

## “LOOKING” FOR INTENTIONALITY WITH HEIDEGGER

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*Phenomenologists find themselves in the unusual position of attempting to describe non-sensuously phenomenal phenomena. Intentionality is one such oddity. It is not sensuously phenomenal, yet Husserl and Heidegger both purport to be able to “read off” its necessary features. Both were well aware that such an enterprise has its difficulties. The primary difficulty is how to make intentionality into an “object.” To do so, a method for directing our “phenomenological vision” is necessary. Heidegger, however, is unable to utilise Husserl’s methods for this purpose. Since the phenomenological method must “follow its matter,” and Heidegger’s matter is different from Husserl’s, Heidegger cannot merely adopt Husserl’s methods. Thus, Heidegger must develop a new method to investigate intentionality. In this paper, I show the ways in which Heidegger’s conception of intentionality diverged from Husserl’s while retaining its core sense, and why intentionality poses particularly difficult methodological problems. Finally, I investigate the new methods Heidegger develops (c. 1925–28) to deal with these problems—categorical intuition, a reformulated version of the reduction, and a form of objectification—and why each of these methods fails.*

The word “intentionality” [*Intentionalität*] is largely absent from Martin Heidegger’s *Being and Time*. This omission is remarkable because *Being and Time* is a work of phenomenological philosophy, and until its publication, phenomenology had largely been *about* intentionality. The reason for this omission can be traced to the dispute between Husserl and Heidegger over the *Encyclopedia Britannica* article on phenomenology.<sup>1</sup> Heidegger felt that Husserl’s focus on transcendental consciousness was too narrow and he wanted to reframe phenomenology in terms of *Dasein*’s ontological constitution. This reframing, however, was not a complete departure. Two lecture courses from around the time of *Being and Time*’s publication—*The History of the Concept of Time*, from the summer semester in 1925, and *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*,

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<sup>1</sup> See Steven G. Crowell, *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2001), 167–81.

from the winter semester in 1927—contain extended treatments of intentionality. These courses, as well as others from the 1920s, are evidence that Heidegger did not excise the concept of intentionality from his phenomenology.

In this paper, I show how Heidegger's conception of intentionality diverges from Husserl's in light of the problem of *Dasein's* ontological constitution. I then illustrate the methodological problems posed by intentionality for Heidegger's phenomenology. These two sections lead to the guiding question of this paper: How does Heidegger make intentionality thematic in his phenomenology? Given that one of the maxims of phenomenology is that the "method must follow the matter," and the fact that the matter of Heidegger's philosophy departs from Husserl's, Heidegger must have a new way of bringing this phenomenon to view.<sup>2</sup> I contend that Heidegger attempts to formulate three new methodological tools for bringing intentionality, as he conceives it, "into view" in his phenomenology: (1) a reformulated version of the reduction, (2) a form of *Wesensschau*, and (3) phenomenological objectification. I also contend that all three are inadequate for the task.

### 1. Heidegger's Conception of Intentionality

At the most basic level, Heidegger's conception of intentionality is compatible with Husserl's. For the latter, intentionality denotes the structural relationality of consciousness. In *Logical Investigations*, Husserl writes: "Intentional experiences have the peculiarity of directing themselves in varying fashion to presented objects, but they do so in an *intentional* sense. An object is 'referred to' or 'aimed at' in them..."<sup>3</sup> Husserl places "referred to" and "aimed at" in scare quotes because these terms are metaphors that don't exactly fit the phenomenon. Heidegger's most basic definition of intentionality is remarkably similar: "Comportments relate to something: they are directed toward this whereto; or, in formal

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<sup>2</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, (tr.) John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (San Francisco, CA: Harper and Row, 1962, 27–28. Hereafter referred to parenthetically in the text as BT.

<sup>3</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, (tr.) J. N. Findlay (Amherst, NY: Prometheus, Humanity, 2000), 558. Hereafter referred to parenthetically in the text as LI.

terms, they are related or referred to it"<sup>4</sup>; and "Comportments have the structure of directing-oneself-toward, of being-directed-toward... [P]henomenology calls this structure *intentionality*." (BPP, 58) In both cases, intentionality is described in terms of relationality. Intentionality is a "directing-to..." or "aiming," and a "referring to...". Notwithstanding the basic continuities between Heidegger's and Husserl's conceptions of intentionality, there are considerable differences between them. For Heidegger, intentionality is a structure of *Dasein's being* rather than a structure of *consciousness*. For this reason, intentionality abstracted from its correlate, that is, *intentio* abstracted from its *intentum*, is inconceivable. Moreover, for Husserl, an analysis of intentionality can discover the pure constituting acts of transcendental consciousness. Heidegger, while perhaps not rejecting Husserl's transcendentalism, thinks that such constitution always occurs in concrete *factive Dasein*:

Transcendental constitution is a central possibility of the eksistence of the factual self. This factual self, the concrete human being, is as such—as an entity—never a "worldly real fact" because the human being is never merely present-at-hand but rather eksists. And what is "wondersome" is the fact that the eksistence-structure of *Dasein* makes possible the transcendental constitution of everything positive.<sup>5</sup>

The "eksistence-structure" to which Heidegger refers is *Dasein's* intentionality, or better, being-intentional. In *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, he parses the distinction between objects present-at-hand and *Dasein* in terms of intentionality: "A distinguishing feature between existent and the extant is found precisely in intentionality." (BPP, 64) Since Heidegger thinks intentionality can and should be understood only as it occurs factually, his conception of it is already very different from Husserl's. Whereas Husserl sought to pursue intentionality in the tran-

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<sup>4</sup> Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, (tr.) Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1982), 57. Hereafter referred to parenthetically in the text as BPP.

<sup>5</sup> Martin Heidegger, "Difficulties with Issues," appendix to letter to Husserl dated 27 October 1922 regarding draft revisions of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* article in Edmund Husserl, *Psychological and Transcendental Phenomenology and the Confrontation with Heidegger (1927–1931)*, (ed.) Thomas Sheehan and Richard E. Palmer (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer, 1997), 138.

scendental dimension, for Heidegger, intentionality is an enactment of a concrete factual being: *Dasein*.<sup>6</sup>

In attempting to get hold of concrete factic *Dasein*, Heidegger lingers with it in its most mundane manifestation. In other words, Heidegger's analysis of intentionality shares Husserl's point of departure: they both begin with human being in its common daily life. However, where they go from this point is another example of their divergence. What Husserl calls "the natural attitude," Heidegger says is *Dasein* in its "average ordinary everydayness." It is important to remember that, for Husserl, the natural attitude is not only the naturalistic positing attitude that he describes in "Philosophy as a Rigorous Science," but also the mode of comportment in which consciousness most naturally finds itself.<sup>7</sup> For example, when describing the natural attitude in §27 of *Ideas*, the doxastic attitude of consciousness regarding the existence of the world is not as significant as the way in which "waking consciousness" finds itself.<sup>8</sup> Unlike Husserl, who takes the natural attitude merely as a point of departure to be immediately surpassed, Heidegger lingers with *Dasein* in its average ordinary everydayness. From the point of view of the phenomenological observer, it is *Dasein* as we find it initially and for the most part.

As a consequence of this lingering with *Dasein*, Heidegger finds that Husserl's paradigmatic case of intentionality—perception—is not the most fundamental moment of this phenomenon: "I do not perceive in order to perceive but in order to orient myself, to pave the way in dealing with something."<sup>9</sup> Heidegger finds that the primary case of intentionality is practical engagement with the world. With this in mind, he gives a different analysis of intentionality's correlate. First, we never find our-

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<sup>6</sup> One has to be careful with the word "enactment" in the same way that one must take care with the word "act." Comportment is not something that *Dasein* does; it is something that *Dasein* is. However, in concretely living its comportments, we can say that *Dasein* enacts.

<sup>7</sup> See Taylor Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic: Interpretation, Discourse, and Authenticity in Being and Time* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 67–71.

<sup>8</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book. General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology*, (tr.) F. Kersten (The Hague, Belgium: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982), 53. Hereafter referred to parenthetically in the text as I.

<sup>9</sup> Martin Heidegger, *History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena*, (tr.) Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), 30.

selves dealing with a “single thing.”<sup>10</sup> Our practical dealings always take things out of a meaning-context. In *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger calls this context the “surrounding equipment contexture.” *Dasein*’s intentional correlate, the world, is a network of functional meanings “surrounding” us, of which we make sense in terms of the practical engagement that occupies us at the moment.

In reconsidering the paradigmatic case of intentionality and the correlate of the same, and in engaging in an analysis of intentionality that frames it as constitutive of *Dasein*’s very being, Heidegger must place new emphasis on the phenomenon of worldhood. Since *Dasein*, as intentional comportment, can never be understood without an intentional correlate, this correlate must always be present in an analysis of *Dasein*’s intentionality. Furthermore, since intentionality is a structure of *Dasein*’s being, this correlate is an integral part of the same. Since intentionality is a structure of *Dasein*’s being, anything that exists as *Dasein* is always already intending. If *Dasein*, as per the structure of its being, is always already intending, then its intentional correlate is a necessary constituent of its being. Thus, we can say that the intentional structure of *Dasein* is being-in-the-world. It is unorthodox to say that *Dasein*’s *intentional correlate* is world because *Dasein* is not consciousness directed at a particular object. However, I persist in using this language to describe *Dasein*’s relation to the world because in being-in-the-world, *Dasein* also maintains the fundamental characteristics of intentionality: directedness toward... and reference to.... What is important for us to recognise is that though Heidegger does not have a Husserlian conception of intentionality, there is nevertheless a conception of intentionality at work in his phenomenology, and it follows from what Husserl and Heidegger agree are the *basic features* of intentionality.

Since Heidegger’s conception of intentionality is significantly broader than Husserl’s, the term “intentionality” is an insufficient descriptor. To more adequately describe and interpret this phenomenon, Heidegger introduces the term “comportment.”<sup>11</sup> However, this does not mean that “intentionality” and “comportment” do not mean the same

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<sup>10</sup> “For in our natural comportment toward things we never think a *single* thing, and whenever we seize upon it expressly for itself we are taking it *out* of a contexture to which it belongs in its real content....” Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, 162.

<sup>11</sup> The term often translated as “comportment” is usually a nominalised version of the verb *verhalten*, such as *Verhältnis*, *Verhaltung* and *Verhalten*.

thing. “Intentionality” and “comportment” are synonyms insofar as they describe *Dasein*’s directedness-to... For this reason, the expression “intentional comportment” is somewhat of a pleonasm. Nevertheless, there is good reason for Heidegger to frame his concept of intentionality in terms of comportment. Heidegger realised that intentionality describes our relation not only to objects present-at-hand, but to our environment and our activity in it. Since *Dasein*’s intentionality involves wishing, thinking, perceiving and, most importantly, practical engagement, “comportment” is a more appropriate descriptor. Moreover, it is not merely what Husserl would call the act quality or thetic character of comportment that constitutes *Dasein*’s intentionality. Heidegger also recognises the “hermeneutic conditions” of *Dasein*’s comportments: namely, its fore-having and fore-conceptions of interpretive situations.<sup>12</sup> Since these conditions are, at best, overly logicised and, at worst, absent in Husserl’s phenomenology, Heidegger needs a more inclusive term than “intentionality.”<sup>13</sup> Ultimately, Husserl’s “intentionality” does not connote these hermeneutic conditions and is, for that reason, an inappropriate descriptor.

## 2. The Methodological Problem of Intentionality

One problem with phenomenology is that phenomenologists spend most of their time talking about phenomena that are not sensuous. Intentionality is a prime case of this oddity. To a non-phenomenologist, “phenomenon” means that which appears before the senses—the phenomenal. This understanding seems to be corroborated by Heidegger’s definition of phenomena: “what shows itself in itself, what is manifest.” (BT, 51) This initial interpretation of the phenomena of phenomenology is, however, naïve. Heidegger is working with a formalised conception of “phenomenon.” In this conception, all particular material or empirical content

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<sup>12</sup> See Carman, *Heidegger’s Analytic*, 23–30.

<sup>13</sup> John Caputo attempts to frame the horizontality of consciousness’s expectations of possible intuitions of subsequent experiences as hermeneutic, but I contend that, for Husserl, these are no more than logical possibilities, and thus do not have the hermeneutic content Heidegger finds in our comportments toward real worldly objects. See John D. Caputo, “Husserl, Heidegger, and the Question of a ‘Hermeneutic’ Phenomenology,” *Husserl Studies*, vol. 1 (1984), 157–78.

is excised from the phenomenon in question.<sup>14</sup> In this formalised conception, any “state of affairs” that has the structure of “self-showing” is a phenomenon. Intentionality is a case of just such a phenomenon. In Heidegger’s phenomenology, it is taken as a formal relation or formal structure. This, of course, is congruent with Husserl’s attempt to get at the essence of intentionality. The question for us is, how do formal structures, and intentionality in particular, show themselves?

Perhaps Husserl’s greatest discovery in *Logical Investigations* was another *order* of phenomena, a non-sensuous or “*supersensuous*” [*übersinnlichen*] order. (LI, 785) Thus, in his inaugural lecture in Freiburg im Breisgau on May 13, 1917, he could say that the term “phenomenon” “includes all modes in which things are given to consciousness.”<sup>15</sup> That is, *both* sensuous *and* categorial phenomena are given to consciousness, i.e., are intuitional. The discovery of categorial intuition makes a new order of phenomena available for analysis. But categorial phenomena are not formal phenomena because categorial essences can have material or empirical content. (LI, 25) Another order of phenomena is founded upon categorial phenomena, though in a different way than categorial phenomena are founded on sensuous phenomena.<sup>16</sup> It is this third order of phenomenon, the formal order, for which Heidegger is looking and with which he works in his phenomenology. For Husserl, this new order includes, but is not limited to, states of affairs, plurality, number, disjunction, ground, the concept of any object in general, and being.<sup>17</sup> Intentionality, described most formally as “aiming at” or “referring to,” is one of these formal relations. Another, perhaps simpler way to think about it is that compartments are states of affairs that obtain in the *Dasein*/world situation. But since this relation is constitutive of *Dasein*, it must hold for all cases of *Dasein*. As holding for all cases of *Dasein*, the content of any particular compartment enacted by any

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<sup>14</sup> Martin Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, tr. M. Frisch and J.A. Gosetti-Ferencei (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004), 42; Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 121.

<sup>15</sup> Edmund Husserl, “Inaugural Lecture at Freiburg im Breisgau: Pure Phenomenology, Its Method and Its Field of Investigation,” in *Life-World and Consciousness: Essays for Aron Gurwitsch*, (ed.) Lester E. Embree (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1972), 8.

<sup>16</sup> Dieter Lohmar, “Categorial Intuition,” in *A Companion to Phenomenology and Existentialism*, (ed.) Hubert L. Dreyfus and Mark A. Wrathall (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 120–22.

<sup>17</sup> See, in particular, Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, VI, ch. 6.

*Dasein* is irrelevant to the structure of the comportment. Thus we can consider the structure itself as abstracted from or formalised from any contingent material content.

The question remains: How are we to bring *intentionality* into view for phenomenological analysis? How does the phenomenologist get hold of this particular formal phenomenon? If intentionality is a “relation” or a “directedness-to...” constitutive of *consciousness* or *Dasein*’s being, how are we to bring it into view such that its structures and determinations can be read off? How do we come to characterise ontic behaviour in an ontological manner; how are we to make the transition from ontic description to ontological analysis? We know this task is not easy; otherwise, Husserl and Heidegger would not have been compelled to correct others’ mistakes about intentionality.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, if intentionality is something we have to “look for” in a certain way, our adherence to another maxim of phenomenology—“not to bring anything to the phenomena other than what we find there”—would seem to be in jeopardy. “Looking for ...” in a certain way would seem to bias our look from the beginning and thereby endanger the genuine self-showing of the phenomena. I don’t have to look for my pen in the way one has to “look for” intentionality. My pen—even in its categorial determinateness—is right there before my eyes, but “where” is intentionality to be “seen”?

This is not a new problem for phenomenology. Husserl recognised that accessing phenomenology’s matter requires preliminary work.

Where the phenomenological interest dominates, we endure the hardship of having to describe phenomenological *relationships* which we may have experienced on countless occasions, but of which we are not normally conscious *as objects*, and we have also to do our describing with expressions framed to deal with objects whose appearance lies in the sphere of our normal interests. (LI, 284, my emphasis)

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<sup>18</sup> These mistakes were the occasion for Husserl’s famous retort that “consciousness is not a box.” Consciousness, and thus intentionality, is not a relation between two existent objects, nor is it an immanent relation between consciousness and its objects. Heidegger makes parallel arguments concerning “subjectivising” and “objectivising” errors about intentionality in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, 65. See Timothy Stapleton, “Husserlian Themes in Heidegger: *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*,” *Philosophy Today*, vol. 27, n. 1 (Spring 1983), 3–17, for more on this coincidence.



In order to make intentionality thematic in our phenomenology, we must make a “relationship” into an “object.” In so doing, we can get this non-sensuously phenomenal phenomenon “in view” in order to “read off” its structures and interpret it.

Husserl was not the only one to recognise this problem. Heidegger, too, recognised that intentionality is not easy to grasp: “If today under the influence of phenomenology there is much talk of intentionality...this does not yet prove that the phenomenon thus designated has been seen phenomenologically.” (BPP, 65) Heidegger proposes to “ask how this structure of intentionality itself looks.” (*Ibid.*, 59) But before the phenomenological observer can read off and describe the structures of intentionality, he must first come to “see” it. Intentionality is an ontological component of *Dasein*’s being; observations of *Dasein*’s behaviour in the world will not yet yield something that is a necessary feature of our existence. At best, we would produce inductive arguments or behavioural analyses, and this is certainly not what either Husserl or Heidegger proposed to do. Heidegger is well aware of this fact: “What is nearest to us ontically is exactly farthest from us ontologically.” (*Ibid.*, 155) Heidegger wanted to see the world with “ontological eyes.”

One further problem with “finding” intentionality is that it “hides” itself. In an intentional act—or perhaps for Heidegger, in living *as* intentionality—what is thematic in that moment is not the directedness-to, but that toward which we are directed. It is in virtue of intentionality that *Dasein* is about the world. Thus, a subsidiary function of intentionality is to make itself transparent. This is why *Dasein* is always already “fallen” in the world. In Husserl’s first-person methodological stance, the method of reduction is designed to *discover* the intentionality at work in our experience, but from Heidegger’s third-person perspective, the phenomenological observer does not have recourse to his own consciousness. Thus, in order to make *Dasein*’s intentionality thematic, Heidegger must resort to means other than reflection.<sup>19</sup> To expose this

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<sup>19</sup> Crowell argues that Heidegger preserves a sense of reflection in his phenomenology, but this “reinscribed” sense of reflection is not the Natorp-influenced sense of reflection used by Husserl, which is not available to Heidegger in virtue of his abandonment of the first-person perspective. See Crowell, *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning*, ch. 7; also, Sebastian Luft, “Reconstruction and Reduction: Natorp and Husserl on the Method and the Question of Subjectivity,” in *Neo-Kantianism in Contemporary Philosophy*, (ed.) Rudolf A.

constitutive feature of concrete factic life, Heidegger must find another way of “looking” for intentionality.

### 3. Heidegger’s Attempts at a Solution for the Methodological Problem

#### 3a. Formalisation

Heidegger’s first method for bringing intentionality to light is formalisation or phenomenological *Wesensschau*. One of the more striking features of *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* is Heidegger’s extensive use of visual language. Heidegger spends a lot of time talking about “seeing” something that we cannot really see. At first, this habit might be attributed to accident or to the inadequacy of the language. However, it seems incongruous for Heidegger, one of the more astute users of philosophical language, to make this error. It is more likely that this usage of visual language can be traced back to one of Husserl’s arguments in *Logical Investigations*.

In order to accommodate the idea of categorial intuition, a certain way of “seeing,” Husserl argues that we need to expand our concept of intuition. Categorial intuition is the intuition of logical or conceptual determinations of intuitional objects, an intuition of something that does not appear sensuously-phenomenally. By means of categorial intuition, we can take ontically given objects and “analyze and describe them in their essence.” (LI, 255) Phenomenological *Wesensschau* is a form of categorial intuition in which we can acquire intuitions of universals. (*Ibid.*, 800) The kinds of universals of which we can have intuitions are not merely material essences of sensuously intuitive objects such as colours and shapes, but are also formal or materially emptied essences. Formal essences, which compose the categories or concepts of formal ontology, are only graspable by *Wesensschau*. I interpret intentionality as a formal essence because its essence is relationality. That is, numerically distinct intentional acts are enumerated in terms of their content, but all intentional acts, as such, are relations; for that reason, they are materially empty. Another way to put it is that, for each kind of intentional act, or for each kind of thetic character, there is a material essence: for example, belief-acts are of a kind, wish-acts are of a kind, judgement-

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Makkreel and Sebastian Luft (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009).

acts are of a kind, and so on. The essence of each of these act-qualities is a material essence because it has a relation to a certain kind of content. That is, only certain kinds of things can be wished for, only certain kinds of things can be judged, and only certain kinds of things can be perceived. However, for intentionality as such, which is simply the relational character in virtue of which any act with a thetic character can be about something, there is no relation to any particular kind of content. In this case, the essence is a formal essence because it can have any kind of material content. The essence of intentionality as such is that it can relate to anything, in the same way that the essence of plurality is that it can be a plurality of anything, or the essence of any object whatsoever can be any object whatsoever.

In *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger deems *Wesensschau* appropriate for bringing intentionality into view: “To see something like such an intentional structure of production, and interpret it in one’s analysis without prepossession, to make it accessible and keep hold of it and adapt one’s concept-formation to what is thus held fast and seen—this is the sober sense of the much ventilated so-called phenomenological *Wesensschau*.” (BPP, 114) Moreover, in *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, Heidegger tells us that this is just the kind of formalisation at work in his idea of formal indication, namely, the kind of essential seeing in which the phenomenologist looks away from any kind of content whatsoever in order to get at the formal essence of the phenomenon. The formalisation is “free in terms of its material contents” because in it, the phenomenologist can “read the determination ‘off’ the object” or “see away from the what content.”<sup>20</sup> If intentionality is a formal object, then it is just this kind of formalisation that is required in order to get hold of it genuinely. Only through phenomenological *Wesensschau*—which is just this type of formalisation because only through it do we get formal essences—could Heidegger thematise intentionality.

Though *Wesensschau* is a (purportedly) successful method for accessing the formal structures of sensory and non-sensory objects, it cannot make intentionality itself known to us. The use of *Wesensschau* in Heidegger’s phenomenology to “find” intentionality is question-begging. All categorial intuitions, including phenomenological *Wesensschau*, and the evidence [*Evidenz*] they can yield, rely on a certain kind of intention. A meaning-intention finds fulfilment in acts of intuition. To have an evidentiary experience, we need to intend an object

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<sup>20</sup> Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 40.

such that our meaning-intention is adequate to the object presented to us in intuition. To make a meaning-intention of intentionality such that it presents itself to us, our meaning-intention would have to presuppose a grasp of intentionality in order to find meaning-fulfilment in intuition. For other objects and meanings, this presupposition is unproblematic because it can find itself frustrated by an unfulfilling intuition. If the meaning-intention is inadequate, it will not result in an evidentiary experience; intuition can confirm or disconfirm our meaning-intention.

The problem with finding a meaning-fulfilling intuition for intentionality is that the whole apparatus of confirmation and disconfirmation relies upon the concept of intentionality. We must have the notion of intentionality in hand in order to understand the process of meaning-fulfilment or to evaluate the legitimacy of evidentiary experience. But the question I am raising here is precisely how we get that notion in hand, in a formal-ontological sense. Perhaps we could use *Wesensschau* to confirm certain theses about intentionality, theses originating from ontic observation. But to do so would be to argue in a circle, for the truth-testing capacity of *Wesensschau* is founded upon the idea of intentionality. In other words, *Evidenz* of intentionality is impossible: the possibility of *Evidenz* is legitimated by our understanding of how meaning-fulfilling intentions work, but we can only know that *Evidenz* is reliable if we already understand intentionality. Thus, Heidegger cannot use *Wesensschau* for his initial approach to intentionality.

This circularity is only problematic from Heidegger's third-person perspective. In a reflective phenomenology such as Husserl's, our confirmation or disconfirmation of meaning-intentions directed at the idea of intentionality comes from the fact that incorrect theses about intentionality are disconfirmed when they would radically alter the character of our experience. But since Heidegger's phenomenology is fundamentally ontological, it does not start from his own experience. Moreover, in Husserlian phenomenology, the phenomenological reduction allows us to grasp intentionality without resorting to categorial intuition. As we will see, when Heidegger attempts to make use of the reductions in that matter, he fails.

### **3b. The Phenomenological Reduction**

Heidegger's second option for bringing intentionality into view is phenomenological reduction. This is a likely candidate because in §5 of *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger explicitly claims to adopt

a version of it.<sup>21</sup> However, the Husserlian sense of reduction will not suffice for bringing intentionality, as Heidegger conceives it, into view. Husserl's reduction is, in large part, designed to isolate transcendental consciousness from its intentional correlate. As I elucidated above, this is exactly what Heidegger does not want to do. For Heidegger, intentionality without an intentional correlate is nonsensical. A methodological procedure designed to isolate transcendental consciousness from its intentional correlate—in Heidegger's case, the world—would not only be inappropriate for the matter, it would lead to an absurdity. But Heidegger does not wholly reject Husserl's methodology; instead, he reformulates it: “*For us*, phenomenological reduction means leading phenomenological vision back from the apprehension of a being, whatever may be the character of that apprehension, to the understanding of the being of this being (projecting upon the way it is unconcealed).” (BPP, 21) In terms of intentionality, phenomenological reduction leads phenomenological vision from the ontic understanding-comportment of human beings to the knowledge that these understanding-comportments constitute the being of *Dasein*. Yet, Heidegger is dissatisfied with the methodological value of this reduction. To combat the sheer negativity of reduction, it must be supplemented with another methodological procedure.

For this guidance of vision back from beings to being requires at the same time that we should bring ourselves forward positively toward being itself. Pure aversion from beings is a merely negative methodological measure which not only needs to be supplemented by a positive one but expressly requires us to be led toward being; it thus requires guidance. (*Ibid.*, 21)

Heidegger calls this positive, guiding moment of methodological procedure “phenomenological construction [*Konstruktion*].” (*Ibid.*, 22)

The problem with Heidegger's supplementation of the phenomenological reduction with a positive constructive moment is that he is reticent about how this guidance works. Ostensibly, the guidance provided

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<sup>21</sup> For an overview of the ways in which the reduction may more subtly operate in Heidegger's phenomenology, see Francis Seeburger, “Heidegger and the Phenomenological Reduction,” in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, vol. 36, n. 2 (1975): 212–21; and Russell Matheson, “Phenomenological Reduction in Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*,” in *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, vol. 39, n. 3 (October 2008), 229–48.

by phenomenological construction comes from our theoretical interest in being. This interest would, however, seem to bias our phenomenological look. Under the guidance of this theoretical interest, we are no longer merely executing a look that allows something to show itself; we are executing a look that is looking *for* something. If, when we are looking for a non-sensuously phenomenal phenomenon, we already have something in mind, we will interpose our theoretical presuppositions into the phenomenon. If we must look for intentionality as more than an ontic phenomenon, and our look is guided by a desire to understand the ontological constitution of *Dasein*, we will probably find something that is constitutive of *Dasein*. It would seem that Heidegger's proposed method contravenes one of his self-imposed rules. He claims that Hartmann's understanding of intentionality "fails because for it theory comes first, before fulfilling the requirement to open our eyes and take the phenomena as they offer themselves...that is, the requirement to align theory according to the phenomena rather than the opposite, to do violence to the phenomena by a preconceived theory." (*Ibid.*, 62) If phenomenological reduction must be guided by a positive methodological impulse, and this impulse comes from our research interests, then the method that is supposed to reveal the phenomena as they show themselves is already biased by theoretical interests, and a biased look "does violence" to the phenomena. If Heidegger is seeking to understand being, then what he finds by means of reduction will be coloured by that desire.

### 3c. Phenomenological Objectification

The final methodological candidate for bringing intentionality into view is a specific sort of objectification. In Heidegger's *Phenomenological Interpretation of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, from the winter semester of 1927/28—the semester following *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*—he revised his understanding of objectification. Until then, Heidegger had always maintained that objectification was a methodology belonging strictly to regional sciences and world-view philosophies. He consistently claimed that this procedure sets regional ontologies apart from phenomenology. Whereas the latter wants phenomena to show themselves without bias, the former requires fore-conceptions [*Vorgriffe*] to circumscribe their domains of inquiry and make limited sets of objects available for inspection.

In 1927, Heidegger still maintained the distinction between philosophic and scientific inquiry: "All ontological inquiry objectifies *being*

as such. All ontic investigation objectifies *beings*.”<sup>22</sup> As this quotation indicates, however, he is no longer averse to the use of objectification as a phenomenological method. He is nevertheless uncommunicative on the character of phenomenological objectification. He characterises the objectification performed in scientific comportment as “turning something into an object [*Gegenstand*].”<sup>23</sup> This seems compatible with the need to make intentionality into a phenomenon. Taken literally, *Gegenstand* is something that stands-over-against. The problem I have identified here is how to make intentionality something that, so to speak, “stands over against.” Only in this sort of relation to the third-person phenomenological observer, it seems, could its features be read off. Heidegger consciously makes the distinction between *Objekt* and *Gegenstand* in order to highlight that the latter is not necessarily an extant object [*Vorhanden*]. Intentionality cannot stand over against us in the same way the ready-to-hand can, but since the phenomenological observer is (purportedly) not looking at the world with naïve vision, his objects need not be ready to hand. Objectification in the sense of *Vergegenständlichung* is literally the allowing of something to stand over against us.

The question remains: If objectification is suitable for bringing intentionality into view, is it an *appropriate* method for phenomenology? Does objectification honour the methodological maxims that guide phenomenological research? For Heidegger, perhaps the most important of these maxims—other than “to the things themselves”—is not to “do violence to phenomena by a preconceived theory.” (BPP, 62) It appears that this method of making intentionality “visible” falls into the same trap as Heidegger’s version of the phenomenological reduction. In the case of the latter, our pure phenomenological look was biased by the positive moment required by the negativity of reduction. In the case of objectification, a similar bias occurs. Here again, our search for intentionality is motivated by an interest in the question of being. As in the previous case, we are not allowing intentionality to “show itself from itself” because we are always already taking it as a clue to our guiding philosophical question.

In this paper, I have taken Heidegger’s phenomenology to be a largely descriptive enterprise. This focus leaves out a substantial part of

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<sup>22</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretation of Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason*, (tr.) Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997), 25 (my emphasis).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

the methodology of *Being and Time*: hermeneutic and destructive phenomenology. Nevertheless, this was a principled decision on my part. The main texts I use to support my argument for the most part neglect these aspects of phenomenological method. This is not to say that the two styles of phenomenology are mutually exclusive. In light of a more descriptive phenomenology, I have tried to show that intentionality is not an easy phenomenon to grasp, but that Heidegger's methods seem unsuited to doing so. The problem is that intentionality is a non-sensuously phenomenal phenomenon. Consequently, in order to "find" it, we need to direct our "phenomenological vision" in a specific way. As it turns out, the three ways proposed by Heidegger all fail to bring this phenomenon into view.

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