

**Ecstatic Temporality in Martin Heidegger's 1920s Works and his  
*Destruktion* of the Metaphysics of Presence**

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## Keys to Works Cited

### Works by Martin Heidegger

- BPP** – *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. A. Hofstadter, transl. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.
- BT** – *Being and Time*. J. McQuarrie and E. Robinson, transl. Malden: Blackwell, 2013.
- CT** – *The Concept of Time*. W. McNeill, transl. Oxford: Blackwell, 1992.
- GA 26** – *Metaphysics Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz. Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 26. Marburg lecture course, Summer Semester, 1928. Frankfurt am Main: V. Klostermann, 1978.

### Works by Other Authors

- EC** – *Ecstasy, Catastrophe*. Krell, D. F. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015.
- HA** – *Heidegger and Aristotle: The Question of Being*. Sadler, T. London: Athlone, 1997.
- HEP** – *Heidegger's Early Philosophy: The Phenomenology of Ecstatic Temporality*. London: Continuum, 2011.
- "HTB"** – "Heidegger on Time and Being." Kockelmans, J. J. In *Martin Heidegger: Critical Assessments* (Vol. 1, pp. 141-169). London: Routledge, 1992.
- IM** – *Intimations of Mortality*. Krell, D. F. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991.
- "OG"** – "Ousia & Grammē." Derrida, J. In *Margins of Philosophy* (A. Bass Trans.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.
- OT** – *The Ontology of Time*. Chernyakov, A. Boston: Kluwer, 2002.
- P** – *Physics*. Aristotle. In *Selections* (T. Irwin and G. Fine Trans.). Indianapolis: Hackett, 1995.
- PH** – *The Philosophy Of Heidegger*. Watts, M. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2014.
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## Introduction

The goal of this thesis is to analyze and interpret Heidegger's theory of ecstatic temporality found in the second division of *Being and Time*, primarily in just one section, §65. Although readers will have progressed through more than three-quarters of the entire work before §65 is reached, this section, entitled "Temporality as the Ontological Meaning of Care," is key to the entire work. Heidegger's many projects contained within *Being and Time*—such as the project of *Destruktion* and the project of fundamental ontology—are all justified through the theory of ecstatic temporality. Despite the section's fundamental importance within *Being and Time*, however, Heidegger is at his least loquacious and the section suffers greatly from a severe lack of philosophical argumentation. The section all too often lays out assertions without justification and proceeds with haste. According to David Farrell Krell's count, there are four main "theses" supporting the theory of ecstatic temporality contained within roughly six pages. The brevity of §65 is even more alarming given the fact that Heidegger intends for his theory of temporality to be the first theory of time to have broken out of the paradigm set by Aristotle's analysis of time set forth in his *Physics*. While the first division of *Being and Time* serves as a propaedeutic for what is to come in §65, it is no doubt that there is much work to be done in working out the key elements of the theory of ecstatic temporality. My research will not be limited to *Being and Time*, but will also include Heidegger's short 1925 essay "The Concept of Time," and two longer works *The Metaphysical Foundation of Logic* and *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*—all of which appeared in the 1920s as part of Heidegger's project of fundamental ontology.

The first chapter of this paper will provide an exegesis of ecstatic temporality. In order to do so, I will first ground §65 in Heidegger's theory of care (*Sorge*). While the structure of care is undeniably critical to the ontology of *Being and Time*, I argue that Heidegger's intention in Division One is to brush away much of the "philosophical clutter" that has impeded a true fundamental ontology. By that I mean Heidegger intends to ground his ontology not on a theory of consciousness or the soul or knowledge or synthetic *a priori* judgments. Rather, Heidegger is attempting to clear a space, a *Spielraum*, that allows for but does not begin with these things. Rather, *Being and Time*'s ontological topography is an exploration of the cleared playspace of existence, which allows Dasein to explore its possibilities. But the word "possibilities" must also be explored. What does it mean for possibilities to expose themselves *meaningfully as possibilities* to Dasein? Division One answers that the structure of care illuminates Dasein's possibilities (which are always possibilities-for-*Being* [*Seinkönnen*]) because Dasein is always already thrown into a world that has a nexus of meaning built into it, alongside which Dasein presently exists, and that Dasein can understand its projects and possibilities which are always for the sake of something. Division Two redevelops each of Division I's themes as based in Dasein's relation to its own temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*). The world exists as an integral part of Dasein's *past*, Dasein exists alongside other beings *in the present*, and Dasein's projects and possibilities are all fundamentally *futural*.

Heidegger calls each one of these forms of time an *ecstasis* (*Ekstase*) of temporality, and the *unity* of the three ecstases of temporality *is* care. Such a unity brings together all three ecstases, but is not in any way ontologically reducible to the so-called "present moment." Rather,

“in every ecstasy, temporality temporalizes itself as a whole” (BT 401). Each ecstasy is whole and complete, contrary to the Aristotelian analysis of time, which reduces the past and future to unanalyzable non-Being. Likewise, ecstatic temporality cuts directly at many of the fundamental tenets of the ordinary conception of time that philosophy has subscribed to since Aristotle. In order to make those differences explicit, I rely on the four theses that Krell has distilled from §65’s discussion of ecstatic temporality. They are, in order: “Time is originally the temporalization of temporality, which makes possible the constitution of the structure of care”; “temporality is essentially ecstatic”; “temporality temporalizes originally out of the future”; and “original time is finite” (EC 21). The third section of the first chapter engages each of these theses directly. But what should be clear from the theses, even before analyzing them, is that they are aimed to usurp the 2,500-year hegemony of the "now" in terms of thinking both time and being.

The last section of the first chapter will focus on exploring a difficulty that arises between the publication of *Being and Time* (1927) and *Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (1928). In the year between the publication of the two works, it appears that Heidegger altogether abandons the third thesis, which states that temporality temporalizes itself primordially out of the future in order to rework the important of the ecstasy of the present. But significant issues arise out of Heidegger’s decision to drop this thesis, specifically because the third and fourth theses are closely related to one another: part of the justification of the fourth thesis (that original time is *finite*) relies on the fact that finitude and closing-off belongs to the structure of the futural ecstasy. But if Heidegger is to turn away from the third thesis, the fourth thesis is jeopardized

despite the fact that Heidegger argues for it (although, as we shall see, only to a point) in *Basic Problems*.

Chapter Two of this paper will center around Derrida's early (1964-5) reading of Division Two of *Being and Time*. As I wrote above, I argue in Chapter One that ecstatic temporality allowed Heidegger to explain the structure of *Sorge* and how Dasein meaningfully engages in the world. Likewise, ecstatic temporality represents a major step beyond Aristotelian ontology by breaking through the limitations of the present moment. I argue, however, that the impact of ecstatic temporality in the history of philosophy is much more important than that. By breaking free of the boundary set by the 'now,' Heidegger also takes a step beyond (or perhaps *within*) a metaphysical tradition which can only think in terms of the presence of what is present *in the present*. (Such a metaphysics also incorporates the modalities of presence [namely, *absence*] and thus incorporates what is known as "negative theology" in its purview as well.) The second division of *Being and Time* drives a divide directly into the history of philosophy by challenging the presupposition that an understanding of temporality is grounded in a sound metaphysics. Rather, *Being and Time* is committed to the opposite: grounding ontology in *temporality*. How does this play out?

*Being and Time* is clear from the outset that it is in the pursuit of concrete questions. One of those concrete questions is "what is the meaning of finitude?" Dasein dies. It also has a relationship to that death. Two issues arise here, both related to the metaphysics of presence. Firstly, what is death in the Aristotelian or what Heidegger dubs the "vulgar" understanding of time? Nothing other than a point in the future, beyond which Dasein is no longer considered to

be living. This answer undoubtedly belies the importance of death; certainly one does not *feel* that one's death is reducible to a mere point in time. But this reduction is precisely what is distilled from the account of time in Aristotle's *Physics*, which attempts to give an account for bodies and motion, not the meaning of death. Secondly, if Dasein can only have a relationship with things given to it in the present (as the past and present are, in distinction to the now, *not*), how can Dasein have a relationship to its own death since it can never be present to such death in the present moment?

I argue in the second chapter of this thesis that such questions that Heidegger is attempting to undertake in the 1920s cannot be answered in an ontological way so long as philosophy unknowingly grounds its metaphysics in an understanding of time that makes no ontological claim on the past or future. But, for example, death is unsurpassable, *unüberholbar*, according to Heidegger. Dasein dies, yes, but death is *philosophically* unsurpassable. I mean that in the sense that *Being and Time* realizes that an inquiry into the nature of Dasein's undeniable finitude has the potential to solicit (which Derrida interprets as "to shake" from the Latin *sollicitare*) the entire structure of philosophy. As I argue in the second chapter, Heidegger's investigation into Dasein's finitude does not amount to an obsession with death but rather a deep engagement with the structures of all three ecstases: the past, future, and the present. By taking these ecstases seriously *ontologically*, Heidegger attempts to ground what we have always already been certain of: these ecstases of time assert themselves on us and the relationships that we have to them are not arbitrary. (What could be *more* meaningful than the matters of birth and death? These are precisely the matters by which we gauge the importance of any other matter.)



But, if Heidegger's analyses are true, philosophy is not able to secure or justify these relationships within the confines of an understanding of time that has not been radically altered in the last two-and-a-half millennia.

However, the question remains as to whether or not Heidegger is indeed able to break through the metaphysics of presence to do so. The last section of Chapter Two will engage with this question and explore Derrida's answer to it. Does Heidegger exit or fully deconstruct the western philosophical canon? The answer would surely be "no" if that was actually the question. The retrospective question asked about the success of *Being and Time* to break out of the limitations of the metaphysics of presence should not be framed as if Heidegger threw out the philosophical rule book. Rather, one should question not whether Heidegger was able to think past the metaphysics of presence, but if *Being and Time* was able to think *through* it. Thinking past or without the metaphysics of presence means practicing philosophy ahistorically, which would be contradictory to the project of *Being and Time* in the first place. I argue that Heidegger does not seek to refute the metaphysics of presence but rather to shake (or "solicit") the foundations of philosophy so that it may begin to take the first steps outside (or *within*, as Derrida argues) of the confines of ancient metaphysics.

In order to arrive at such a conclusion, I have arranged the thesis to be comprised of two complementary chapters. The reader should view the first chapter as an exegesis of the fundamental aspects of ecstatic temporality as it appears in a selection of Heidegger's works of the 1920s and a laying out of some of the fundamental philosophical moves and gestures in this period. Although a discussion of the problems surrounding ecstatic temporality as it appears in

*Being and Time* alone could warrant an entire thesis (at least), my ultimate goal is not to give an exhaustive analysis of Heidegger's theory, but to examine the significance of such a theory. Thus, the first chapter serves to elucidate the theory of ecstatic temporality in order to ground the discussion of Heidegger's *Destruktion* of the metaphysics of presence in the second chapter. I follow an early Derridean reading of this *Destruktion* and focus primarily on Derrida's 1964-65 lectures to tie up many of the threads that I begin in the first chapter. In conclusion, the reader should view this thesis as an attempt to ground properly the act of *Destruktion* in ecstatic temporality. As such, what is required to carry out this task is not only an analysis of the theory of ecstatic temporality, but also an examination of why the problem of temporality is fundamental to metaphysics. To do so, I will look at some of the theoretical issues that Aristotelian temporality creates (such as an insufficient understanding of finitude) as well as some of the figures that attempted themselves to critique (implicitly or explicitly) the metaphysics of presence, such as Hume and Husserl. The latter failed to do so successfully because they were not able to think outside of the metaphysics that arose out of Aristotle's conception of time.

## Chapter One:

### Ecstatic Temporality in the Early Heidegger

#### I. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter will be to elucidate some of the major aspects of the structure of ecstatic temporality as it appears in Martin Heidegger's writings in the 1920s. This essay will deal primarily with two issues in the study of ecstatic temporality, which is how Heidegger's thinking of time figures into the existential analytic of Division One of *Being and Time*, and what the most fundamental theses of ecstatic temporality are. With regards to the first issue, I argue, with Alexander Chernyakov and James Luchte, that temporality grounds Heidegger's project of fundamental ontology through a rethinking of the *topos* of existence. Such a *topos* of existence is elaborated through the structure of care (*Sorge*), whose "spatial" dimensions (thrownness, being-alongside, for-the-sake-of-which) are actually grounded in the ecstases of temporality. With regard to the second issue, I base my exegesis on David Krell's "four theses" as given in his works *Intimations of Mortality* (1986) and *Ecstasy, Catastrophe* (2015). After an analysis of Krell's four theses, I will also discuss issues that arose due to Heidegger's own revision of the third and fourth theses in *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, which potentially undermines the relationship between temporality's primordial futurity and finitude that Heidegger had insisted upon in *Being and Time*.

## II. Time in Aristotle's Physics and "Vulgar" Time

Heidegger's confrontation with vulgar time arises out of Aristotle's conception of time in *Physics IV*, which is summarized in section 219b and states that "time is just this—number of motion in respect of 'before' and 'after'" (P 70). (Heidegger will translate this passage as "this is time: that which is counted in the movement which we encounter within the horizon of the earlier and later" (BT 473)—I will come back to this translation later.) Such a 'number' entails a measuring or a counting which is predicated on the passage from the future into the present, and then a passage again into the past. According to Aristotle, then, the primacy of the now is necessary for an understanding of time itself *as present*, since it is "the "now" determines time, in so far as time involves the before and after" (P 219b12). Of course, the importance of the now is greater than how it can serve as a unit of measurement. The now not only measures time but is indicative of the passage of time as both a link and a boundary: "the "now" is the link of time, as has been said (for it connects past and future time), and it is a limit of time (for it is the beginning of the one and the end of the other)" (P 222a10-12).

Within this problematic of time, Aristotle also runs up against an ontological problem. How are we to think of the being of the now if the presence of the now is seemingly destroyed at every possible juncture if time is to truly be a passage? Aristotle himself notes that given the constant division happening within the now, it is likely that one may think that time "either does not exist at all or barely, and in the obscure way" (P 218a1). Derrida summarizes the problem of the divisibility of the now: "Time is divisible into parts, and yet none of its parts, no now, is *in the present*" ("OG" 40). The ontological problem here is the question of "how is it to be thought

that time is what is not?” (“OG” 39) Aristotle answers the problem by “giving into the obvious, that time is, that time has as its essence the *nun*.” Still, the essence of the *nun* must be worked out ontologically. Derrida, again:

The *nun* [now], the element of time, in this sense is not in itself temporal. It is temporal only in becoming temporal, that is, in ceasing to be, in passing over to no-thingness in the form of being-past or being-future. Even if it is envisaged as (past or future) nonbeing, the now is determined as the intemporal kernel of time, the nonmodifiable nucleus of temporal modification, the inalterable form of temporalization. Time is what overtakes this nucleus, in affecting it with nothing. But in order to be, in order to be a being, it must not be affected by time, it must not become (past or future). To participate in beingness, in *ousia* [beingness or substantiality], therefore is to participate in being-present, in the presence of the present, or, if you will, in presentness (“OG” 40).

I will return to the question of affection later in Chapter 2, but for now we have the necessary ontological and temporal framework to set up Heidegger’s problematic in *Being and Time*.

Through Aristotle’s conception of time, we not only have a groundwork for the fundamental concepts of the ordinary concept of time (the now, the boundary, the point, the now as *tode ti*—concepts that Heidegger is only repeated throughout the tradition up to Hegel’s philosophy of time) that are simultaneously linked to a conception of being as *ousia* as the presence of the present.

With the Aristotelian conception of time discussed, we may now move onto the first

division of *Being and Time*, which takes implicit aim at the kind of metaphysics that arises out of Aristotelian temporality. In order to break out of a thought of being as the mere presence of the present, the first division centers around Heidegger's concept of "care" (*Sorge*), which, as we will see, creates a kind of ontological "playspace" by focusing on the temporal structure of Dasein's possibilities.

### III. Ontological Topography

Before reaching into the ontological or structural components of Heidegger's theory of temporality as it appears in the 1920s, I believe it is important to begin by asking how such a theory fits into Heidegger's early philosophy in general, and why it is a necessary undertaking at all. The short answer is championed by James Luchte and Alexander Chernyakov in a single word: *topos*. *Being and Time* is devoted to not only a terminological but an ontological re-examination of human being, beginning with Heidegger's insistence on using the traditional German word for existence, *Dasein*, to designate the Being of the being at stake in *Being and Time*'s ontological examination. Rendered with a hyphen, any examination of *Da-sein* demands research not only into the being of this being, but also its *Da*, its *there* and hence its very thrownness into a given *topos* or place. In attempting to get behind traditionally loaded conceptions of human being—such as consciousness, the soul, *élan vital*—*Being and Time* is inaugurated by an ontological research into the structure of *Being-in-the-world* (*In-der-Welt-sein*) which placed Dasein in context of care and concern in which one, first and foremost, and in a pre-theoretical way, finds oneself always already engaged in a meaningful world. Luchte warns

readers off of a particular reading of *being-in-the-world* when he writes that,

we must not imagine moreover that this being-in-the-world is an object for an inspection,

or a thing ready to hand for practical deployment and utilization. On the contrary,

Heidegger's phenomenological destructuring of theoretical and practical is an attempt to retrieve the being of Dasein upon the original *topos* of ecstatic temporality. (*HEP*, 12).

But what does this *topos* mean in philosophical or ontological terms? Luchte answers that

the primordial *topos* is neither theoretical nor practical, but is a disclosure of an original phenomenon. Such an interpretation of truth implies a re-appropriation by Heidegger of

the 'Greek' sense of phenomenology as letting the phenomenon 'be seen from itself' ...

Beyond, or beneath questions of 'pure consciousness' and of the possibility of *a priori*

synthetic judgments [as in Kant], there is already a prerequisite self-disclosure of beings,

an unexpected detour to the "place" of an object. (*HEP*, 13)

What Heidegger is after in crafting Dasein's *Da*, then, is an ontological opening that allows for the very possibility of possibilities themselves, which occur in the light of Being. In Heidegger's own words, "Dasein takes space in ... In existing, it has already made room for its own leeway.

It determines its own location in such a manner that it comes back from the space it has made

room for to the 'place' which it has reserved" (*BT* 419). The German for the second sentence in

the quotation reads "*Existierend hat es sich je schon einen Spielraum eingeräumt*" (*SZ* 368).

Macquarrie & Robinson have rendered *Spielraum* as "leeway," which does indeed translate into

leeway in a more sober sense, but a look at the German here is necessary to craft a better analogy

for what Heidegger is aiming for in creating Dasein's *topos*, which, if one chooses to render

*Spielraum* literally, would be a *playspace*. Here it would be wise to call upon Heraclitus's fifty-second fragment, wherein he writes that "Time is a child playing a game of draughts." I would argue that Heidegger takes Heraclitus at his word here in the linkage of time and playing, *Spielen*. As Luchte writes above, while Kant may have paved the way to such an ontological *Spielraum* by examining the structure of knowledge before its contents, Heidegger's intention in *Being and Time* is to get beneath any questions of epistemology or theoretical content in order to examine how it is that such epistemological content—or *any* content, for that matter—could be revealed in the first place. If any investigation is to be truly ontological, it must begin not with the givenness of the mind or with thought but with the condition of givenness as such. Thus, to engage Dasein in its *playspace*, Heidegger begins his investigation with the pre-theoretical in *Being-in-the-world*, which "means nothing but a unity of a special *topos* in the variety of references or assignments, within the contexture of involvement" (*OT* 183).

Part and parcel with such *Being-in-the-world* of course is the structure of care (*Sorge*), in which Dasein is always already meaningfully engaged and taken up by the beings around it. That Heidegger structures the first division of *Being and Time* around care is philosophically important for several reasons, including the inversion of philosophy's traditional privileging of theory over praxis, but for our purposes here it is constitutive of Dasein's *Da* as a pre-theoretical starting point that assumes that meaning is always already (*immer schon*) given to Dasein without needing logical constructions to do so. But how is such meaning and understanding given? For such a *topos* to be meaningful, Heidegger stresses in *Being and Time* that we must examine "*what makes possible the totality of the articulated structural whole of care, in the unity*



*of its articulation as we have unfolded it*" (BT 371, his emphasis). In other words, we must look at not just how Dasein interacts with hammers and dogs, but we must inquire into the conditions for the possibility of Dasein's *Da* in the first place *as a structural totality*. Heidegger's answer to this question is as such: "If we say that entities 'have meaning', this signifies that they have become accessible *in their Being*; and this Being, as projected upon its 'upon-which' [*das Woraufhin*], is what 'really' 'has meaning' first of all." (BT 371-372). Meaning is thus understood here as the upon-which the projection of an understanding of being is projected onto, and the "question about the meaning of the Being of an entity takes as its theme the 'upon-which' of that understanding of Being which underlies all *Being* of entities" (BT 372). In other words, meaning has the structure of an understanding of Being, upon which Dasein projects. Dasein projects an understanding onto a hammer, which it knows as the kind of being that is readily available for use towards construction projects, and Dasein (implicitly or explicitly) understands *itself* in that it has become accessible in its own being as something that can do such projecting. But we should not read this thinking of *topos* without its temporalization, as Heidegger makes clear throughout *Being and Time*'s second division.

Heidegger writes, however, that Dasein has its own role to play in creating such a unity of meaning through care, which is through *anticipatory resoluteness (Entschlossenheit)*, which forces Dasein right up against the question of the meaning of Being as it is given through one's ownmost potentiality-for-Being (*Seinkönnen*). By working through such a meaning of Being in the structure of care, what Heidegger is seeking to expose is a fundamental thesis about temporality, which is that it is *time* that is the condition for the possibility of such a topological

understanding of Being. However, to excavate such a structure of meaning, Heidegger undertakes a radical revision in the history of philosophy by upending theories of temporality that have drawn from the Aristotelian tradition of giving complete supremacy to the “now” of time whilst remaining indifferent to the ontological meaning of the past that preceded it and the future that is yet to come. With such an understanding, one may remark that it is as if time stretches out its arms into the non-Being of the past and the future. Does this not indicate that the past and future have little bearing on my understanding of Being, and that what is meaningful is only given to me inside of the present moment? If the past and future are ontologically *not* (the past is gone; the future is not yet), then how could they affect one’s understanding of one’s own life and possibilities?

Heidegger’s response to these considerations (which all branch out from the millennia-long privileging of the “now”) is that such an understanding of Being is *not possible* so long as we do not specifically take in all three ecstases of time (past, present, and future) into the account of Dasein as a *temporal being*. In short, beings, situations, and so on are only meaningful to Dasein because Dasein has a relationship with these things inside of a structure of temporality that cannot be contained to the present. In terms of topology, it is only a temporality that includes the past, present, and future that can constitute the disclosedness of Dasein’s *Da*. What does Heidegger mean by this? Part of what is coming under fire in *Being and Time* is a philosophical viewpoint that takes existence to happen exclusively in the present moment. In the ordinary or vulgar understanding of time, my engagements with the beings arounds me happens in real time, which is to say that it happens *now*. One does not engage, according to the vulgar understanding

of time, with my world in the past and in the future; how could one act in anything *but* the present? Heidegger's answer to this is that the very possibility of meaningful action and activity—and meaning itself—is only possible *if* one has an ecstatic relation to the past, present, and future.

Undergirding such a relation is Dasein's relationship to its own death, which is unsurpassable (*unüberholbar*). As unsurpassable and not just one of many potentialities to choose from, death is what breathes urgency into Dasein's self-understanding, since it is this death that forces Dasein to spring to action to act inside of a coming-to-terms with finitude: an eternal life would be one without meaning. Heidegger begins to break down the temporal structure of Dasein's ability to be towards its potentiality-for-Being:

This sort of thing is possible only in that Dasein *can, indeed*, come towards itself in its ownmost possibility, and that it can put up with this possibility as a possibility in thus letting itself come towards itself—in other words, that it exists. This letting-itself-come-towards-itself in that distinctive possibility which it puts up with, is the primordial phenomenon of the *future as coming towards*. If either authentic or inauthentic *Being-towards-death* [*Sein zum Tode*] belongs to Dasein's Being, then such Being-towards-death is possible only as something *futural* ... By the term 'futural' we do not here have in view a "now" which has *not yet* become 'actual' and which sometime *will be* for the first time. We have in view the coming in which Dasein, in its ownmost potentiality-for-being, come towards itself. Anticipation makes Dasein *authentically* futural, and in such a way

that the anticipation itself is possible only in so far as it is futural in its Being in general” (BT 372-73)

Part and parcel of the excavation of the meaning of death in *Being and Time*, Dasein’s *Being-towards-death* now becomes a central fixture of the explication of the unity of care as ecstatic temporality.

What I mean is that Heidegger argues that we must look to the phenomenon of death to guide the investigation of meaning: it is *because* my life is finite that my choices become meaningful so long as I am authentically given over to the fact that my life will end. In contrast to *inauthentic* Dasein, authentic Dasein looks (even if implicitly) towards death in the understanding that life is finite and that it does not have infinite time work out its potentiality-for-Being and must do so with an understanding of death at the fore. Likewise, this relationship to death and the future is not the anticipation of a “now” that will arrive at some point in the future (which may certainly be a correct statement about death), but the relationship can be characterized as truly being *ecstatic* in the sense of a stepping-outside-oneself and then coming-towards-itself. What this means is that Dasein projects its possibilities upon such an understanding that is primarily futural, and this structure of meaning returns *back* to Dasein and its understanding. As ecstatic, however, this does not mean that Dasein is something primarily static or stationary whose understanding begins from a locus of what is present in the present and only goes out to the future in order to circle back to this “home base.” Rather, Dasein, “*as being*, is always coming towards itself—that is to say, in so far as it is futural in its Being in general” (BT 373). As Dasein steps outside and ahead of itself, it always returns back with an

understanding that futural possibilities must always be grounded through the nullity that is death, and such a nullity is what Dasein returns back to itself with. Dasein's circuitous stepping-outside and coming-towards does not mean that Dasein first exists in the present moment and then heads into the future and comes back; if this were the case, Dasein would be static and not *ecstatic*.

Likewise, Dasein has a similar relation to the past. The German word that Heidegger uses is *Gewesenheit*, which is based off of the past perfect participle that translates into English as "have been." Heidegger uses this term in the early works to distance himself from the understanding of the past as *Vergangenheit*, the typical German expression for the past but which here would indicate the past as something *bygone* and which has died off into an irretrievable oblivion. Macquarrie and Robinson translate *Gewesenheit* as "having-been," which is demonstrative of Heidegger's attempt to retrieve an understanding of temporality as both necessary for an existential investigation into Dasein as well as ontologically constitutive of Dasein. To draw parallels to Dasein's essential futurity, Heidegger writes that "only in so far as Dasein *is* as an 'I-am-as-having-been,' can Dasein come towards itself futurally in such a way that it comes *back*. As authentically futural, Dasein *is* authentically as '*having been*'" (BT 373). Thus, ecstatic temporality does not *only* run ahead but is grounded in and goes towards Dasein's *Gewesenheit* as well, even if "the character of 'having been' arises, in a certain way, from the future" (ibid.). Heidegger's privileging of futurity within *Being and Time* does not cancel out the importance of the past but instead recovers the past as a necessary element of temporalization constitutive of an understanding of Being—something which is not possible within the ordinary conception of time.

Again, Heidegger does not conceive ecstatic temporality as awaiting moments to come or merely to acknowledge of past moments. Dasein's resolute anticipation "discloses the current Situation of the 'there' in such a way that existence, in taking action, is circumspectively concerned with what is factually ready-to-hand environmentally" (ibid.) by incorporating the structures of the future and *Gewesenheit* into an understanding of Being that guides all meaningful action in the world. Heidegger only hints at the role of the present in *Being and Time*, and uses the German *Gegenwärtigen*. Macquarrie and Robinson translate this word as "making-present" in *Being and Time*; Hofstadter translates it as "enpresenting" in *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. Heidegger writes of *Gegenwärtigen* in *Being and Time* that

resolute Being-alongside what is ready-to-hand in the Situation—that is to say, taking action in such a way as to let one encounter what *has presence* environmentally—is possible only by *making* such an entity *present*. Only as the *Present* in the sense of making present, can resoluteness be what it is: namely, letting itself be encountered undisguisedly by that which seizes upon it in taking action. (BT 374)

And he will later expand his definition of *Gegenwärtigen* in *Basic Problems of Phenomenology* to specifically include a relationship of the present to the now: "whenever I say "now" I am comporting myself toward something extant or, more precisely, toward something present which is in my present. This comportment toward something present, this having-there of something present, a having which expresses itself in the now, we call the *Gegenwärtigen* [enpresenting] of something" (BPP 259). What is necessary to note, however, is that Heidegger is careful not to

collapse the ecstases of the future and past into the present. Although he resuscitates Dasein's relationship to the present and the now in *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, he does not venture from *Being and Time*'s central thesis that the authentic now has nothing to do with the Aristotelian moment, but instead is best expressed in terms of the "moment of vision," or the *Augenblick*. Even before discussing the *Augenblick*, however, Heidegger writes that "*making-present*, as the *primary* basis for *falling* into the ready-to-hand and present-at-hand with which we concern ourselves, remains *included* in the future and in having been, and is included in these in the mode of primordial temporality" (BT 376). As the ground for the structure of care, primordial temporality necessarily involves the three ecstases of time, even if Dasein's engagement with the world is primarily inauthentic and does not fully recognize or affirm the three ecstases of time, reducing these ecstases to the timing of passing nows. However, as authentic and "when resolute, Dasein has brought itself back from falling, and has done so precisely in order to be more authentically 'there' ('*da*') in the 'moment of *vision*' as regards the Situation which has been disclosed" (ibid.).

As such, we have returned full circle back to a greater understanding of Dasein's *Da*, which is given through the three ecstases of primordial temporality. Such temporality is "*the primordial unity of the structure of care*" (BT 374) and is what underlies the previously topological characteristics of Dasein's being-in-the-world. As Heidegger explains, "the future, the character of having been, and the Present, show the phenomenal characteristics of the 'towards-oneself', the 'back-to', and the 'letting-oneself-be-encountered-by'" (BT 377). Each one of these temporal characteristics grounds characteristics of the structures of care and being-

in-the-world: in the present, Dasein is in the mode of ‘letting-oneself-be-encountered-by’ which translates into *being alongside* (BT 89). As futural, Dasein is in the mode of “towards-oneself” which translates into the “for-the-sake-of-which” (BT 119), and as historical, Dasein is in the mode of ‘back-to’ which translates into Dasein’s facticity, thrownness, and the character of the *always already* (*immer schon*) (BT 82). Chernyakov summarizes the ontological importance of tying together the fundamental characteristics of care and being-in-the-world to original temporality:

[T]he ontological meaning of care is the primordial temporality that is nothing else but a triad of *ecstases* of time, every one of which is unthinkable by itself and constitutes just an aspect of a tripartite unity. Care as the “root” of the being of *Dasein* means, in temporal interpretation, *ecstasis* before *stasis*, the primordial opening of the topos of *Da*, in which time temporalizes itself in the primordial way. In the tripartite unity of time lies the foundation of the unifying unity of the *existentiale of care*. (OT 194)

The *topos* of Dasein’s *Da*, its *Spielraum*, is made possible through an opening that is itself opened by ecstatic temporality. Again here I argue it is important to continue with the language of *play*, since that is exactly what is opened up through ecstatic temporality. As Chernyakov has shown, temporality itself is constantly at play *as ecstasis*: there is no singular point in which temporality arises out of and then begins to go outside of itself. Such an *ecstasis* guarantees the free play of possibilities of Being for Dasein, which are crucial for the early Heidegger’s ontological investigations.



#### IV. David Krell's Elucidation of Heidegger's Four Theses

Now that I have laid out some of the foundational considerations of *Sorge* and made a case for its ontological novelty, I turn now to David Farrell Krell in order to transition into an explication of the theory of ecstatic temporality as it appears in §65 of *Being and Time*. In his works *Intimations of Mortality* and *Ecstasy, Catastrophe*, Krell outlines the four theses that comprise Heidegger's theory of temporality. To my knowledge, Krell is the only writer to break the theory into its four supporting legs, which I believe to be exhaustive of the theory of ecstatic temporality as it is expressed in 1927, the year of *Being and Time*'s publication. Krell's organization of these theses allows for a clear line of argumentation to follow within Heidegger's account of ecstatic temporality within *Being and Time* and will allow me to break down the theory into its constituent parts for a comprehensive discussion of each thesis. I will discuss all four of them in depth and in order, beginning with thesis one below. We've already set the groundwork for such a thesis above (given that thesis one is a grounding of the phenomenal characteristics of *Sorge* in temporality), but I believe the first aspect of this thesis, the so-called "temporalization of temporality," needs to be expanded further out from the treatment above, as it cannot be explained simply in terms of *Sorge*.

Heidegger's first indication of time's self-temporalization appears on page 377 of *Being and Time*: "Temporality 'is' not an *entity* at all. It is not, but it *temporalizes* itself. Nevertheless, we cannot avoid saying, 'Temporality "is" ... the meaning of care', ... the reason for this can be made intelligible only when we have clarified the idea of Being and that of the 'is' in general. Temporality temporalizes, and indeed it temporalizes possible ways of itself" (*BT* 377). What is

thus at stake here is an ontological claim about the being *of* time. Contrary to the Aristotelian model, where the *now* has (some) ontological claim to being, Heidegger is completely abandoning all attempts to understand temporality within the schema of the present-at-hand<sup>1</sup>, *Vorhandenheit*: “Temporality ‘is’ not an *entity* at all.” As I indicated above, Heidegger is arguing for an understanding of temporality that has absolutely no basis of understanding in the schema of *Vorhandenheit* in that the characteristics of the ecstases of temporality are never structured against the “now” whose ontological grounding is that of the presence of the present. Instead, the phenomenal characteristics of ecstatic temporality are the ‘towards-oneself’, the ‘back-to, and the ‘letting-oneself-be-encountered-by’.<sup>2</sup> None of these phenomenal characteristics are grounded in the present moment, the “now.” Here is Krell’s first thesis he finds in Heidegger’s analysis:

- Thesis one: “*Time is originally the temporalization of temporality [die Zeitigung der Zeitlichkeit] which makes possible the constitution of the structure of care*” (EC, 21)<sup>3</sup>.

Krell’s own notes on the thesis are scant as he devotes only about half of a page to it. Heidegger too devotes but one paragraph to his description of temporality’s self-temporalization in §65. But we can begin to unpack the meaning of self-temporalization through Krell’s hint:

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<sup>1</sup> The “schema of *Vorhandenheit*” will be used as the shorthand for an understanding of Being that is derived out of an understanding of beings that are not Dasein, beings which are present-at-hand, and the ontology that grows out of such an understanding.

<sup>2</sup> *Zukunft, Gewesenheit, Gegenwart zeigen die phänomenalen Charaktere des “Auf-sich-zu”, des “Zurück auf”, des “Begegnenlassens von”* (SZ 329).

<sup>3</sup> All four theses appear in numbered order on page 21 of *Ecstasy, Catastrophe* so I will omit citation for the remaining three.

“temporality *is* not; it *ensues*” (EC 21). That time is too elusive to be called a being was known to Aristotle, but what here is being meant by saying that temporality *ensues*? Heidegger answers that “temporality temporalizes, and indeed it temporalizes possible ways of itself. These make possible the multiplicity of Dasein’s modes of Being, and especially the basic possibility of authentic or inauthentic existence” (BT 377). If the *ensuing temporalization* of temporality is bound up directly with authenticity/inauthenticity and care, then what *ensues* is the making-possible of not only the phenomenal characteristics listed above, but the space for meaning and action at all. The self-temporalization of temporality means that Dasein is ontologically freed towards its possibilities-of-Being and “clears *the ‘there’* *primordially*. It is what primarily regulates the possible unity of all Dasein’s existential structures” (BT 403). In a double movement, ecstatic temporality both clears the way of Dasein’s *Da* and guarantees the very possibility for meaning and an understanding of Being, as expressed through the phenomenal characteristics listed above. “We understand the light of this clearedness only if we are not seeking some power implanted in us and present-and-hand, but are interrogating the whole constitution of Dasein’s Being—namely, care—and are interrogating it as to the unitary basis for its existential possibility” (ibid.). And, as we have just seen, interrogating care means interrogating temporalization.

- Thesis two: “*Temporality is essentially ecstatic.*”

I’ve alluded to this in broad strokes above but Heidegger’s claim in §65 about the ecstatic

nature of time is an ontological claim about the ‘essence’ of temporality. Thesis one and thesis two are somewhat related to each other, if not for the fact that they are separated in §65 by one paragraph break. Nonetheless, we must examine the claim as it appears in this section.

The phenomena of the ‘towards...’, the ‘to...’, and the ‘alongside...’ [zu... auf... bei...], make temporality manifest as the *ἐκστατικόν* pure and simple. *Temporality is the primordial ‘outside-of-itself’ in and for itself.* We therefore call the phenomena of the future, the character of having been, and the Present, the ‘*ecstases*’ of temporality. Temporality is not, prior to this, an entity which first emerges from *itself*; its essence is a process of temporalizing in the unity of the ecstases. (BT 377)

This selection employs somewhat traditional metaphysical language in its description by using words such as “unity” and “essence” and thereby runs the risk of leading the reader astray into the typical metaphysical categories that employ such terms, and more specifically the category of substance or *ousia*. However, Heidegger later asks us in *Basic Problems* to avoid such an interpretation: “The common Greek expression *ἐκστατικόν* means stepping-outside-self. It is affiliated with the term ‘existence.’ It is with this ecstatic character that we interpret existence, which, viewed ontologically, is the original unity of being-outside-self that comes-toward-self, comes-back-to-self, and makes-present” (BPP 267, translation amended). By underscoring the affiliation between existence and ecstasy, Heidegger is attempting to undercut the traditional category of substance in his ontology of temporality. He goes on to explain that “within itself, original time is outside itself; that is the nature of its temporalizing. It is the outside-itself itself.

That is to say, it is not something that might first be an extant thing and thereafter outside itself, so that it would be leaving itself behind itself. Instead, within its own self, intrinsically, it is nothing but the outside-itself pure and simple” (ibid.). Essentially, Heidegger’s ontology of time is such that there is not and cannot be any moment of the “now” that has the metaphysical status of being a substance which undergirds the past and the future—such a “now” only belongs to the ordinary concept of time. As the *ekstatikon*, temporality has no such “now,” but functions in such a way that each ecstasis of time is constantly flowing outwards and returning back again without ever coming back to any sort of essence or underlying metaphysical temporal building block such as the “now.” As Heidegger puts it, “The unity of the three dimensions [ecstases] cannot derive from one particular dimension—for example, the present” (*IM* 53).

Perhaps we can imagine how this works in an example given the structure of care: when I prepare myself to make a decision, I am projecting myself out into the future and returning back to myself as well as drawing on my history and situatedness and likewise returning to the decision in a constantly flowing way that does not, contrary to the vulgar understanding of time, refers me back to a “present moment” but instead involves me in an ecstatic experience of temporality that involves the future, past (or having-been), and present simultaneously without ever fixing itself to a single given moment.<sup>4</sup> Michael Watts writes of ecstatic temporality that “the moments of Dasein’s authentic temporality stand outside themselves, linked to each other by countless pathways of memory and anticipation that reach into both past and future” (PH 122).

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<sup>4</sup> Of course, authenticity is dependent on the *Augenblick* which synthesizes all three ecstases of temporality but which nevertheless cannot be reduced to a simple “now” of time, since the *Augenblick* has no fixed given duration.

Belonging to the phenomenality of ecstatic temporality is the word *Entrückung*, which is translated by Macquarrie and Robinson as both “rapture” and “carry away.” Heidegger first uses this term in §68, immediately following an introductory mention of the *Augenblick*:

This term [*Augenblick*] must be understood in the active sense as an ecstasis. It means the resolute rapture with which Dasein is carried away to whatever possibilities and circumstances are encountered in the Situation as possible objects of concern, but a rapture [*Entrückung*] which is *held* in resoluteness (*BT* 387).<sup>5</sup>

Heidegger renders ecstasis *directly* as *Entrückung* one page later when discussing the structure of forgetting (*Vergessen*), in which forgetting, as ‘backing-away,’ “closes off ecstatically that in the face of which one is backing away, and thereby closes itself off, too” (*BT* 379). By using *Entrückung* to describe ecstatic temporality, Heidegger is drawing a relationship not only to “the motion of time itself but to the connection between temporality and the possibilities that Dasein encounters in the world” (*EC* 30). However, as Kockelmans notes, “ek-stases are not simple ‘raptures’ in which one gets carried away; rather, there belongs to each ek-stasis a kind of ‘wither’ to which one is carried away” (“HTB” 148). If the *Entrückungen* discussed in these sections are not just the forces that sweep Dasein away, then what are they? Krell answers that “at all events, enrapturement has to do with a very particular ‘situation,’ namely, the proper or authentic possibility of Dasein as being toward death” (*EC* 30). (I will speak on the issue of futurity in ecstatic temporality later on, while covering Krell’s fourth thesis.) In this account, we

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<sup>5</sup> “Dieser Terminus muß im aktiven Sinne als Ekstase verstanden werden. Er meint die entschlossene, aber in der Entschlossenheit *gehaltene* Entrückung des Daseins an das, was in der Situation an besorgbaren Möglichkeiten, Umständen begegnet” (*SZ* 338).

can tie the poles to which Dasein is *entrückt* (and thereby stretched between) to both Being-towards-death in the future as well as an authentic relationship to *Gewesenheit*, which is exemplified in *Being and Time* as *repetition (Wiederholung)* (see SZ 343). As discussed earlier in the examination of the temporal structure/meaning of care, the background of Dasein's inner-worldly dealings is a futural projection into potential possibilities, *besorgbaren Möglichkeiten*; temporality as the *ekstatikon* is what allows for such a projection to be possible in the first place as a *carrying away*.

Such a carrying away, however, presupposes an opening to which Dasein could be carried away into. Heidegger writes that “every *Entrückung* is in itself open” (BT 430). And if temporality is primordially an *ekstatikon*, which means the “original outside-itself,” what is the “outside” and what is temporality opened to?

- Thesis three: “*Temporality temporalizes originally out of the future.*”

Again, let us begin here with the origin of this thesis in its most distilled form: “Primordial and authentic temporality temporalizes itself in terms of the authentic future and in such a way that in having been futurally, it first of all awakens the Present” (BT 378). Although Heidegger does not argue for an understanding of temporality that resembles a “cumulative sequence” that originates temporally into future then cascades into the present and past—in fact, he argues the opposite: each ecstasis is equiprimordial (*gleichursprünglich*), but he does say that “within this equiprimordiality, the modes of temporalizing are different” (ibid.) and that

primordial temporalization can indeed be determined by the futural ecstasis. In Krell's words, the ecstasis of the future has non-temporal (in the sequential sense) "*apriority*" (EC 25). Let us also link this passage to an earlier statement: "Self-projection upon the 'for-the-sake-of-oneself' is grounded in the future and is an essential characteristic of *existentiality*. *The primary meaning of existentiality is the future*" (BT 375-76). Additionally, Heidegger had written about the primordially of the futural ecstasis as early as 1924 in the short work "The Concept of Time": "With regard to time, this means that *the fundamental phenomenon of time is the future*" (CT 14E).

Firstly, Heidegger makes an important move in the first passage, which is to declare that authentic temporality is futural, and is futural to the extent that the present is "awakened" as what is actually and primordially *not* the present as such but is instead the *Gewesenheit* of the future. It should not be in doubt that Heidegger's primary target here in redefining the present as the history of a future is the philosophical tradition, which has viewed the meaning of time as what happens in the present. I have discussed above the importance of this in terms of care, Dasein's *Seinsverständnis* is based off of a projection of itself into the future, which is ultimately bracketed by an authentic relationship towards its own death through the production of "the horizon of possibility in general, within which a definite possible can be experienced" (OT 199). The *Entrückung* of Being-towards-death as futural would thus place Dasein, as coming back to itself, as the living *Gewesenheit*. Regarding Dasein's lived status as *gewesen*, Heidegger writes that "as long as' Dasein factually exists, it is never past [*vergangen*], but it is indeed as already having been, in the sense of the 'I am-as-having-been'. And only as long as Dasein is, *can it be*



as having been” (BT 376). This particular conversation concerns Dasein’s temporality in the ecstasis of having been (*gewesene Ekstase*), but immediately follows the assertion that the primary meaning of existentiality is the future and is used to support Heidegger’s claim that what we think of the “present” is really just the past of the future. With that in mind, how do we cross the threshold from the structure of understanding to making claims about the ontology of temporality? Does the fact that understanding is produced through the futural ecstasis necessarily mean that time itself temporalizes from out of the future? The answer lies in something of a tautology, wherein “as the identity of the very term implies, the futural essence of *existence* is defined by futural *existentiality*” (IM 55). Such a tautology ties Dasein to the topographical clearing that I have elucidated above, as well as the nullity of death (discussed in Section I), against which Dasein is pushed up against in the experience of anxiety as discussed in §69.<sup>6</sup> So far, Heidegger’s reliance on the *apriority* of the future allows *Being and Time* to underscore the fundamentally temporal nature of Dasein’s *Spielraum*, which frees understanding, meaning, and transcendence (Heidegger grounds the possibility of transcending into a world at all on ecstatic temporality, see §69 of *Being and Time*) out of their imprisonment in the present and roots them in all three ecstases of primordial temporality. But does that make Heidegger’s justification for the third thesis, that temporality temporalizes primordially out of the future, merely *post hoc*? Is it possible to maintain the above aspects of Dasein’s Being without claiming the third thesis?

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<sup>6</sup> Regarding anxiety, Luchte writes that “anxiety is not anxious about any being ‘in’ the ‘world’, any involvement, but instead, discloses this world as a *topos* of sheer possibility, as a complex projection of ecstatic temporality. In falling, one flees from itself as *this possibility*, hiding in the generic so as to avoid the intimacy of self-interpretation” (HEP 153). Heidegger is clear about the relationship of anxiety and temporality, and such a relation is crucial to the clearing of Dasein’s *topos* of understanding and possibility.

*Being and Time* is unclear, and later works seem to dodge the question altogether.

The third thesis appears from “The Concept of Time” in 1924 to *Being and Time* in 1927, but is either severely walked back or abandoned altogether by the time of *Basic Problems* in 1929. In *Basic Problems*, Heidegger spends virtually no time arguing for the thesis that temporality temporalizes originally out of the future. Rather, discussions of the futural ecstasis appear in the context of *Sorge*, which shows up consistently throughout the early Heidegger’s discussions of temporality and understanding.<sup>7</sup> Rather, *Basic Problems* should be viewed as an attempt to resuscitate or salvage the *eckstasis* of the present, and Heidegger spends the lion’s share of §§19-21 of *Basic Problems* giving an account of *Gegenwärtigen* (making-present) and *Praesenz* (the horizon of the present), the ecstatic schema of the present. This is problematic for reasons that we shall see in the fourth thesis.

- Thesis four: “Original time is finite.”

Thesis four appears near the end of §65. Heidegger writes that Dasein “does not have an end at which it just stops, but it *exists finitely*. The authentic future is temporalized primarily by that temporality which makes up the meaning of anticipatory resoluteness; it thus reveals itself *as finite*” (BT 378).

Thesis four is the most bewildering thesis if viewed from the lens of “ordinary”

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<sup>7</sup> He writes in 1924 that the “first principle of all hermeneutics” is “the possibility of access to history [that] is grounded in the possibility according to which any specific present understands how to be futural” (EC 20E). See above for the quote at BT 375-76 regarding the future as the primary meaning of existentiality.

considerations of temporality. Although I believe Heidegger is successful in arguing for the ecstatic nature of understanding and *against* the absolute primacy of the present now, the fourth thesis strikes directly at the heart of what has become a virtual tautology: eternity. Time's relation to eternity seems to have been a foregone conclusion since at least Plato, who wrote in *Timaeus* that time is the moving image of eternity; Aristotle's reliance on the very principle of eternity in regards to the prime mover is a central principle of his metaphysics. However, as Heidegger keenly points out in 1924, that

if God were eternity, then the way of contemplating time initially suggested would necessarily remain in a state of perplexity so long as it knows nothing of God, and fails to understand the inquiry concerning him. If our access to God is faith and if involving oneself with eternity is nothing other than this faith, then philosophy will never have eternity and, accordingly, we will never be able to employ eternity methodologically as a possible respect in which to discuss time.

(CT 1E)

Due to theological reasons, we find the meaning of time in eternity. But if God is unknowable—no doubt *due* to God's eternity—how is time and *its* eternity supposed to be known?<sup>8</sup>

Aristotle's discussion of time in Book Δ of *Physics* perhaps gets philosophy into the door of discussing time, but Aristotle's endless stream of 'nows' "fabricates, via its linear *mathēsis*, an illusion of everlastingness, although in truth, it is finite, and soon *breaks down*" (HEP 22),

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<sup>8</sup> Heidegger is no doubt influenced by Kant's discussion of the first antinomy in the first *Critique*. Although discussing this influence is outside of the scope of this paper, see Sherover's *Heidegger, Kant and Time* for coverage of this topic.

Luchte writes, summarizing Heidegger's implicit criticism in this section. "Any "now" becomes the being of time, that sequence with a transitional character of a 'not yet' and 'no longer'. A "now" is slippery, always points beyond itself—it promises an 'everlastingness', but this bad infinity of a 'clipped sequence of nows' covers over our true 'eternity'" (*HEP* 20). The two-dimensional line of discrete "nows," common to both Aristotle as well as Edmund Husserl, carries the prospect of the future only as a promise through an understanding of the now as the porous barrier between the past and future, time's two "modes" of non-being. For Heidegger, drawing from Hegel's concept of "bad infinity," we cannot merely draw eternity together by pasting a theoretically endless number of "nows" together. Such an understanding of eternity is based on a purely mathematical model, but has absolutely no relation to finitude.

Heidegger does not deny that time will proceed "in spite of my own no-longer-Dasein" (*BT* 378) and that there is a potentially unlimited number of things that can still happen in the future. Heidegger objects that these reservations do not prove that time is infinite. Rather, these seem to be characteristics of *das Man*, the "they" of average everydayness, who is always exceeding and outstripping 'my' time and will certainly continue out of my death: "in the infinite "now" Dasein lives as the They-self [*das Man*]" (*DPT* 134). Rather, Heidegger writes that primordial temporality's finitude

is not about everything that still can happen 'in a time that goes on', or about what kind of letting-come-towards-oneself we can encounter 'out of this time', but about how 'coming-towards-oneself' is *as such*, to be primordially defined. Its finitude does not amount primarily to a stopping, but is a characteristic of temporalization itself. (*ibid.*)

Given the structure of the future as the phenomenal characteristic of letting-come-towards-oneself, Being-towards-death means, then, that Dasein constantly lets its own death—the possibility of an impossibility, or a nullity—come towards it and indeed exists inside of this nullity. Belonging to the structure of death is “that the future closes one’s potentiality-for-Being; that is to say, the future itself is closed to one, and as such it makes possible the resolute existentiell understanding of nullity” (BT 379). So despite the fact that Heidegger does not deny that time will continue on after one’s death, Heidegger is pointing to the fact that the fact that time ‘closes off’ is not only characteristic of the future, but of original temporality itself. In other words, the future is not just what continues eternally in front of the present. Rather, it belongs to ecstatic temporality, specifically the future, to not only open out into the *Spielraum* of possibilities, but to close down on them as well, as we have seen in the ontological analysis of death and Being-towards-death.

This is why Heidegger argues that the typical relationship of finitude and eternity is backwards. In the ordinary or vulgar conception of time, Dasein dies when it, as it were, runs out of nows. But the ordinary conception of time also understands that there have been nows that preceded Dasein before its death and will succeed it after its death. After all, this is the relationship that all things that are not Dasein have. But, as Heidegger writes in *Basic Problems*, if the nature of time is understood in this way, it follows that time must then be conceived as an endless sequence of nows. This endlessness is inferred purely deductively from the isolated concept of the now. And also, the inference to the endlessness of time, which has a legitimate sense within certain limits, is possible

only if the now is taken in the sense of the clipped sequence of nows. It can be made clear—as was shown in *Being and Time*—that the endlessness of common time can enter Dasein’s mind only because temporality itself, intrinsically, forgets its own essential finitude. Only because temporality in the authentic sense is finite is inauthentic time in the sense of common time infinite. (*BPP* 273)

Not only does Dasein forget its own finitude, but it forgets the fact that it belongs to the futural *ekstasis* to both open up and close off. The future grounds *Sorge* and opens up the very possibility of understanding, but simultaneously closes down these possibilities through Dasein’s finitude, and thus such finitude thus *belongs* to the futural *ekstasis*. This double movement of the futural *ekstasis* is precisely what engenders Dasein’s relationship to finitude as such. If Dasein is ecstatic temporality, then the fact that Dasein is *finite* is only given from the fact that ecstatic temporality is given as well. Such a relationship to finitude, and finitude as such, is thereby only possible by this fact. Heidegger remarked earlier in *Being in Time* that beings in the world that are considered through the *Vorhandenheit* schema are wordless (*weltlos*) In Division II, we now know that that also means that they do not have the relationship to death and finitude that Dasein does. In fact, we cannot even call those things that are *Vorhandenheit* finite, but merely perishable. Heidegger is arguing that so long as we look to things that are not finite, we will only understand time based on the “now” and thus only understand the meaning of temporality as eternity and *not* finitude.

## V. Reconciling Theses Three and Four

As I remarked above while discussing the third thesis, Heidegger distances himself almost *immediately* after the publication of *Being and Time* from the thesis that ecstatic temporality temporalizes originally out of the future by never defending the thesis again, despite retaining and continue to defend theses one, two, and four until at least *Basic Problems*. But if Heidegger thought thesis three was indefensible after 1927 (and therefore dropped it in subsequent publications), does dropping the third thesis from the theory of ecstatic temporality jeopardize his account as a whole? As Krell summarizes, “if the apriority of the future ecstasis cannot be maintained, what will conjoin ecstatic temporality and finitude? In other words, what is the relation of Time as such to finitude, the negative, and the nothing?” (*IM* 55). Such a problem is complicated within *Being and Time* itself when Heidegger writes that “*in every ecstasis, temporality temporalizes itself as a whole; and this means that in the ecstatical unity with which temporality has fully temporalized itself currently, is grounded in the totality of the structural whole of existence, facticity, and falling—that is, the unity of the care-structure*” (*BT* 401). Paradoxically, Heidegger then goes on to affirm that “temporality temporalizes itself as a future” (*ibid*). How are we supposed to square temporality’s primordial futurity with temporality’s professed ability to temporalize “completely” in every ecstasis? What does it mean for an ecstasis to temporalize “completely” if it is the outside-itself? These answers are not given in *Being and Time*, though we learn that there is no single ecstasis off on its own, so to speak, but each opens itself onto the other, equiprimordially.

What is more important here is that, despite the lack of demonstration for them in *Being and Time*, the third and fourth theses do form the outline for a cohesive view of temporality. As I

argued above, Dasein, as care, always runs ahead (*Vorlaufen*) and projects its possibilities into the future to come back to themselves. If “understanding is grounded primarily in the future,” (ibid.) and Dasein’s *existentiality* is similarly grounded in futurity *via* the *apriority* of the future ecstasis, one can see what looks to be a causal relation between the two. Likewise, Dasein’s finitude is grounded in the fact that Dasein is constantly existing within a nullity that is given to Dasein *out* of the apriority of the future ecstasis and the fact that this ecstasis closes off the future *primordially*. Again, despite the lack of ontological demonstration present in *Being and Time*, there is a progression among the four theses.

Perhaps it is *because* of this lack of argumentation that Heidegger draws away from the third thesis, but at what cost does this withdrawal come? Certainly the structure of the argument as it appears in *Being and Time* falls apart. Without the apriority of the future ecstasis, how is one to salvage the tenuous-but-existent chain between the third and fourth theses? We must turn to *Basic Problems* for a look at Heidegger’s attempt at a retrieval.

I’ve alluded several times to Heidegger’s attempt to resuscitate the present ecstasis in *Basic Problems*, but now the “how” of this resuscitation will figure greatly into looking at how Heidegger attempts to keep the fourth thesis without relying on the third. In the explication of the horizon of *Praesenz*, which opens both the *Gegenwart* and the *Augenblick* and is therefore nonidentifiable with either, Heidegger explains that “the name ‘*Praesenz*’ itself already indicates that we do *not* mean by it *an ecstatic phenomenon* as we do with present and future, at any rate not the ecstatic phenomenon of temporality with regard to its ecstatic structure” (*BPP* 306). This is a very significant detour away from the ecstatic temporality of *Being and Time*. Why has



Heidegger chosen to render the horizon of *Praesenz* to be not ecstatic? Krell remarks that there is still a question left open after *Being and Time*, which is to look for the *unifier* of the three temporal ecstases (see *BPP* 307) and “the question is whether *Praesenz* can be the unifier” (*IM* 58). As the original “outside-itself,” ecstatic temporality is “carried away [*entrückt*] within itself as future, past, and present” (*BPP* 267). As I have argued above, an *Entrückung* is not simply a carrying-off or an enrapturedness into nothingness; it requires a place to be carried off into. So where is temporality itself *enraptured*, and what part does *Praesenz* play in this rapture?

Heidegger answers that “the concept ‘horizon’ in the common sense presupposes exactly what we are calling the ecstatic horizon. There would be nothing like a horizon for us if there were not ecstatic openness for ... and a schematic determination of that openness, say, in the sense of *Praesenz*” (*BPP* 308). *Praesenz* opens temporality up to the horizon of ecstasis as such, as an ecstatic being-open-for. In the 1928 lectures on Leibniz’s logic, Heidegger renders *Praesenz* as a question mark in a diagram, remarking that “the question mark signifies the horizon that remains open”<sup>9</sup> (*GA* 26: 268, my translation), signifying the inscrutability of this constantly open horizon.

However, this resuscitation of *Praesenz* as *the ecstatic horizon* still is not without issue. The most glaring point here is that Heidegger may have salvaged the *spirit* of the third thesis at the complete expense of the fourth thesis. It is not a satisfying answer to merely leave *Praesenz* as the inscrutable horizon of *ecstasis par excellence*. Such an answer is problematic in two ways. Firstly, have we not just returned back to a kind of theologizing about time? A constantly open horizon of ecstasis that has no closure as such sounds like a God-like horizon of time through

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<sup>9</sup> “Das Fragezeichen bedeutet den offenenbleibenden Horizont.”

which all things are possible. Secondly, if the *offenenbleibende Horizont* of *Praesenz* remains without closure or closing-off, how can Heidegger maintain the fourth thesis? Most disconcertingly of all, given its importance, Heidegger comes to a point in *Basic Problems* where he declines to comment any further on temporality's primordial finitude: "It is not possible to go into further detail here on the finitude of time, because it is connected with the difficult problem of death, and this is not the place to analyze death in that connection" (*BPP* 273).

Thus, readers are caught in a paradox. One can either develop the four theses as they appear in *Being and Time* with Heidegger's relatively scant justification, or one can make the alterations of *Basic Problems* and regain an importance of the present ecstasis at the cost of the latter two theses. Although Heidegger does insist several times in *Basic Problems* that temporality is primordially finite, such a thesis is greatly jeopardized, for reasons elucidated above, if *Praesenz* is to be understood as the *offenenbleibende Horizont*, the horizon of ecstasis as such which remains open. It appears that Heidegger is aware of this problem, since Heidegger is unwilling to justify the finitude of original temporality in *Basic Problems*. Additionally, if *Basic Problems* puts the theory of ecstatic temporality in limbo due to the falling away of the third thesis, he never returns to resolve this issue in his career. Thus, readers are stuck with a conundrum: either accept *Being and Time*'s assertion that temporality temporalizes primordially out from the future or reject this assertion, as *Basic Problems* does, in order to justify *Praesenz* as the temporal horizon which remains constantly open *for* the other ecstases. If one chooses the latter route, one must, at the very least, rewrite the third thesis, and then be faced with the task of doing what Heidegger does not (or *cannot*): justify the finitude of primordial temporality, which

seems to require the *apriority* of the futural ecstasis.

## VI. Conclusion

So far, I've attempted to cover all of the major aspects of Heidegger's theory of ecstatic temporality as it appears in the 1920s. I began with a brief discussion of Aristotle's conception of time in the *Physics* before moving on to *Being and Time*. My discussion included an overview of the structures of *Sorge* and the grounding of *Sorge*'s phenomenal characteristics in the three ecstases of temporality. This also included a thorough description of what in Heidegger leads to David Krell's elucidations of Heidegger's four theses on temporality. One of the most important discoveries within this section is that Heidegger himself often does not elaborate on his own theses, leaving readers with a great deal of legwork to be done in order to make up the lack of argumentative justification. This is particularly evident in the third and fourth theses, since Heidegger spends only a scant few paragraphs justifying them. It may be the case that the latter two theses ultimately fail because Heidegger may ultimately come to believe that they cannot be justified, as is hinted at by Heidegger's complete abdication of the third thesis in the Leibniz lecture and *Basic Problems*, but readers are nonetheless pressed to choose between the *apriority* of the futural ecstasis in *Being and Time*, which has the structure of both opening-towards and closing-off, and the horizon of *Praesenz* in *Basic Problems*, which is always open and does *not* close off. While Heidegger continues to insist on the equiprimordiality of all three ecstases (since all three temporalize themselves "completely"), the question at hand here is where the *primordial temporalization* of temporality is located. *Being and Time* affirms that it is located at the futural

ecstasis because this ecstasis has the structure of both closing down and opening up. *Basic Problems* affirms that it is the horizon of *Praesenz*, which constantly holds open temporality, but also because it is on this horizon that Dasein makes-present, which is representative of Dasein's authentic totality. However, if Heidegger is to locate the site of the original temporalization of temporality in the *constantly opened horizon* of *Praesenz*, then the support for the fourth thesis (temporality's primordial *finitude*) is jeopardized as it is precisely the structure of closing down that Heidegger points to as justification of temporality's finitude. Although moving the locus of original temporalization to *Praesenz* does not, of course, get rid of the futural ecstasis, moving it to a permanently held open horizon versus a horizon which has closing down in its structure presents a potentially ontologically unsurpassable contradiction between rejecting the third thesis and affirming the fourth. And, as I have pointed out, Heidegger himself is unwilling to justify the fourth thesis in *Basic Problems* beyond the mere affirmation of the thesis. I don't doubt this is because he realized that the fourth thesis would need to be revised or properly justified anew if the third thesis is to be dropped altogether in favor of *Praesenz*.

## Chapter Two:

### Heidegger's *Destruktion* of the Metaphysics of Presence

#### I. Introduction

The previous chapter was dedicated to an exegetical approach to Heidegger's theory of ecstatic temporality as it appears in the 1920s. I believe that ecstatic temporality is remarkable in its own right as a theory of time that is not explicitly rooted in Aristotle's conception of time from Book  $\Delta$  of *Physics*. Historically speaking, ecstatic temporality is a philosophical achievement. The current chapter, however, is dedicated to an exploration of the critique of the history of philosophy that is inaugurated by Heidegger's novel conception of temporality. As Division II of *Being and Time* shows, Heidegger's ontology rests directly upon an understanding of *Being-in-the-world* as fundamentally temporal.<sup>10</sup> But the question of what is at the heart of Heidegger's ontology still remains open. In this chapter, I argue that the greatest import of Heidegger's theory of temporality is that it directly combats the philosophical lineage of privileging what is presently given to thought in the present moment. My shorthand for this philosophical lineage will be the "metaphysics of presence."<sup>11</sup> Although, as I showed in the previous chapter, Heidegger moves away from the thesis that temporality temporalizes primordially out of the future in favor of an anchoring around the horizon of *Praezens*, ecstatic temporality in *Being and Time* is not just a resuscitation of the future, but an attempt to break

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<sup>10</sup> See section one of the previous chapter ("Ontological Topography") for an explanation of how the 'prepositional' relations of *Being-in-the-world* (thrownness, tarrying alongside, 'for-the-sake-of-which') are, at heart, grounded in the three temporal ecstases.

<sup>11</sup> The metaphysics of presence also includes the *modalities* of presence--namely, absence. Heidegger does not present his ontology within negative theology.

free of a metaphysics that can only think in terms of the presence of the present. I looked primarily at Dasein's relation to death in the previous chapter, but expand this reading to include Dasein's relation to natality, the past, and history in the current chapter. This chapter will be largely based off of Derrida's interpretation of the second chapter of the first division of *Being and Time* from his 1964-65 lectures, *Heidegger: The Question of Being and History*, which I will elaborate on later in this chapter. In arguing for Derrida's interpretation, I will draw upon Heidegger's project of *Destruktion* and argue that Heidegger's primary target in such a *Destruktion* is indeed the metaphysics of presence. Likewise, I argue that *Being and Time* as a whole can be viewed as an attempt to move beyond such a philosophical prejudice by first and foremost dismantling any theory of temporality that only gives ontological preference to the present moment. Finally, I argue that it is only through the ecstatic temporality and the *Destruktion* of the metaphysics of presence is it possible to secure a meaningful ontological relationship to finitude, futurity, and historicity.

## **II. *Destruktion* and Temporality**

In §6 of *Being and Time*, entitled "The Task of Destroying the History of Ontology," Heidegger lays out a crucial element of the procedure of his fundamental ontology, which is to sweep through the history of philosophy to critically assess how, and on what terms, philosophy has addressed the question of the meaning of Being. In laying out the procedure of *Destruktion*, Heidegger takes aim at two fundamental issues directly at the heart of the history of ontology: time and what Derrida coins as "the metaphysics of presence." Through destroying the history of

ontology, Heidegger writes that

we found ourselves faced with the task of Interpreting the basis of the ancient ontology in the light of the problematic of Temporality. When this is done, it will be manifest that the ancient way of interpreting the Being of entities is oriented towards the ‘world’ of ‘Nature’ in the widest sense, and that it is indeed in terms of ‘time’ that its understanding of Being is obtained. The outward evidence for this (though of course it is *merely* outward evidence) is the treatment of the meaning of Being as *παρουσία* or *οὐσία*, which signifies, in ontologico-Temporal terms, ‘presence’ (*Anwesenheit*). Entities are grasped in their Being as ‘presence’; this means that they are understood with regard to a definite mode of time—the ‘Present’ (*BT 47*).

An explicit connection here is made between how philosophy thinks time and how philosophy thinks ontology, and specifically how this is done in the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. Heidegger names a few paragraphs later that “Aristotle’s essay on time [in Book Δ of *Physics*] is the first detailed Interpretation of this phenomenon [of time] which has come down to us. Every subsequent account of time, including Bergson’s, has been essentially determined by it” (*BT 48-49*). As such, an account of the Aristotelian conception of time will form any basis for an understanding of both temporality as well as ontology. It is the importance of this question of the link between temporality and ontology that will force Derrida to claim that “everything – everything: that is, not only this or that gesture of the destruction of *Metaphysics* but the totality of the destruction and the meaning that directs it as a whole—everything is played out around the

meaning of the present and the privilege accorded by the whole of philosophy to the present” (QBH 137).

### III. *Vorhandenheit* and Traditional Metaphysics

In the selection above, Heidegger hints at the “merely outward evidence” for the interpretation of the meaning of Beings in terms of nature or time in the widest sense as the treatment of Being as *ούσία* or *παρουσία* (*Anwesenheit* or presence). This merely outward evidence points at the category of such evidence, which Heidegger names *Vorhandenheit*. Heidegger’s analysis of *Vorhandenheit* in *Being and Time* is centered around giving an account of one of the kinds of beings that we encounter in the world: things that are ready to hand and are important to beings such as *Dasein* because they get implemented into a referential whole in such a way that *Dasein* can meaningfully use such items for various tasks. As we are reminded many times in *Being and Time*, *Dasein* does not have the kind of being of something present-at-hand. But this seems to be a rather obvious starting point for the existential analytic of *Dasein*: is it not altogether undoubtable that I am different than the lifeless material objects that I concern myself with? While the answer seems to be “yes,” Heidegger is deeply concerned with how successful history has navigated this ontological difference, if it has done so at all. What Heidegger is working through in his existential analytic is not necessarily to establish a theory of equipmentality but instead to see how far this “ontological clue” of *Vorhandenheit* has condemned philosophy to actually be “philosophy as philosophy of the present ... [as] philosophy pre-determining beings as *Vorhandenheit*” (QBH 146). The question of determining



human existence as separate from *πράγματα* is crucial to any ontological analytic, but Heidegger's existential analytic in *Being and Time* is partly a sustained dialogue with the diffusion of *Vorhandenheit* into the ontological analyses of both being and time. The question will be of critical importance throughout *Being and Time* and will serve as the fundamental clue of what Heidegger alluded to above, the interpretation of nature and time in the widest sense.

The importance of the concept of *Vorhandenheit* in both the existential analytic of *Dasein* as well as the task of *Destruktion* is that the schema *Vorhandenheit* is uncovered as the most primarily given clue for which any type of ontology will build itself up from. This givenness (*Gegebenheit*) of things objectively present cannot be understated, because it is precisely what must be overcome if ontology is no longer going to operate within the closure of traditional metaphysical ontology which can only think being in terms of the presence of the present. The importance of undermining the often unthought privilege of the givenness of things objectively present must be underscored: a thinking *outside* of the metaphysics of presence is so far yet to be seen in the history of philosophy precisely because no thinker has yet accomplished thinking outside of such givenness. Such attempts to at least separate *Dasein* from things objectively present are frequent and constant in *Being and Time*. Heidegger will explicitly claim that “*Dasein* is never to be understood ontologically as a case and an instance of a genus of beings *Vorhandenem*” (BT 42). And yet, as obvious as it seems to separate the two, part of the project of *Destruktion* is to expose just how widespread the influence of presence-at-hand is in ontology. Of course, the history of philosophy rarely equates *Vorhandene* with human being, but it is precisely *from* the givenness of things present-to-hand that ontological concepts are formed. In a

discussion of the modern debate between subjectivism and objectivism, Heidegger writes that

Of the essence here is the necessary interplay between subjectivism and objectivism. But precisely this reciprocal condition of the one by the other refers us back to deeper processes. What is decisive is not that humanity frees itself from previous bonds but, rather, that the essence of humanity altogether transforms itself in that man becomes the subject. To be sure, this word “subject” must be understood as the translation of the Greek *hypokeimenon*. The word names that-which-lies-before, that which, as ground, gathers everything onto itself. This metaphysics meaning of the concept of the subject has, in the first instance, no special relationship to man, and none at all to the I. (*AWP* 66-67)

So long as human being is thought in any form of *subjectivity* whatsoever, it will always be thought in terms of something persisting (in this case, the ground as what gathers everything onto itself), something *Vorhandenes*. Again, what is critical here is that even though modern metaphysics (at least since Descartes) opposes the reduction of human being to something present-at-hand, the concept by which such an opposition is structured around is contained by an ontology of thingliness, of the schema of *Vorhandenheit*. It is precisely the task of *Destruktion* to investigate just how deeply the schema of *Vorhandenheit* has penetrated into the history of philosophy, at least in the terms of an existential analytic of the kind of being that Heidegger calls *dasiengemäßig*, specifically due to the near-impossibility of overcoming the *Gegebenheit* of things present-at-hand. (After all, where should philosophy begin other than with what it finds itself confronted with in the present?) The history of the *subjectum* may perhaps be

representative of the history of philosophy itself (Derrida humorously adds one word in the margin in his lecture notes on this topic: “Hume” [QBH 120]), and such a history is precisely what is targeted in Heidegger’s *Destruktion* of that history. For example, Heidegger takes on the Husserlian transcendental ego in order to display how rooted philosophy is in the metaphysics of presence—even when it attempts to escape such a prejudice. Heidegger writes that Husserl’s transcendental ego is understood “as what is always already constantly present (*Vorhandene*) in a closed region” (BT 112), and thus is still a concept of the ‘subject’ contained within the metaphysics of presence. Furthermore, it is clear that the phenomenality of intentionality rests upon the same metaphysics of presence that undergirds the transcendental ego: a reliance upon what is given to consciousness in the present. But the critique contained within Dasein’s existential analytic in *Being and Time* is designed to go much further than particular historical iterations of such a *subjectum*. “Even if one rejects a substantial soul, the thingliness of consciousness, and the objectivity of the person, ontologically one still posits something whose being retains the meaning of *Vorhandenheit*, whether explicitly or not” (ibid.). So long as a theory of the person is maintained around any kind of objectivity (present to itself, the *for-itself*, the soul, the phenomenality of consciousness, etc.) we will not have overcome a theory that is even potentially outside of a metaphysics of presence—rather, it will be another extension of an ontology that attempts to link all forms of Being to *ousia* or *parousia* (presence), as objectively present beings only and exclusively in the present.

Derrida envisions the Husserlian objection to this aim of *Destruktion*, which would argue that “this identity of the *subjectum* is not a metaphysical thesis and that, by referring to it, one is

merely describing what is *given*” (*QBH* 119). Of course, for the Husserlian, returning “to the things themselves!” is the clarion call of phenomenology itself: if we are not examining the *given as given*, does not Heidegger run the risk of turning fundamental ontology into a negative theology? How is phenomenology to continue methodologically without relying on the structures of the conscious experience as they are given? Heidegger himself notes the difficulty of overcoming *Gegebenheit* as the organizing principle of phenomenological inquiry: “But is it not contrary to the rules of all sound method to approach a problematic without sticking to what is given as evident in the area of our theme? And what is more doubtless than the givenness of the ‘I’” (*BT* 151)? Again, the difficulty of starting with what is given is so contradictory that it seems to run roughshod against all previous forms of philosophizing. Starting from such *Gegebenheit* has installed itself so firmly into the history of philosophy that Heidegger refers it as one of the “rules of all sound method.” How to begin if not starting from what *is*?

Heidegger responds to this questioning, to the question of beginning with what should be the most fundamental point of inquiry, with a series of questions.

In this context of an existential analytic of factual Dasein, the question arises whether giving the ‘I’ in the way we have mentioned discloses Dasein in its everydayness, if it discloses Dasein at all. ... What is this kind of ‘giving-itself’ on the part of Dasein should lead our existential analytic astray and do so, in a manner grounded in the Being of Dasein itself? ... Dasein is in each case mine, and this is its constitution; but what if this should be the very reason why, proximally and for the most part, Dasein *is not itself*? What if the aforementioned

approach, starting with the givenness of the 'I' to Dasein itself, and with a rather patent self-interpretation of Dasein, should lead the existential analytic, as it were, into a pitfall? (BT 151)

Heidegger's questions strike to the heart of the procedure of the metaphysics of presence by calling into question the very givenness of the given. As Heidegger shows in the "Letter on Humanism," the given (and the metaphysics of presence) is a project of *security*<sup>12</sup>, but that does not mean that such a project is itself secure. Instead, what is questioned above is whether or not the givenness of the given is as secure of a starting point as one might think, or whether or not this presupposed security is *precisely* what leads us, "as it were, into a pitfall." Heidegger specifically argues above that such a going-astray (*Verführung*) does so "in a manner grounded in the Being of Dasein itself." Which manner is this? Heidegger answers a few sentences later: *Jemeinigkeit* ("Dasein is in each case mine, and this is its constitution" [BT 113]). It is within the structure of *Jemeinigkeit* that Dasein also runs the risk interpreting itself and its experiences within the Husserlian framework of the transcendental ego: whenever I reflect on something, it is always the *I* that responds as given. Derrida, however, notes that the "*Gegebenheit* is perhaps here the *Verführung* itself, that the being-given is perhaps the *ruse*, the *seduction* that se-duces, that leads off the path, that seduces in the etymological sense: the so-called self-evidence of what is given is perhaps here the dissimulation and the evasion itself. An essential evasion that has its basis precisely in the being of *Dasein*" (QBH 119) in that Dasein can both alienate itself as well

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<sup>12</sup> The German *Sicherheit* means both security and certainty, which has ontological signification here. Heidegger writes that ontology arrests beings as subsisting things that are present-at-hand, both readily available for both theoretical scrutiny as well as every kind of mastery and domination.

as call on itself within the structure of *Jemeinigkeit*.

Although Heidegger remarks that Dasein's fallenness (*Verfallenheit*) makes no claim as to whether or not Dasein calls itself as something *Vorhandenes*, it is clear that such a risk of falling into such an interpretation is omnipresent in the history of philosophy. And, as we have remarked, it is virtually impossible to overcome—not in small part due to its historical rootedness in the philosophical tradition. Heidegger has identified the risk and argued throughout *Being and Time* that *daseingemäßig* and *vorhanden* are antonymous, but have we effectively established such a distinction within Heidegger's own philosophy? Such a question cannot be answered until progressing to what Derrida sees, in his 1964-65 lectures on *Being and Time*, as *Destruktion*'s most important task, which is to give a “radical affirmation of an essential link between being and history” (*QBH* 21). However, establishing the difficulty of overcoming the schema of *Vorhandenheit* begins with the existential analytic of Dasein and continues directly into the *Destruktion* of philosophy's relation to time (and *its* relationship to *Vorhandenheit*). Just as the history of the *subjectum* has not freed itself from the schema of *Vorhandenheit*, the philosophy of time has likewise failed to establish itself free from the interpretation of what is *temporally* present, the structure of the “now.”

#### **IV. Critique Contained Within Ecstatic Temporality**

Heidegger's continual critique of the *subjectum* and subjectivity understood within the schema of *Vorhandenheit* is important in its own right, but it is most profoundly connected to the question of time. When, in taking aim at the transcendental I, Heidegger writes that “*If the 'I' is*

*an Essential characteristic of Dasein, then it is one which must be Interpreted existentially*” (BT 152). To this point, Heidegger has already carried out his existential analysis of Dasein’s *In-der-Welt-Sein* and argued for the referential whole of things not *daseingemäßig*, things ready-to-hand that are not like Dasein but available for Dasein to use. Heidegger has shown that Dasein is not fundamentally removed from the world like one would find it in the transcendental reduction, but instead is fully enmeshed within its world and, more importantly, ontologically inseparable from it. Although Husserl (like Descartes) began with the givenness of what is seemingly undeniably given—the I—it is precisely such givenness that led Husserl away, ironically, from the things themselves. However, the work of *Being and Time* is only half way through here: “This absolute independence of subjectivity, says Heidegger, is never *given*, on the one hand. On the other hand it leads, like it or not, to an ahistorical concept of the *ego*” (QBH 121). Heidegger’s argument is that so long as we begin with the givenness of the given, we will always construct a theory of subjectivity around the schema of *Vorhandenheit*, and thus will go astray by describing Dasein as what is absolutely not *in-der-Welt*, and thus then as something that is completely ahistorical. Any existential analytic of Dasein must necessarily include a kind of *In-der-Welt-Sein* that is fundamentally grounded upon a theory of temporality that allows for such a relation to the ecstases of time. Recall from the previous chapter that Heidegger wrote that “*the primordial unity of the structure of care lies in temporality*” (BT 375). The two branches of Heidegger’s existential analytic necessarily suppose each other: “*Vorhandenheit* pure and simple can no more have a history than can a being foreign to the world. Neither the intra-worldly nor the extra-worldly can have a history” (ibid). And this, of course, is the contradictory model of the

Husserlian transcendental ego, which, as Derrida puts it, is “outside the world according to an intra-worldly model” which, simply put, “cannot rigorously think transcendental history” (*QBH* 122). Such is the *Verführung* of *Vorhandenheit*, but once such a leading- astray is addressed can the link between being and history be worked out.

The crossroads that both Heidegger and Derrida find themselves at in this stage of Dasein’s existential analytic is the challenge of yoking together three separate conditions of a proper understanding of temporality that will all be linked to an understanding of Being that cannot be understood in terms of *Vorhandenheit*: time itself, history, and finitude (which includes both death *and* birth). I have argued thus far that Heidegger’s *Destruktion* of subjectivity is dependent on an overcoming of the reliance and privilege of the metaphysics of presence, which has appeared in the form of philosophy taking the givenness of the given as the clue for its starting point. But is it possible to overcome metaphysics and rethink the three separate conditions above by way of a renewed thinking of temporality? Derrida lays out the explicit stakes of the question at hand: “traditional ontology, then, can be destroyed only by repeating and interrogating its relation to the problem of time. In what way has a certain determination of time implicitly governed the determination of the meaning of Being in the history of philosophy (“OG” 31). To answer such a question, a confrontation with the “vulgar” time is required.

## **V. Hume and Time**

I took note of Derrida’s humorous monosyllabic notation of “Hume” in his lecture notes



above. His doing so is clearly because Hume's theory of personal identity is an attempt to take a crucial step past the concepts of subjectivity grounded in the *hypokeimenon* given to us by the Cartesian tradition. However, even Hume's own revolution in this respect is still trapped within the metaphysical problematic that he is trying to usurp. Hume's "actors on the stage" metaphor for subjectivity<sup>13</sup> argues directly against any conception of the subject as having a substratum, but the fundamental error in such a metaphor is that it is directly constructed upon the vulgar conception of time: the actor is lit up and comes to presence *only in the "now"* and follows a linear progression of actors that are before him in the future ('not yet') and ones behind him in the past ('having been'). Thus, Hume's theory falls directly in line with an Aristotelian conception of time. Since it cannot break out of this conception, Hume's theory ends up confirming what it sought to overthrow: the hegemony of the *subjectum*. Although Hume sought to work around this by never assigning an ontological lineage to the "actors on the stage," he misses the fact that this theory relies on a *temporal subjectum* by way of the ever-present "now" that illuminates those actors on the stage. In the language of *Being and Time*, instead of describing of describing the flux of personal identity, Hume may well have been on the way to simply elucidating the temporal being of something *Vorhandenes*, which exists entirely and wholly in the present "now" with no relation whatsoever to the past or future, which, in Hume's

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<sup>13</sup> This sustained metaphor is found in *A Treatise on Human Nature* (1739) in which Hume argued against the continuity or "substance" of human subjectivity that endured through time, instead arguing for a conception of subjectivity that resembled a line of actors parading in linear fashion on the stage. In this metaphor, perceptions (the "actors") pass along in the mind (the "stage") in an infinite number of permutations, never producing a kind of identity between them. Hume attempted to show that since the metaphysical notion of human identity is only produced through our belief in the identity and supposed endurance of our perceptions and impressions of objects over time, the identity of the self could be refuted if it could be shown that the identity of such perceptions were erroneous.

theory, are ontologically nullified. This is precisely what Heidegger calls in *Basic Problems* an “extant sequence” of nows:

the time that is known as the now and as a manifold and succession of nows is an *extant sequence*. The nows appear to be intratemporal. They come and go like beings; like extant entities they perish, becoming no longer extant. The common experience of beings has at its disposal no other horizon for understanding being than that of extantness, being at hand. (*BPP* 269)

Speaking only from the temporal level, Hume’s theory of personal identity has done little else than to confirm an understanding of time which draws its ontology from the being of things present-at-hand, namely, as given exclusively within the present “now.”

Sadler refers to such a constriction in the Aristotelian conception of time, from which Hume is not able to escape:

the ontological priority of the now consists in the fact that bodies, the only ontologically admissible physical realities, can never be found in the past or future, but always in the present. In one sense the now is ever different, because it is always at a different point of time, but in another sense it is always the same, for it has the ontological function of ‘presenting’ the real thing itself. (*HA* 69-70)

Sadler perfectly summarizes the limitations that *Being and Time* is attempting to destruct. First, Aristotelian temporality reduces or flattens everything to something present-at-hand, or a body in motion, which are the only physical entities that the Aristotelian model can account for.

Secondly, Aristotelian temporality is unable to account for futurity or historicity. As the

account of the temporal structure of Being-in-the-world displayed, Dasein is constantly projecting itself into the past, present, and future ecstatically: such a projection is not possible in the ordinary conception of time because the ordinary conception of time cannot allow for a projection into the non-being of the past or future. Thirdly, Hume's skepticism only repeats the Aristotelian ontology of the present: even if the *nun* is ever-changing, it is still the only locale where bodies may present themselves. Finally, it appears that Hume's analogy mistakes what Heidegger calls "clock time" for temporality itself and takes all time to be an "intrinsically free-floating runoff of a sequence of nows" (*HEP* 22).

## **VI. Finitude**

Pointing out the internal failure of Hume's theory is not enough. What Heidegger is after is not simply to throw light on theories of temporality caught within the Aristotelian paradigm, but to bring out what their fundamental limitations are. In light of Heidegger's critique of the metaphysics of presence so far, we may also say that Hume's conception of time leaves finitude (and thereby history, birth, death and so forth) unthinkable—even if it attempts to wrest subjectivity away from a theory of the substratum. In terms of care, Hume's use of the vulgar conception of time is precisely what makes a relationship to death as such impossible: both authentic and inauthentic Being-towards-death "is possible only as something *futural* ... By the term 'futural,' we do not here have in view a "now" which has *not yet* become 'actual' and which some time *will be* for the first time" (*BT* 373). Such a 'coming towards' is rooted not in the fact that time cannot be paused or that these moments are coming towards Dasein like the actors on

the stage, but instead is rooted in temporal projection. Such a futural projection is not possible within the temporality of the eternal now, or the uninterrupted chain of “nows” that proceeds in a linear fashion within time. Instead, the relationship towards natality and death is purely formal in this conception of time (as “only” the beginning and end of life). But, as Heidegger writes, “only that entity which is ‘between’ birth and death presents the whole which we have been seeking” (*BT* 425). So long as one, like Hume, clings to the vulgar conception of time, one cannot even formulate the ontological problem of the extension (‘connectedness of life’) between birth and death in a way that is not indifferent to that birth and that death. “Dasein *is* its past and its future, *is* its birth and its death. But the *is* [*est*] here designates a Being that can *absolutely* not have the form of presence or phenomenality” (*QBH* 148). Such an *is* belongs only to manifestation and phenomenality.

Heidegger writes that the ontological meaning of temporality is grounded in the experience of resoluteness as well as authentic or inauthentic Being-towards-death. Such is Dasein’s futurity. But what about Dasein’s past—its historicity? Very early on, Heidegger writes that “Dasein’s Being finds its meaning in temporality. But temporality is also the condition which makes historicity possible as a temporal kind of Being which Dasein itself possesses, regardless of whether or how Dasein is an entity ‘in time’” (*BT* 41). Of course, what must be subjected to *Destruktion* first before we can understand such a claim is the ordinary conception of time found in Aristotle. Once the Aristotelian model of time has been subjected to critique, it is possible to look at historicity as a mode of temporality, “which explains in particular that this mode is modified, modalized according to the structures that are those of temporality itself, in

particular that the significations of authenticity and inauthenticity will be found again in it” (QBH 93). In other words, the question of historicity is a question of how Dasein can relate to such a historicity as such, and thus what the temporality of Dasein signifies.

Contrary to the Humean model, in which the past is merely the oblivion of past actors that have departed the stage, Dasein’s historicity is structured by the ontological fact that “in its factual Being, any Dasein is as it already was, and it is ‘what’ it already was” (BT 41). If this is true, it is not possible for Dasein to be historical in any sort of merely formal way (such as having some connection to a ‘past now’). Instead,

*Dasein* is intrinsically its past: the *ist* is intrinsically constituted by *Vergangenheit*, without which *Da-sein* would not be essentially historical. The past does not follow, that means that in every *Geschehen* that ‘historizes’ by projecting into the to-come—and there is history only through this exiting of the past, of ek-stasis toward the to-come—every *Geschehen* opening the future is already not followed but pre-ceded by the past that my being is. (QBH 97)

Derrida’s insertion of the dash between *Da* and *sein* in the first sentence after not using it moments before is not insignificant, because what is precisely at stake here in such an understanding of historicity is the *Da* of *Dasein*, as I argued in the previous chapter. In Heidegger’s omnipresent struggle with the separation of *Dasein* and *Vorhandenheit*, what must be understood is what exactly is meant in the ‘there’ of Dasein’s *being-there*. (Dasein’s *topos*, as Chernyakov and Luchte write.) Part one of the first division of *Being and Time* is devoted in part to developing the answer in terms of *In-der-Welt-sein*, and Heidegger grounds this kind of being

in ecstatic temporality. Temporality is at the heart of such an understanding of Dasein, so long as we do not think that Dasein's futurity nor history can be understood through something like being in time or *intratemporal*, which only describes beings that are present-at-hand.

More specifically, what Heidegger has in mind here is explicating the structure of which Dasein seems to be constant throughout its existence *as movement*: "the movement (*Bewegtheit*) of existence ... is definable in terms of the way Dasein stretches along. The specific movement in which Dasein *is stretched along and stretches itself along*, we call its 'historizing.' The question of Dasein's 'connectedness' is the ontological problem of Dasein's historizing" (*BT* 427). By engaging with such a movement of historizing, Heidegger's philosophy of time is engaging specifically with finitude. To engage with finitude, one must engage with both the heritage upon which one is thrown into (not simply 'in') as well as the possibilities of authentic resoluteness, which is itself grounded by a *futural anticipation* towards death. However, contra Hegel, there is no *falling into history*; rather "historicality is rooted in temporality" (*BT* 428). As I alluded to earlier, Dasein's historicity is *modalized* by an understanding of the structure of ecstatic temporality. Dasein does not *fall in and out of history* but instead oscillates between the structures of authentic and inauthentic historicity which itself is rooted in an authentic understanding of temporality itself (which of course itself is partnered with the *inauthentic* understanding of temporality).

## VII. Is *Destruktion* Successful?

The struggle of *Being and Time* is in large part to divest philosophy and ontology away

from the privileging of the presence of the present. For the reasons that I have argued above, Heidegger makes clear that the structure of *Vorhandenheit* is precisely what we take our ontological clues from, and that the history of philosophy has made its moves exclusively within the domain of this structure. Additionally, such a trajectory has been confirmed by and has found its roots in the Aristotelian conception of time as having the essence of the now that grounds Being. But as I noted above, Heidegger himself translates Aristotle's definition of time in an ontological way: "this is time: that which is counted in the movement which we encounter within the horizon of the earlier and later" (*BT* 473). Heidegger's structure of ecstatic time in the past, present, and future is not a counting (because it grounds such counting) but operates within these three horizons. Certainly, we have taken some distance from the metaphysics of presence within Heidegger's project of *Destruktion*. But how much distance is required for an 'overcoming' of such metaphysics? Heidegger's anti-teleological conception of history and temporality has its ground not in the historical linkage within a succession of time, but instead "in the linking, *Verkettung*, of subject and object" (*QBH* 207). But such a movement within history that produces and is produced in the historicity of *In-der-Welt-sein* requires "systematically destroying classical ontology and ... thinking historicity in the open horizon of the question of being" (*QBH* 211). Have we completed such a project?

Derrida's answer is no. But we have taken a "decisive step beyond or within metaphysics." Heidegger himself notes that the *Destruktion* of the history of philosophy and inquiry into the meaning of Being is fundamentally enigmatic: "the obscurities are all the harder to dispel when we have not disentangled the possible dimensions of the appropriate inquiry, and

when everything is haunted by the *enigma* of *Being*, and, as has now been made plain, by that of motion” (BT 444). These two enigmas likewise plague Aristotle’s *Physics*. Aristotle himself notes that Zeno’s paradox does not clarify anything with regards to the nature of movement, but then simply “repeats its *aporia* without deconstructing it” (“OG” 50). Such a thought of movement outside of the ordinary conception of time is one half of the task of *Destruktion* in *Being and Time*—yet it remains incomplete. However, the final sections of *Being and Time* that take on such an *aporia* head-on leave us with some of the most important clues of Heidegger’s struggle with fundamental ontology—the “quiet force of the possible” and “auto-transmission” (*Sichüberlieferung*)—even if these sections do completely “run out of breath” (HQB 153). But the question of the “overcoming of metaphysics” must be addressed as such for not only an understanding of Heidegger’s work, but Derrida’s as well.

On one of the last pages of *Being and Time*, Heidegger remarks on the relationship of the ordinary concept of time (as a succession of “nows”) to the concept of historicity:

The ordinary way of characterizing time as an endless, irreversible sequence of “nows” which passes away, arises from the temporary of falling Dasein. *The ordinary representation of time has its natural justification*. It belongs to Dasein’s average kind of Being, and to that understanding of Being which proximally prevails. Thus proximally and for the most part, even *history* gets understood *publicly* as happening *within-time*. This interpretation of time loses its exclusive and pre-eminent justification only if it claims to convey the ‘true’ conception of time and to be able to prescribe the sole possible horizon within which time is to



be Interpreted. (BT 478)

Heidegger here argues that inauthentic historicity is grounded in a certain structure of the history of Dasein. So much so seems to be fully in line with the existential analytic that we have been working with so far. The last sentence, however, seems to argue that the inauthentic conception of historicity is *not incorrect*, but merely loses its “pre-eminent justification” *so long as it claims to be the only conception of time*. What is Heidegger saying about the inauthentic or ordinary interpretation of temporality? The answer to this question lies within the structure of authenticity itself. We read earlier in *Being and Time* that “the inauthenticity of Dasein does not signify any 'less' Being or any 'lower' degree of Being. Rather it is the case that even in its fullest concretion Dasein can be characterized by inauthenticity. ... Dasein’s average everydayness, here is not to be taken as a mere aspect” (BT 68-69) but instead is grounded in *Jemeinigkeit* just as primordially as authenticity. As I have argued so far, the inauthentic or ordinary concept of time finds its origin in the structure of Dasein, as that which takes its ontological clues from what is present around it in the present. What does this say about the legitimacy of the metaphysical claims that have sprung out of the ordinary concept of time? Derrida answers that “the inauthentic understanding of its being does not befall Dasein like an accident; it is a possibility and even an essential necessity inscribed in the very heart of its being” (QBH 116). Does that preclude the possibility that we cannot merely overturn such understandings in favor of a more authentic or primordial understanding of Being or temporality? To this Derrida answers “that metaphysics, which is essentially substantialist ... is not a fault or a sin of which one should rid oneself, of which one could purify oneself by ‘overcoming’ metaphysics. Metaphysics, like

inauthenticity, cannot be overcome” (*QBH* 117). Clearly we have not here overturned metaphysics in its entirety—just taken a step beyond or within it—but Derrida is clear here that metaphysics is not like a sin of which one *should* rid oneself. Why does Derrida use such ethical language here? What obligation do we have to the history of philosophy, which has potentially led us astray so many times in light of the existential analytic?

To answer this question, we must keep in mind that we must be faithful to the project of *Destruktion* itself. What is, after, all *Destruktion*? We can be certain that it does mean “neither annihilation or demolition, nor critique, nor refutation of an error” (*QBH* 18). Why is this so? Simply because *Destruktion* itself must remain within the constraints of the existential analytic that has been set out in *Being and Time*. We cannot forget that Dasein “*is* its past, whether explicitly or not” (*BT* 41). After all, has it not been clearly shown that a desire to cast off a past would be precisely the kind of understanding of history that would be characterized as *inauthentic*? Any thinking of *Destruktion* that is a casting off is *in and of itself ahistorical*. “Dasein has grown up both *into* and in a traditional way of interpreting itself: in terms of this it understands itself proximally and, within a certain range, constantly. By this understanding, the possibilities of its being are disclosed and regulated” (*BT* 41). Just as Dasein grows up into a certain set of contexts and historical situations, so does philosophy. Such a grounding in the history of philosophy is also what explicitly grounds the possibilities of philosophy. Dasein’s “own past—and this always means the past of its ‘generation’—is not something which *follows along after* Dasein, but something which already goes ahead of it” (*ibid.*). In other words, the possibility of “overcoming metaphysics” takes the double structure of the *could not/should not*—

at least in the span of one work. If we were to indulge ourselves in the delusion of a singular gesture that usurps the entire canon of philosophy, we would be indulging in a fantasy that has no basis in an authentic understanding of historicity itself.

Such, then, is the importance of the concept of *repetition*, which Heidegger peppers into the last sections of the ontological investigation of ecstatic temporality. He notes in these sections that resoluteness grounded in authentic being-towards-death “which comes back to itself and hands itself down, then becomes [!] the *repetition* of a possibility of existence that has come down to us” (BT 437). Of course, this is not any kind of deterministic repetition, but a repetition that follows the structure that Heidegger calls *Sichüberlieferung*, which Derrida translates as “*auto-transmission*” (QBH 184). Such auto-affection is the opening for the possibility (and yes, just that) of authenticity itself, which is grounded *precisely and explicitly* in the auto-affection of time that I explored earlier in this essay (“Time is what affects this nucleus, affecting it with nothing”). Heidegger describes the process of *Sichüberlieferung* here:

*“Only an entity which, in its Being, is essentially **futural** so that it is free for its death and can let itself be thrown back upon its factual “there” by shattering itself against death—that is to say, only an entity which, as futural, is equiprimordially in the process of **having-been**, can, by handing down to itself (sich selbst überliefernd) the possibility it has inherited, take over its own thrownness and be **in the moment of vision** for ‘its time’. Only authentic temporality which is at the same time finite, makes possible something like fate—that is to say, authentic historicity (BT 437, all emphases in the original [?]).*

Derrida describes the process of *auto-transmission* as “this exiting from the self that rebounds onto self and holds itself in the exit from self, gives itself and transmits itself so as to keep it, its own ecstatic movement, in itself ... taking rigorously into account the fact that the absolute form of this movement ... is not the present of the now” (ibid.). These passages here require careful study, but beautifully capture the kind of authenticity that Heidegger is attempting to ground *in* the authentic understanding of ecstatic temporality *as* a step beyond (or still yet) *within* the metaphysics of the present—and it is “the only concept that is truly original and proper to a thematic of history,” (*QBH* 206) but is still a concept that is yet to be understood in its entirety. Even as such a concept of historicity is grounded in authentic temporality, that also means that such an understanding is consistently engaged in a polemic with the inauthentic understanding in such a way that they both require each other in order for a true *movement* of understanding within history. But it is precisely within this movement of possibilities of repetition, the more that the question of Being is understood not as the presence of the present or as *Vorhandenheit*, the greater chance that “historiography will disclose the quiet force of the possible with greater penetration” (*BT* 446). Such a quiet force of the possible is explicitly the link between Being and truth, which is only possible once philosophy asks the question of “the tie between truth and presence that must be thought, in a thought that henceforth may no longer need to be either *true* or *present*” (“OG” 38).

## VIII. Conclusion

I have argued here that Heidegger’s *Destruktion* of the history of ontology is rooted in a

critique of the metaphysics of presence, and that such a metaphysics is rooted in an ontology that gets its ontological clues from the schema of *Vorhandenheit*. If indeed such a schema is to be examined critically, any critique must begin with a thorough-going investigation of the concept of temporality. Such an investigation highlights that the concepts of temporality begins with Aristotle's conception of time, which places the essence of time as the "now", thereby determining what has being as what has presence. Despite recent philosophy's entanglement with the attempt to think of human being in ways *not* given by this tradition, it is still inexorably caught inside of them. Hume's theory of subjectivity cuts at the heart of the substratum of the individual but is caught within the modern conception of time; Husserlian phenomenality is likewise only possible through the presence of the givenness of the intentional object. Likewise, I've shown that Heidegger's fundamental struggle in *Being and Time* is the attempt to distance ontology away from a thinking of the presence through a rethinking of Being as temporal, and a rethinking of temporality as tripartite (past, present, and future) and ecstatic. Ultimately, I believe that the early Heidegger's attempt to break through some of the fundamental limitations of philosophy is successful, so long as what success means is defined clearly. The success of *Being and Time* is not within its ability to destroy philosophy, but to shake it. What does it mean to "shake" philosophy? Heidegger is not after refutation, but "to bring out the thinking of being that is hiding under the ontic sedimentations" (*QBH* 18), and what Heidegger "shakes" in his solicitation is the "privilege of the Present is the self-evidence, the assurance, the most total and most irreducible ground of the totality of metaphysics itself; it is philosophy itself" (*QBH* 138).

Although Heidegger does, only a year later in *Basic Problems*, walk back a number of

claims made in *Being and Time*, Heidegger's primary success is in proving one of *Being and Time*'s most fundamental claims: that death is unsurpassable. By showing the ontological importance of death, Heidegger effectively shook philosophy enough to at least put on display that the inability to think beyond the modalities of presence had crippled philosophy's ability to ground the questions of life and death, finitude and natality. Although Heidegger did not return to the question of ecstatic temporality after the 1920s until *On Time and Being* in 1963 (which does not resolve, for example, the issue of the reconciliation between the third and fourth thesis), ecstatic temporality remains one of Heidegger's most intriguing and novel projects and remains one of the only (if not *the* only) alternative to an Aristotelian theory of temporality.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, what I have shown in this thesis is that Heidegger's project of "fundamental ontology" of the 1920s rested on his theory of ecstatic temporality. In chapter one, I argued that the structure of care is ontologically ungrounded if it does not rest upon a thinking of temporality that breaks out of the confines of a thinking of being as only possible within the presence of the present. Rather, Dasein's engagement with the world has a tripartite temporal structure that enables Dasein to be in a world that is given to it as meaningful. And such meaningfulness, I argued, is only possible given Dasein's relationship to the three ecstases of temporality: to care is to be temporal. To explore this, I briefly looked at why death is "unsurpassable" in Heidegger's philosophy: by being the boundary that Dasein may not pass beyond, death becomes the backstop that Dasein returns to itself against. When Dasein projects its understanding out to the future, it brings back with it an understanding that, in the face of death, passive indifference is no longer an option. Dasein's life is its own to shape and mold, and this realization is only possible if Dasein understands in an authentic way that its life will come to an end. Ultimately, I argue that for this to be possible, Heidegger is correct in writing that such a relationship to death is not possible given the "ordinary" conception of time, in which death is merely just some event that will occur in the future. This kind of relationship to death belongs to beings that are not Dasein, beings which are merely "in time." Rather, Dasein's relationship to death means that Dasein cannot be a being that is merely in time, but that "the existential-ontological constitution of Dasein's totality is grounded in temporality [*Zeitlichkeit*]" (BT 488).

And, as I showed above, the meaning of this totality is given in care, which is itself grounded on the phenomenal characteristics of ecstatic temporality [*zu...*, *auf...*, *bei...*].

To explore these phenomenal characteristics, I looked at David Farrell Krell's four theses of ecstatic temporality, which provided a firm foundation to discuss Heidegger's ontology of temporality. The first thesis dealt primarily with the temporalization of temporality and its relationship to care, which I have briefly summarized in the paragraph above. The second thesis argued that time is originally ecstatic. Such a claim, I argued, is the first explicit attack on the ontology of the metaphysics of presence, since it undercuts Aristotle's fundamental claim that it is only the present "now" which enjoys actual being, and that the past and future are characterized by non-being. Rather, Heidegger's temporality states that temporality is the original *ekstatikon*, or that which is constantly stepping outside itself. In order to challenge the ontological privilege accorded to the 'now,' Heidegger strips the present of its ontological priority and argues that each of the ecstases of temporality are equiprimordial and temporalize themselves completely. As such, each ecstasis is required for a proper understanding of temporality and cannot be collapsed into the other. Next, I looked at the third and fourth theses, which are deeply related to one another. In these theses, Heidegger argues that temporality temporalizes originally out of the future, and that temporality is finite. In order to justify these claims, I circled back to Heidegger's discussion of death, which pointed to the fact that the futural ecstasis has the structure of "closing-down" as well as opening up. Given that finitude and death are unsurpassable (both in the sense that they cannot be overcome as well as that they make possible the totality of care), Heidegger writes that it temporality originates only out of the



futural ecstasis. Consequently, because of this structure of closing-down, temporality itself must be finite as well.

Branching off of this discussion, I discussed the shift in Heidegger's thinking in the one year between the publication of *Being and Time* and *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, noting that Heidegger abandons the third thesis of ecstatic temporality in order to account for the permanently held open horizon of *Praesenz*. However, I argue that such a shift jeopardizes the fourth thesis since Heidegger no longer looks towards the closing off structure of the futural ecstasis, which is potentially reflected in his unwillingness to justify the fourth thesis in *Basic Problems*.

After giving an account of the ontology of ecstatic temporality in the first chapter, I moved to the second chapter, which sought to give an account for the philosophical importance of ecstatic temporality, basing this reading largely off of a Derridean reading found in his 1964-65 lecture series on *Being and Time*. First, this chapter entered a new phrase into this paper's lexicon, the "metaphysics of presence," which refers to how philosophy has constructed ontology and metaphysics out of the "ordinary" concept of time (canonized by book Δ of Aristotle's *Physics*), which can only think of temporality in terms of the presence (or absence) of what is present in the given moment. One must not forget that Aristotle's intention for the *Physics* was to justify motion. Although Aristotle certainly did not invent the ordinary conception of time, it is his account that canonized its justification and ontology. But how could philosophy have built a proper ontology out of a temporality that is concerned with little other than bodies in motion? Such a question here, of ontology's development *out of* temporality, is only possible after

Heidegger's *Destruktion* in *Being and Time*. Thus, the second chapter looked at the project of *Destruktion* and its principal target: the schema of *Vorhandenheit*. I argued that philosophy has constructed its ontology by looking at the beings around it and moving out from there. This means that philosophy, historically speaking, constructs ontology out of beings that are not Dasein, and thus are *intemporal* [*innerzeitig*]. Such a building out represents a significant blockade to a properly grounded ontology, which Heidegger attempts to work around in the 1920s through a sustained solicitation of the foundations of the history of philosophy. In this chapter, I argued that ecstatic temporality is not only significant because it is a new theory of temporality, but because such a theory recognizes that "ordinary" time cannot adequately account for Dasein's being, which is temporally ecstatic. Rather, one of Heidegger's primary goals in *Being and Time* is to sufficiently ground the phenomena of finitude, which means both natality (and thus *history*) as well as death.

In examining such a question, I took one historical example of how philosophy attempt to break out of the confines of a thinking of identity and *Vorhandenheit* by looking at David Hume's *A Treatise of Human Nature*. In my examination, I argued that while Hume recognizes that metaphysics has constructed the self out of the impressions given to us by *Vorhandene*, Hume is unable to properly break out of this metaphysics in his critique. In his "actors on the stage" metaphor, he merely (perhaps ironically) reiterates the temporality of *Vorhandene* by relying on an ontology of time which gives being only to the present moment. By doing so, Hume's critique collapses back into itself. But the purpose of this section is to show how philosophy is unable to break outside of the metaphysics of presence so long as it does not first

start out from a renewed thinking of ontology. If it does not do this, it cannot sufficiently critique the structure of such metaphysics, and only critiques the individual instantiations of the metaphysics of presence.

Lastly, I looked at the question of whether or not Heidegger's project of *Destruktion* was indeed successful. I argue that the answer to this question must be determined by the question that is being asked. If the question being asked is whether or not Heidegger completely exited the history of philosophy and the metaphysics of presence, then the answer is most definitively "no." It is undoubtable that Heidegger himself would have rejected that possibility, as he wrote several times in *Being and Time* that there is something unsurpassable itself about the metaphysics of presence. Philosophy completely bereft of the metaphysics of presence would be ahistorical, and thus illegible. Rather, the question I ask is whether or not the project of *Destruktion* is successful in its attempt to shake or solicit the primacy of the metaphysics of presence, and I argue that *Being and Time* is indeed successful in this attempt. At the very least, Heidegger successfully argued that finitude is philosophically unsurpassable: one must grapple with finitude if one is going to do philosophy. The legacy of post-Heideggerian thinkers who confirmed this is too long to list here. But nonetheless, Heidegger's writings on finitude are based entirely on a rethinking of temporality outside of the limits of the vulgar conception of temporality and the privilege of the presence of the present that it brings with it. As such, I conclude by saying that Heidegger's greatest success in the early period is in showing that philosophy has been unable to discover the connection between ontology and temporality. By focusing on this connection, Heidegger changed the trajectory of philosophy in the 1920s by first showing what philosophy was hitherto

unable to think and *why* (namely, the problem of human finitude) and then by grounding an attempt towards the meaning of being on an ontology that itself is grounded on ecstatic temporality. Ultimately, *Being and Time* represents the first sustained dialogue with the connection between temporality and ontology since Aristotle that does not merely repeat Aristotle's own ontology, something that had not been accomplished in the two millennia since the *Physics*.