decisive relation to death. Hegel writes: "Whatever is confined within the limits of a natural life cannot by its own efforts go beyond its immediate existence; but it is driven beyond it by something else, and this uprooting entails its death. Consciousness, however, is explicitly the Notion of itself. Hence it is something that goes beyond limits, and since these limits and its own, it is something that goes beyond itself."⁹ This decisive relation to death introduces the dialectical movement in consciousness that offers the ground to what Hegel calls experience. To follow Hegel, and Heidegger, the *presentation* of the phenomenal knowledge, which is its object, cannot itself be phenomenological science, but may be taken as the pathway of natural consciousness which is pressing toward new knowledge. This is what Hegel calls the path of suffering and despair that consciousness undergoes:

Natural consciousness will show itself to be only the Notion of knowledge, or in other words, not to be real knowledge. But since it directly takes itself to be real knowledge, this path [of experience] has a negative significance for it; what is in fact the realization of the Notion, counts for it rather as the loss of its own self, for it does lose its truth on this path. The road can therefore be regarded as the pathway of *doubt*, or more precisely as the way of despair.¹⁰

Gadamer, following Hegel, calls this experience “skepticism in action,” where event of experience confronts a singular otherness as the latter negates the fixed determinations of its earlier certainty. But, Heidegger would remark that common sense skepticism sees in the result only *pure nothingness*, it abstracts away the fact that nothing is the nothing of *that out of which it comes as a result*. It is a *determinate* nothing, and has a content, a new content. Consciousness as such is the notion of this determinate negation. Through the determinate negation a new form has (im)mediately arisen and through the negation a transition is made by which the complete succession of shape emerges.¹¹

The concept of determinate negation defines Hegel’s concept of experience: “this dialectical movement which consciousness exercises on itself and which affects both its knowledge and its object, is precisely what is called experience [Erfahrung].”¹² To interpret strongly, the singular event of experience that consciousness undergoes and which is negative for the natural consciousness is not nothing as such; On the contrary, *determinate* negation introduces, through *reversal*, through what Hegel famously calls a dialectical *Aufhebung*, a new objectivity. Thus, what the singular experience of reversal and otherness that consciousness suffers at its own hand also is a positive phenomenon for consciousness. The reversal is a singular experience of otherness and positive elevation into new objectivity. The transition from the first object and the knowledge of it to the new object does not come from exteriority; For Hegel, the knowledge of the first object is, through reversal, itself to become a new object and a new knowledge. As Heidegger writes, “since what at first appeared as object is reduced, when it passes

into consciousness, to a knowledge of the object, and since the in-itself becomes a being-for-consciousness of the in-itself, then as a result this latter is the new object, whereupon there appears also a new shape or embodiment of consciousness.”¹³

If determinate negation signifies an essential finiteness of experience, then that finiteness consists the inner historicity of man. Historicity is not some supra-historical essence but the finitude, albeit via painful suffering that Hegel calls the path of despair rather than skeptical doubt. Likewise, for Gadamer, the understanding of a text always has the structure of finite reversal, an exposure to the otherness of the text. “The experience of being brought up short by the text” is essential to textual experience. The experience of a text, or for that matter, of historical past is primarily that of limit situation, if we may use Heidegger’s expression. The experience of limit situation refuses our expectation and limits our fore-structure of understanding.

Yet, the experience of negation is not nugatory; the negativity of experience has something positive about it. It leads us to the openness of horizon. Gadamer puts emphasis on this openness of experience, but the openness does not mean elevation to a higher level of consciousness in the manner of arriving at the transparency of absolute concept. That is why Gadamer would take issue with Hegel for whom determinate negation is the mode of *Aufhebung* whereby experiencing consciousness overcomes all alienness and finitude in the form of a complete identity of consciousness and its object. Hermeneutic consciousness, in so far as it is historical, must distinguish itself from the absolute concept of speculative reflection. The openness of horizon must rather be understood as a situation of limit and aporia.

The person experiencing the aporia and limit is not the one who knows better than anyone else. Rather, experienced person is someone who is radically undogmatic and is well equipped to be open to new experience. Experienced person, in that sense, affirms the historicity and finitude of his situation. “Experience in this sense belongs to the historical nature of man. ... Thus the historical nature of man essentially implies a fundamental

negativity that emerges in the relation between experience and insight” (TM 356). Gadamer’s expression insight refers us to the fact that reversal of consciousness forms what Hegel in *Phenomenology* calls the education (*Bildung*) of the experiencing consciousness. However, unlike Hegel, in Gadamer there is no steady movement of dialectical progression. Rather determinate negation, for Gadamer, means we are constantly being brought up short by experience. The negativity of experience engenders insight into the essential historical finitude of our existence.

Real experience is that whereby man becomes aware of his finiteness. In it are discovered the limits of the power and the self-knowledge of his planning reason. The idea that everything can be reversed, that there is always time for everything and that everything somehow returns, proves to be an illusion. Rather, the person who is situated and acts in history continually experiences the fact that nothing returns. ... Genuine experience is experience of one’s own historicity. (TM 357)

Let me return one more time to Gadamer’s articulation of historically effected consciousness in the form of *tradition*. Tradition, as historical consciousness, is essentially an ethical phenomenon, understood as a relation to Thou. Gadamer draws on Martin Buber’s ‘concept’ of the singular inter-subjectivity of the I-Thou relation without explicitly naming him, and also on Hegel’s dialectic of recognition.

For Buber I-Thou relation is radically distinct from the instrumental relation characteristic of I-it. If the latter is one of knowing and domination the former is an ethical phenomenon where the singularity of the Thou has primacy over the I. In the dialogic relation characteristic of I-Thou the Thou is a person and not an object. Similarly, for Gadamer, hermeneutic experience in the form of historically effected consciousness that is concerned with tradition is not simply an objective process of knowing and governing, so to speak, but, as Gadamer says rather ambiguously, “is language—i.e. it expresses itself like a Thou” (TM 358). Thus, in a manner reminiscent of Heidegger’s view of

language in *Being and Time*, Gadamer insists that tradition, as language, is a space of sharing in meaning in that tradition is a genuine partner in dialogue.

Another way in which the Thou is experienced is that even if it is distinct from the instrumental relation and acknowledges the Thou as a person it still remains within the self-relatedness wherein the Thou loses its immediacy in a reflective relation. The Thou is understood but is at the same time co-opted and loses its otherness. According to Gadamer, this way of understanding the Thou is characteristic of the inappropriate dialectical relation of recognition of the master-slave relation in Hegel's *Phenomenology*. The hermeneutic analogue of the mutual recognition is what is called *historical consciousness*. To be sure, in this schema, historical consciousness acknowledges the otherness of the past not as the instantiation of a general law but something historically singular and unique. But, at this level of false dialectical appearance historical consciousness incorporates the true otherness of the tradition in a reflective relation. To think tradition in its otherness is to think within its own historicity which the reflective relation of dialectical recognition disavows.

Thus, in opposition to both the instrumental relation of I-it and the reflexivity of false dialectical appearance Gadamer insists that the genuine experience of the Thou is the exposure to and recognition of the other in a radical horizontal openness. In an eloquent passage Gadamer writes:

In human relations the important thing is, as we have seen, to experience the Thou truly as as a Thou—i.e., not to overlook his claim but to let him really say something to us. Here is where openness belongs. ... Without such openness to one another there is no genuine human bond. Belonging together always also means being able to listen to one another. ... Openness to the other, then involves recognizing that I myself must accept some things that are against me, even though no one else forces me to do so. (TM 361)

The hermeneutic analogue of this is that the tradition we relate to has something to say to me, which demands on our

part a fundamental openness. The horizon of openness means nothing other than our exposure to the other and being corrected by the other. The openness, as we have seen, has something evental about it in that it refuses our fore-structure of meaning and project. This is the true meaning of historicity which is a finite principle *par excellence*. Here we can see that Gadamer returns to Heidegger's finite concept of destiny of historical situation. Heidegger's concept of destiny, like Gadamer's rehabilitation of tradition (and authority of the other), is not to be conceived as blind fatalism, but as the singular horizon of openness and being-with. As we have seen, in *Being and Time*, destiny is Dasein's finite being-with-one-another in its *singular* "community," which constitutes the authentic occurrence of Dasein. It is in this precise sense that Dasein is historical. Historicity of man lies in its co-occurrence that takes place in the *singular community* of being-with-one-another.

Notes

1. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Second, Revised Edition, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (New York: Continuum, 1993), 200.
Hereafter, cited parenthetically in the text as TM followed by page number.
2. Hans-Georg Gadamer, 'Text and Interpretation,' trans. Dennis J. Schmidt and Richard E. Palmer, in *Dialogue and Deconstruction*, ed. Diane P. Michelfelder and Richard E. Palmer (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 25.
3. James Risser, *Hermeneutics and the Voice of the Other: Re-reading Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997) 65-66.
4. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Heidegger's Ways*, trans. John W. Stanley (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 23.
5. Hans-Georg Gadamer, 'Letter to Dallmayr,' trans. Richard palmer and Diane Michelfelder, in *Dialogue and Deconstruction*, 95.
6. James Risser, *Hermeneutics and the Voice of the Other*, 71.
7. James Risser, *Hermeneutics and the Voice of the Other*, 72.
8. Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 267.

9. G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 51.
10. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 49.
11. Martin Heidegger, 'Hegel's Concept of Experience,' in *Off the Beaten Track*, trans. Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 91.
12. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 55.
13. Heidegger, *Off the Beaten Track*, 95.

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