

Cover Design
IVE Press



5706 Sargent Road
Chillum, MD 20782-2321

© IVE Press, Chillum
All rights reserved

Ph. (301) 853 2789
Fax (301) 559 1713

ISSN 2150-9824

Printed in the United States of America

MANUSCRIPTS

Manuscripts should be submitted in two letter–perfect copies (with double–spaced endnotes) to Rev. Nathaniel Dreyer, IVE Press, The Incarnate Word, 5706 Sargent Rd., Chillum, MD 20782–2321, USA. [Speed–mail delivery requires a street address and telephone number. For that service, add Ph. 301–773–3635]. E–mail: ivepress@ive.org
Important: When submitting an article, the author should certify that it is not being submitted simultaneously to another journal. Guidelines on manuscript formatting are available on request, or on our website: www.theincarnateword.org.

BOOK REVIEWS

Book reviews should be sent to Rev. Nathaniel Dreyer, IVE Press, The Incarnate Word, 5706 Sargent Rd., Chillum, MD 20782–2321, USA. [Speed–mail delivery requires a street address and telephone number. For that service, add Ph. 301–773–3635]. E–mail: ivepress@ive.org
Guidelines on manuscript formatting are available on request from the editor or on our website: www.theincarnateword.org.

TIW Vol. 4 | No. 1

THE “CRUCIAL STEP”: A CRITIQUE TO
HEIDEGGER’S POINT OF DEPARTURE AND AN
ALTERNATIVE NOTION OF INTENTIONALITY

Andrés Ayala, IVE
St. Michael’s College, University of Toronto, Toronto

IN *BEING AND TIME*, Heidegger is trying to elaborate a fundamental ontology, and for this reason he addresses the conditions that make it possible.¹ It is not possible to work out the question of being if something like an understanding of being is not available. In other words, we need to know what we are looking for. For Heidegger, because Dasein is already in the world taking care of things, something like an understanding of being is possible.

My concern with Heidegger is not the project but the presuppositions. For him, being is being of consciousness and is understood not as formal or objective, but as pure relation. Therefore, our purpose in this paper is to work out a critique to the point of departure of his doctrine, focusing on the theory of knowledge and intentionality that lies behind it, and trying to offer an alternative to it.

Therefore, in the first section we will describe Heidegger's doctrine in *Being and Time*, so that it may be clearly seen that the bases of the doctrine are the reduction of being to being of consciousness and a particular notion of being as "pure" relation. The second section will show Heidegger's concern for intentionality in his project. The third point is a critique of what we call (at suggestion of Prof. Zuidervaart) the "crucial step" in Heidegger, which is basically to transform the being of the question into being of consciousness. Finally, more to complete our critique than to build up a doctrine, the main lines of a Thomistic theory of intentionality and knowledge will be set up.

This paper owes its final form to the comments and corrections of Prof. Lambert Zuidervaart, at the University of Toronto, to whom I am most thankful. They helped me to precise my own statements and to avoid some errors in the interpretations of the Authors. I did not mind to let the dialogue come through sometimes, and perhaps many times, since the

¹ Cf. Taylor Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic: Interpretation, Discourse, and Authenticity in Being and Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 4 and passim.

accurateness of his observations obliged me to an acknowledgement.

We will quote *Being and Time* (BT) from the English translation used (see bibliography), followed by the pagination of *Sein und Zeit* in brackets. All the other sources will be first quoted in full and then abbreviated, the different works or courses of one author with a key word of the title. I need to make particular mention of the courses of Fr. Michael Tavuzzi, OP, which I had the opportunity to attend when doing my Licentia at the Pontifical University “San Tommaso D’Aquino in Urbe” (2003-2006). Many ideas in this paper come from those courses, but on the other hand I don’t have any other source but my own notes. I will refer to them, however, quoting “Cf. Tavuzzi” and the required information.

I. THE DOCTRINE OF *BEING AND TIME*

In unfolding the doctrine of *Being and Time*, I will avoid the Heideggerian vocabulary, in order to manifest clearly my interpretation of his thinking. The exception will be the term Dasein, in order not to make my description uncomfortable to Heidegger scholars by using the word “subject.” I must say that although Dasein is not a subject in the classic sense of a substance separated from other beings (essentially of the same kind) which in turn relates accidentally to objects by means of knowledge,² Dasein is still a subject, in the sense of “the one who knows”, and in the modern sense of the (active) principle of being (of consciousness). However, Dasein is not a subject that is something before it relates to the object, but its being is the

² Cf. BT 300 (313-314), 307 (321), 336 (352) and 414 (436-437); Dreyfus, 50-51. I think Heidegger rejects the division subject-object mainly because, once separated, we fall in the problem of how it is possible for the subject to “reach out” to the object.

very relation to the object, its very activity, its position of itself out of itself, its ex-sistence.³

Heidegger in *Being and Time* proposes an ontology, a first philosophy, in a system very similar to Kant. Being is reduced to being of consciousness,⁴ not formal though, but as pure relation. Dasein is pure relation or pure position of itself out of itself.⁵ Beings unlike Dasein (objects) are determined in their being by their relation to each other and of all to Dasein.⁶

The idea of Dasein as pure position of itself may sound similar to Hegel, and indeed it is.⁷ In Hegel, however, the

³ Cf. BT 314 (328-329), 129 (133) (note about Dasein as "Ek-sistence"); Dahlstrom, xxiv. I think it is important to underline Dasein as an infinitive rather than as a noun, in order to preserve its meaning from that of "objective presence" or "subject" in the sense of a substance.

⁴ Cf. BT 199-200 (207-208). We will consider this in the third section of this paper.

⁵ Prof. Zuidervaart worries that in this paper we equate Dasein with human consciousness. I think that his worry comes from an understanding of the word "consciousness" in the sense Heidegger wants to reject, as an objective presence. If it is so, I may need to clarify that for me "consciousness" means just the "subjective side" of knowledge, and what I discuss is not directly the concept of Dasein but the priority of Dasein in the determination of the meaning of being. My recognition of an irreducible duality in the phenomenon of knowledge is not a recognition of two "objective presences" in a certain kind of (physical?) relationship, but the recognition of an intentional relationship to the other (object) on behalf of a subject (knower). The being of the subject is of a different kind. A subject, or a human consciousness, is a being capable of relating to other beings as objects. It is also for me a "disclosedness," with the differences I will later propose. Therefore, I am not simply defending the distinction subject-object, but the priority of the object in the determination of the meaning of being. How another subject or oneself becomes "object" (thrown-in-front-of) would be a further topic to consider, but I think this is more fundamental.

⁶ Cf. BT 145-146 (150-151), 152-153 (158), 164 (170), 284-285 (297); Dreyfus, 98.

⁷ Cornelio Fabro, *Partecipazione e Causalità secondo S. Tommaso D'Aquino*, 2nd. ed (Torino: Società Editrice Internazionale, 1961), 65. In an earlier work (*Introduzione all'Esistenzialismo*, pp. 16 and 55, see Bibliography), Fabro

development of the universal subject is worked out by means of a logical dialectic of negations, by a formal process.⁸ In Heidegger there is neither such a formal dialectic, nor any universal subject. We may say that the idea of being is Hegelian in inspiration, but the system itself has more similarities with Kant.

In Kant the phenomenon is independent of the subject, and lacking of form. In Heidegger, beings are independent of Dasein, but in themselves lacking of being. The subject gives objectivity to the phenomenon in Kant, by means of categories. Dasein gives “sense” to beings, and no being (*Seiende*) has being (*Sein*) if it is not in relation to Dasein. The most important difference with Kant is perhaps that the subject does not give to the object its essence or form, but its being, that is to say, its being for Dasein. However, in the same way that the essence of Dasein (its proper characteristic as a being) is its existence⁹ (its being out of itself by being in the world), the essence of beings unlike Dasein is also reduced to a kind of being for Dasein.¹⁰ Each thing is what it means for Dasein.¹¹

considered Heidegger as a reaction to idealism and was hoping that it could promote a return to a more realistic approach in philosophy. Carman (cf. 4) seems to suggest also a realistic understanding of Heidegger. In my view, realism is much more than accepting that there are entities independent of Dasein. In Heidegger, the meaning of everything is founded in Dasein, and being belongs *fundamentally* to it. For the rather positive approach of Heidegger towards idealism in general, cf. BT 199-200 (207-208).

⁸ Cf. BT 411 (433-434).

⁹ Cf. BT 41 (42).

¹⁰ This is the reason in my view for Heidegger’s doctrine about “tools.” It is a phenomenon taken by Heidegger (because of its clarity) as an analogy of what happens indeed with every being. In tools, the relationship with Dasein is more evident.

¹¹ Cf. Hubert L Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time, Division I* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 98-99.

There is in my view an equivalence between sense and the being of beings unlike Dasein.¹² Dasein gives being to beings. But it is not as easy as to say that a particular Dasein arbitrarily gives meaning to any entity.¹³ This is not what Heidegger means. Dasein is already in the world, that is to say, it already belongs to a system of relations in the particular mode of existence. "Being-in-the-world" means that Dasein depends on the world for its existence (it is out of itself in the particular possibilities offered to it by the world) and the world "belongs" to Dasein, in the sense that the system of relations is wholly oriented to Dasein as its final end, its key, or its "for-the-sake-of-which." There is no Dasein without world,¹⁴ and there is no world without Dasein.¹⁵ There is no Dasein without world, because Dasein exists insofar as it is thrown (out of itself) in its possibilities. There is no world without Dasein, because nothing has a sense, nothing belongs to the world, if it does not relate in some way to Dasein.

Thus, the world is a system of relations pre-given to Dasein, but in which Dasein plays the key role.¹⁶ The proof that it is pre-given is that Dasein does not need to know anew what to do with entities encountered in the world.¹⁷ This world works as the

¹² Cf. Daniel O. Dahlstrom, *Heidegger's Concept of Truth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 54-64, 116.

¹³ Cf. BT 103-104 (106).

¹⁴ Cf. BT 113 (116).

¹⁵ Cf. BT 348 (365-366); Cornelio Fabro, *Introduzione all'Esistenzialismo*, Opere Complete, vol 7 (Segni: EDIVI, 2009), 64.

¹⁶ Cf. BT 119-125 (123-129), 163 (169), 185 (192), 347-348 (364-366); Dreyfus, 96-99, 201; Carman, 133-134, 153.

¹⁷ This true phenomenon is explained in realism by the doctrine of schematism. Basically, the fact that we do not explicitly focus in some of the things we do every day, depends on the development of sensitive schemas (caused by experience) that allow the subject to conduct his regular activities without starting always anew. But still the origin of this behavior is explicit knowledge. We cannot cover this issue here, but it has been extensively studied by Fabro (cf. especially *Percezione e Pensiero* [Brescia: Morcelliana,

pre-understanding of being that allows Dasein to interpret (to know explicitly) things encountered. It is because of this pre-understanding that Dasein can use beings like tools in its daily life. It is however not enough to consider that the meaning of beings is pre-given to Dasein because Dasein is already in the world. Rather, because nothing has any meaning if not in relation to Dasein, and because there is no relation to Dasein without Dasein being there, it appears that the meaning of beings depends on Dasein “being there”, on its existence in the world. This is the importance of practice, of practical dealings. Factual “taking care” of things “lets things be themselves”, or in other words, the being of beings depends on their relation to Dasein, as if they “received” being by Dasein using them or taking care of them in some way.¹⁸ In this way, the meaning is in a certain way pre-given, insofar as Dasein “finds itself already [thrown] in the world”, but not to the point of making the meaning independent of Dasein’s practical dealings. Dasein is what it does,¹⁹ and things are what Dasein makes of them. The problem of culture and environment finds its place here. If Dasein does not make anything with a being, that being *is* not, does not have any sense, because sense and meaning²⁰ are found only in Dasein, and Dasein has nothing to do (has no relation) with a being that is not taken care of. Explicit understanding (in the sense of “staring at”) is just one more way, the weakest, of taking care. This is in my view the reason of the priority of practice over

1962], 243-299). The difference of explanation, however, depends on the point of departure, which will be my focus in this research.

¹⁸ Cf. Dreyfus, 206; BT 220 (229-230), 336-337 (352-354). This may be the meaning of understanding as projecting: understanding is not the reception of a given (*data*), but the activity of the subject that gives meaning and being to entities encountered. Cf. BT 98 (100), 140-141 (145).

¹⁹ Cf. BT 116 (119), 122 (126): “In what is taken care of in the surrounding world, others are encountered as what they are; they *are* what they do.” The notion of “care” as the being of Dasein also suggests the same idea. Cf. 184 (191).

²⁰ Although I am aware of the different use of “sense” and “meaning” for some philosophers, my intention is to use these terms in their colloquial meaning, as in “it doesn’t make sense” or “it does not mean anything to me.”

theory for Heidegger: it is not simply to say that we do before we know, but to say that the position of the subject, the activity of consciousness, is the ground of the meaning of anything in the world. Dasein gives meaning and being because being is being of consciousness, being for a subject. We will come back to this point later, and when treating intentionality.

Therefore, Heidegger in *Being and Time* is not proposing an idealistic system in which entities are produced by the subject, or in which entities are the ideas of a subject. But Heidegger is neither realistic, because the being of beings is determined by Dasein. It is a subjectivistic system, because being is reduced to being of consciousness, and Dasein as a being-subject is the starting point of knowledge and reality, which are all the same thing. In other words, when being is not something received by consciousness, it must be something "put out" by consciousness; and because consciousness is nothing else than itself, the only thing consciousness can put out of itself is itself. It is the principle of the activity of consciousness, which in Heidegger takes the shape of the "ex-sistence" of Dasein.

I think this explanation of his doctrine makes sense of many other of its features. For example, the idea of being as pure relation or pure position of itself, as a pure *esse ad* (being towards), is the explanation of the fact that Dasein is "thrown" (coming from no-thing and without reason) and "being towards death" (towards no-being and without purpose). Being as the activity of a subject explains these features, in the sense that there is no being before this activity, and there is no being other than this activity that could function as a purpose. Being is reduced and exhausted in this activity of the subject. Being is never quiet, is always actively positing and losing itself in the instant. It also explains the idea of repetition, in the sense that being is not considered as something static objectively present, as formal, but something always new. It may also explain the idea of being as time, because time is something ever flowing, present and finite, like the being of Dasein, like the position of itself of the finite subject. The notions of being as existence and understanding as project may also be related to this idea.

II. HEIDEGGER'S CONCERN FOR INTENTIONALITY

The scholars agree that Heidegger is interested in giving a correct account of intentionality.²¹ Heidegger refuses the classic approach to this question, one that betrays the very meaning of intentionality, and rightly so. Although it is proclaimed that the subject is not a “cabinet”, and that the relationship between subject and object is not a “spatial” one,²² the nature of the relationship itself is not questioned, and finally intentionality itself is treated as a relationship between two “objective presences,” between two things originally separated. But how can one relate to each other two things that are originally separated? What is the ground or the field in which something like a relationship could be established?²³ No answer is given to this, and so the whole problem of intentionality remains properly speaking not discussed. Moreover, intentionality is treated as a property of mental states, and as a result the proclaimed relationship with reality is lost. Heidegger tries to rescue object and subject from this separation, by talking about Dasein as “being in the world” and his essence as this very “being in,” this “existence” towards the world. Thus, Dasein does not need to “go out” in knowledge, because it is already “in.” The phenomenological confirmation of this “being in” would be the fact that Dasein is always familiar with its world, and “already” knows how to deal with it.²⁴

Although the claim is justified, at least against a classic and common account of intentionality, the answer to the real problem is articulated within a questionable subjectivistic approach, that will be discussed later. To say it briefly, the distinction of the two poles within the cognitive fact, subject and object, does not require a “real” or “spatial” separation, nor a

²¹ Cf. Dreyfus, 48-50; Dahlstrom, 116-130; Carman, 101-104; Fabro, *Esistenzialismo*, 55-56.

²² Cf. BT 60 (60).

²³ Cf. Dahlstrom, 108-116.

²⁴ Cf. BT 54-55 (54).

dissolution of the elements, but the recognition of the irreducible duality between object and subject as phenomenologically primordial.

III. CRITIQUE OF HEIDEGGER

The value of every doctrine resides in the principles, because it is from them that each aspect of the doctrine receives its proper meaning. My critique of Heidegger is intended to go to the principles, and actually to the very beginning of his project. Prof. Zuidervaart draws attention to what he calls a “crucial step”²⁵ in Heidegger’s *Being and Time*. It is the moment in which the question of being becomes the question of the being [that is] questioned,²⁶ or the being of consciousness. In the words of Heidegger (bold text mine, emphasis always of Heidegger):

In which being is the meaning of being to be found? [...] If the question of being is to be explicitly formulated and brought to complete clarity concerning itself, then the elaboration of this question requires, [...] explication of the ways of regarding being, of understanding and conceptually grasping its meaning [...] Regarding, understanding and grasping, choosing, and gaining access to, are constitutive attitudes of inquiry and are thus themselves modes of being of a particular being, of the being we inquirers ourselves in each case are [...] The explicit and lucid formulation of the

²⁵ Lambert Zuidervaart, *Notes on Martin Heidegger’s Being and Time: Introduction*, Lecture’s hand-out (Toronto, Winter 2013), 2.

²⁶ The expression “being [that is] questioned,” does not mean “Dasein” or a particular being but rather “being insofar as it is questioned.” We understand that Heidegger is looking for the meaning of being (*Sein*), and not for the meaning of a particular being.

question of the meaning of being requires a prior suitable explication of a being (Dasein) with regard to its being.²⁷

This guiding look at being grows out of the average **understanding of being** *in which we are always already involved and which ultimately belongs to the essential constitution of Dasein itself.* [...] [T]here is a notable ‘relatedness backward or forward’ of what is asked about (being) [Sein] to asking as a mode of being of a being. The way what is questioned essentially engages our questioning belongs to the innermost meaning of the question of being.²⁸

It is clear, in Heidegger’s view, that the question of being can only be worked out through the understanding of being that belongs to Dasein. In other words, what other access do we have to being if not through our own understanding? But, is it not just an expression of the principle of immanence?²⁹ No doubt about it, and in a note Heidegger will point out that Dasein is the place where being is to be found. The being we are dealing with is the being of consciousness:³⁰

Again as above (H 6-7), an essential simplification and yet correctly thought. Dasein is not an instance of being for the representational abstraction of being; rather, it is the site of the understanding of being.³¹

²⁷ BT 6-7 (7).

²⁸ BT 7 (8).

²⁹ We call principle of immanence the philosophical position according to which, in the most general sense, being or the object of knowledge “remains within” consciousness, that is to say, being is being thought or being of consciousness, in the sense of “determined by thinking.” Cf. Roger Verneaux, *Epistemologia generale* (Brescia: Paideia, 1967), p.74.

³⁰ Cf. Fabro, *Esistenzialismo*, 57.

³¹ BT 8 (9).

Heidegger will come back to this fundamental position of the problem in three other places, in which he offers a summary of his position, that is to say, the reduction of being to the being of consciousness. In the first text, however, it is clear that although being depends on understanding, understanding does not produce beings:

Beings are independently of the experience, cognition, and comprehension through which they are disclosed, discovered, and determined. But being 'is' only in the understanding* of that being to whose being something like an understanding of being belongs.³²

The second text will clearly affirm the primacy of Dasein in order to work out the question of being, a question (this primacy) left open at the beginning.³³

The question of the meaning of being is possible at all only if something like an understanding of being is. An understanding of being belongs to the kind of being of that being which we call Dasein. The more appropriately and primordially we have succeeded in explicating this being, the surer we are to attain our goal in the further course of working out the problem of fundamental ontology.³⁴

Probably the clearest text in order to see the passage from being to being of consciousness is the following:

All our efforts in the existential analytic are geared to the one goal of finding a possibility of answering the question of the meaning of being in general. The development of this

³² BT 178 (183)

³³ Cf. BT 8 (8)

³⁴ BT 193 (200)

question requires a delineation of the phenomenon in which something like being itself becomes accessible – the phenomenon of the understanding of being. But this phenomenon belongs to the constitution of being of Dasein.³⁵

As we can see, the focus on being becomes a focus on *our understanding* of being, and finishes in the dissolution of being in consciousness. Being is no more “*what* is questioned” or “*what* is understood” but rather “*our understanding* of being,” our *idea* of being. Being is not only the known being, but being *insofar as known*.³⁶ It is just a new edition of the principle of immanence, perhaps the best, but repeating the same problems.

Heidegger is more aware of the problem of knowledge than many philosophers in history. Knowledge and intentionality

³⁵ BT 355 (372).

³⁶ Prof. Zuidervaart suggested that we should not equate meaning of being and nature of being, because being is not a *being* in Heidegger’s mind. I agree with the distinction of Prof. Zuidervaart and with Heidegger itself in the fact that being belongs to a being, and it is not an objective presence or an essence in the formalistic sense. In that sense being cannot have a nature, if nature is understood as content, as a form, or as an entity or objective presence. But if “something like an understanding of being” is possible, that means that I can philosophically ask what being is. Only in that sense I mean “whatness” or “nature” of being. For me, being is a complement of the essence-nature, *actus essendi* in the (real) Thomistic sense. My point here, however, is not the metaphysical distinction between meaning of being and beings, but the previous epistemological problem of putting the object of inquiry (*what* being is) as being of consciousness, when in my view the object of inquiry is by principle distinct of consciousness as *given to* consciousness. When we ask “what is being?” we want to know what it *really* is, not what it is *in* my understanding. In other words: I agree with Heidegger’s notion of being, as distinct from nature and entities, but not with the position of that being “within” the realm of consciousness, as being thought, or something coming from the activity of the knowing subject. This is the “crucial step” we criticize: the passage from the question of being to the question of being as thought.

imply a communion between a subject and an object, but a very particular communion. It is not a spatial communion, it is not about an accidental or physical relation between beings, like the relation of causality (that is why he rejects the distinction subject-object).³⁷ Heidegger thinks that the only way to save this communion is to ensure that the being of object and subject is the same from the very beginning. The principle of immanence announces itself. The subject will be defined as being in the object, and the object as being for the subject. The being of both will just be their relationship to each other.³⁸

But are they still two or only one thing? Heidegger will recognize that there is a subjective aspect and a more objective one, but this issue must not lead us astray: the essence of Dasein is its very being towards the world, and the essence of the world is its being towards Dasein. Nothing in the world has any meaning (being) without Dasein, and Dasein is no more there if it is not in the world taking care of things. Heidegger has arrived to an admirable dissolution of the distinction between subject and object, by the reduction of the essence to being, of being to being of consciousness, and then to *pure* relation.

A better look at the phenomenon of knowledge, however, presents a different prospective. First, there is an irreducible duality in the phenomenon of knowledge, that of subject and object. That duality implies a real distinction, but not necessarily a separation of the kind Heidegger is afraid of. Second, the notion of knowledge implies a necessary relation to being, but the notion of being does not imply a necessary relation to knowledge. Third, a relation cannot even be thought without a reference to the *relata*.

1) The irreducible duality of subject-object in the phenomenon of knowledge is something that presents itself in

³⁷ Cf. Dreyfus, 50-51; Dahlstrom, xxiii.

³⁸ We are talking about the being of beings. In this regard, it is not important that innerworldly beings are independent of Dasein in some sense.

many ways. Knowledge is a phenomenon of intentionality.³⁹ Intentionality was for Brentano the characteristic of mental states, opposite to physical states, in which an object was present to the subject.⁴⁰ The very etymology of the word “intention” orients us in the same sense: originally taken from the realm of affectivity (act of the will towards an end, then the end itself) passes to the realm of knowledge, and refers first to the act of knowledge towards its object, and then to the object itself (*primae et secundae intentiones* of the Scholastics).⁴¹

We may find in Heidegger himself indications of the same phenomenon. Is it not his compound expression “being in the world” an attempt of putting together things that initially show themselves as distinct? In working out the question of being we cannot avoid talking about “question” and “being”, which at least initially do not mean the same. Heidegger affirms also the independence of entities from Dasein, although not in their being. Dasein as a being is different from beings unlike Dasein.⁴² These and other affirmations are not proof of this irreducible duality in Heidegger, but they are for us a confirmation that, in the phenomenon of knowledge, it is impossible to cover over the primordial distinction between subject and object.

³⁹ We will not deal here with intentionality of affectivity, but cf. Fabro, *Pensiero*, 495-506.

⁴⁰ Fabro, *Pensiero*, 67; Dahlstrom, 57; Dreyfus, 48; Michael Tavuzzi, *Husserl's Logical Investigations*, course (Pontifical University St. Thomas Aquinas, Rome, Fall 2004).

⁴¹ Michael Tavuzzi, *The Distinction of the Divine Attributes*, course (Pontifical University St. Thomas Aquinas, Rome, Winter 2005).

⁴² Cf. BT 105, SZ 108: “the farness from itself of what is at hand, is something that Dasein can *never cross over*”; cf. Carman, 123-124, with references to *Being and Time*, also BT 300 (313-314), 307 (321), 336 (352) and 414 (436-437). The distinction is always recognized, and even recognized as a “point of departure” of the problematic (cf. BT 414), but it is not given the value of a real distinction.

This distinction, however, does not imply a hermetic separation (as Husserl seemed to presuppose) but a cognitive union (not physical) in the real distinction. It neither necessarily annuls the research of a common field for the relationship between subject and object.⁴³ We do not mean to deny the mutual interdependence or rather the union of both elements, but to accept the phenomenon as it is: duality and unity under different respects, “other” [and] “known,” objective and subjective aspects. In the process of knowledge, however, the *primum cognitum* is not this duality, but the object or being.⁴⁴

The alterity of the object of consciousness is something primordial. In the words of Fabro:

Every representation is, in knowledge, the «presentation» of an object, whatever its value may be. This object irrupts in consciousness since the first times with an acute character of alterity and stranger-ity [estraneità] and for this reason is

⁴³ Cf. Dahlstrom, 108-116.

⁴⁴ Which is *ens*, and not *esse*. It is a basic Thomistic claim. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *De Veritate*, q.1, a.1 “*Illud autem quod primo intellectus concipit quasi notissimum, et in quod conceptiones omnes resolvit, est ens, ut Avicenna dicit in principio suae metaphysicae.*” Cf. Idem, *Super Sent.*, lib. 1 d. 8 q. 1 a. 3 c. The *ens (creatum)* is the subject of Metaphysics as *genus subjectum*, and not the separate substances, which are the causes of the subject. Cf. Idem, *In Met.*, “Prooemium.” According to Michael Tavuzzi, *Aquinas’ Comment to Boethius’ De Trinitate, qq.5-6*, course (Pontifical University St. Thomas Aquinas, Rome, Winter 2005), this conception of Metaphysics is totally different from Aristotle. Finally, and to the observation of Prof. Zuidervaart, we are not saying here that being (*Sein*) is an object or a thing, but rather that the first object of knowledge is *ens*, “something that is,” which reveals itself in turn as a compound of “whatness” and being (*esse*). So, there is syntheticity in the first object of knowledge (something – that is), and syntheticity also in knowledge itself (subject – object). The first object of knowledge, in our view, is not being/*Sein*, but being/*Seiende*.

said to be “given” or “presented.”⁴⁵ The subjective elaboration may be complicated, but does not abolish such character; rather, it grows with the progression of the real determinations of the objects.⁴⁶

Everything in knowledge speaks about a bipolarity, knowing and what is known, object and apprehension, “I know” and “something,” a bipolarity that appears initially and primordially as such.⁴⁷ This is the phenomenon, and this is what we have to explain. We cannot explain this bipolarity by dissolving it, by abolishing the point of departure, because we will be explaining something different.

Moreover, the explanation of the phenomenon of knowledge supposes the phenomenon itself, that is to say, that knowledge exists, that it is “there” to be studied. But knowledge is always knowledge of something. Heidegger himself recognized that in order to work out the question of being, something like being must be first understood. Therefore, first it is to know something, to know being, and then we can come back to know our knowledge of being. This is not what Heidegger meant, of course, because he moved from the assumption that there is no being but the being of consciousness. The fact that being is known, however, does not mean that it belongs to the subject, but exactly the opposite: what knows and what is known are different, but at the same time they are united *in a way that is not physical-subjective*.⁴⁸ Heidegger has committed

⁴⁵ It is beyond the purpose of this paper to work out properly the priority of the knowledge of the “other” over the knowledge of itself (reflection).

⁴⁶ Fabro, *Pensiero*, 474.

⁴⁷ Cf. Fabro, *Pensiero*, 504-505.

⁴⁸ The argument here is about the duality that is presupposed whenever we speak about understanding of anything, and how that irreducible duality implies an original distinction between knower and known, subject and object, of a particular kind. We abstract here of what that object (being) means for Heidegger and for us. Therefore, we do not assume that “being is a

basically the same error of Husserl: he (Heidegger) transformed being into something subjective, indeed (unlike Husserl), into the subject itself. By dissolving subject and world in their relationship, being became a pure relation, but subjective, and the alterity of the object was lost.

In other words, if being is what is questioned, does it not become a content of our consciousness, related to it as an object? And if the question of being presupposes, in order to be formulated, an initial understanding of being: is it not this initial understanding that primordial content of consciousness?⁴⁹ The initial movement of understanding is not to the question, but to being. Knowledge of being allows knowledge *to be*. Then knowledge (of being) itself can become an object, precisely because it *is*.

It seems that for Heidegger the question of being becomes from the very beginning "questioning", and (subjective) questioning becomes being itself. This procedure, however, is not logic, but an abuse of the point of departure.⁵⁰

2) Moreover, knowledge cannot be thought without being, that is to say, without something that is known.⁵¹ Knowing is directly referred to something that is known, it is knowing something. The essence of knowledge implies an object.⁵² The

being," as Prof. Zuidervaart was afraid of, but simply that being is the object of understanding. In our position, being [*Sein*] comes as "part" of the being [*Seiende*], which is the true object of understanding. This object is a synthetic unity of content and being [*Sein*]. The *esse* is not (initially) available to understanding if not as "part" of this synthetic unity.

⁴⁹ Cf. Fabro, *Causalità*, 64.

⁵⁰ If, as we suggest, the point of departure is a duality, the problem is indeed to explain the nature and the metaphysical possibility of the relation between subject and object. Cf. BT 208 (216-217).

⁵¹ Again, this are general remarks that abstract from what the object of knowledge is, *esse* or *ens*. Anyone speaking about knowledge is assuming that something is known or understood. "To know" is a transitive verb.

⁵² It is also what we mean by the "intentionality" of knowledge.

opposite is not true: although being is always reached by means of an act of knowledge, being (what is known) can perfectly be thought as this or that, as of this kind or another, as real or not, without any reference to knowledge. This goes for the primacy of being: although, in fact, being and knowledge are for us equiprimordial, there is a metaphysical priority of being.⁵³ It goes also for the distinction subject-object. It goes, finally, for the method to follow: if being is the first known, a fundamental ontology will work out first the meaning of being, and only then the meaning of our questioning.

It is true that knowledge of being is only possible if something like a possibility of knowledge is first. This priority, however, is not methodological. We know this possibility by the factual knowledge, and knowledge is factually possible by the being which is known first.

3) The concept of pure relation is also problematic. Although Heidegger does not explicitly use this concept, I think it is the core of his understanding of being, and the explanation of why his writing is so confusing at first. It is the core of his understanding of being, in the sense that Dasein is nothing but its existence, its *pure* movement of *ungrounded* position of itself, from nothing (“thrownness”)⁵⁴ towards nothing (death). Dasein is a pure *esse ad*, not a subject related to things, nor a definite movement towards something like a goal. Dasein is just thrown on its possibilities. This notion of being makes also sense of Heidegger’s notion of world, totality of relevance, etc. It is also coherent with the principle of activity of the subject, and perhaps more coherent than ever: the subject not only puts itself by its activity, but it is this very activity.⁵⁵

⁵³ It is not to say that knowledge is not being, but knowledge “becomes” being in dependence of the object, the being that is known.

⁵⁴ I take this “nothing” to mean the lack of cause or of reason for Dasein to be there.

⁵⁵ For a very interesting interpretation of Kant in this sense: cf. BT 305 (319).

I think that the obscurity of Heidegger’s style has something to do with this notion of being as pure relation, because it is at least very difficult, if not impossible, to think in a relation without beings that are related. Heidegger is trying to work out an account of knowledge by constantly erasing the line between subject and object, world and Dasein, between one thing and the other, in such a way that nothing remains always the same or with a definite content.

It is not possible to make a scientific ⁵⁶ claim about something that does not have any sense. The concept of pure relation has no sense. If something like that will be discussed, a proper phenomenon should be provided. Dasein is not that phenomenon, and if there were any, it could not even be articulated by a human being. That is why the opportunity of really “going to the things themselves” in philosophy should be recognized. The principle of immanence should not be retained as a matter of faith if we want to do something like a science.⁵⁷

“Why would one think philosophy should be like science?” My answer to Prof. Zuidervaart would be that the very question supposes the necessity of a reason to ground our way of philosophizing. The whole *Sein und Zeit* is a masterful work of reason. If we are discussing what philosophy must be, it is because we will not embrace a philosophy that does not make sense for us, first in the realm of theory. If philosophy is called

⁵⁶ I mean just “reasonable.”

⁵⁷ Fabro (cf. *Pensiero*, 7) says that the basis of the principle of the autonomy of consciousness depends on the principle of association, which in turn depends on a theory of experience as a perceptive “chaos.” Now, if the “modern psychology” (at that time especially the *Gestalttheorie*) has forever rejected that conception of experience and put again at the centre the “whole” as the primary object of experience, the principle of association and consequently that of immanence lose necessarily their historical and conceptual basis. The support of his affirmations regarding “modern” phenomenology is his most accurate *La Fenomenologia della Percezione*.

to be something more than a theory (like a practical science, or Ethics), it will be on the basis of a philosophical theory.

IV. MAIN LINES OF AN ALTERNATIVE ACCOUNT OF THE INTENTIONALITY OF KNOWLEDGE.

The intention of Heidegger was to work out a fundamental ontology, but because being for Heidegger is the being of consciousness, it is finally a theory of knowledge and of intentionality. Our intention is now to give only the main lines of an account of knowledge and intentionality, as an alternative to Heidegger's *Being and Time*, based on the doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas.⁵⁸

The point of departure of a theory of knowledge is always the fact of knowledge. The fact of knowledge manifests an irreducible duality of subject and object, and a particular relationship between them. The problem of intentionality arises. What is it?

Intentionality implies two things: the relationship of the subject to the object,⁵⁹ and the presence of the object to the subject.⁶⁰ The being of the relationship to the object must be real

⁵⁸ Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones Disputatae De Veritate*, Editio Leonina, 1970. <http://www.corpusthomicum.org/qdv02.html> (accessed May 3, 2013), q.2, aa.2 and 5, and q.8, a.3; Idem, *Summa Contra Gentiles* (1934, Reprint, Jacob Wood, 2012), lib. I, ch. 53; Idem, *Commento alla Metafisica di Aristotele: e testo integrale di Aristotele*, Vol. 1 (Bologna: ESD, 2004), lib.1, lect.10; Fabro, *Pensiero*, 7-17, 35-79, 449-485; Tavuzzi, *Husserl*; Idem, *Boethius' De Trinitate*.

⁵⁹ Cf. BT 208 (216-217). I found this text very interesting, which is for me a very clear reference to the problem of intentionality. The distinction between ideal and real is questioned at the end, and the supposed relation between them is said to be something "subsistent."

⁶⁰ The relation of the object to the subject is said to be *rationis tantum* (depending only on the consideration of reason). We will not consider this issue, but it is related to the distinction between the object in its real being (which is not "changed" by knowledge) and the way it is known (sense). The *rationis tantum* relation has to do with the first aspect.

in the subject, because the object does not change when it is known,⁶¹ but the subject does. The presence of the object to the subject must also be something real, but not physical-subjective. It must be something real, because what makes the subject change is the perfection of the object, and therefore the perfection of the object is present in some way. But this presence cannot be physical-subjective, precisely because the object is present as such, as "other", as "thrown before."⁶² The particularity of the phenomenon of knowledge shows itself in this second moment. In the words of St. Thomas:

A thing is perfect in two ways. First, it is perfect with respect to the perfection of its being which belongs to it according to its own species [...] another kind of perfection is to be found in created things. It consists in this, that the perfection belonging to one thing is found in another. This is the perfection of a knower in so far as he knows; for something is known by a knower by reason of the fact that the thing known is, in some fashion, in the knower.⁶³

⁶¹ The change from being unknown to being known (as Prof. Zuidervaart would suggest) is not a change of the object, since it was not an object before being known. To say that its properties as a thing have changed because now we know it, presupposes that knowledge is a physical activity, which is questionable, and presupposes that we can know the thing before it is known, which is impossible. This "change" is a change in relation, and relation can be *rationis tantum* or real or mixed. A column does not change because it is at our right or at our left, but we are the ones who move. The object does not change because we know it, we know "it."

⁶² The very etymology of "object" seems to suggest this understanding: *ob-jactum* as "thrown in front of."

⁶³ Aquinas, *De Veritate*, q. 2, a. 2, c: "[R]es aliqua invenitur perfecta dupliciter. Uno modo secundum perfectionem sui esse, quod ei competit secundum propriam speciem [...] Invenitur alius modus perfectionis in rebus creatis, secundum quod perfectio quae est propria unius rei, in altera re invenitur; et haec est perfectio cognoscentis in quantum est cognoscens, quia secundum hoc a cognoscente aliquid cognoscitur quod ipsum cognitum est aliquo modo apud cognoscentem."

Being (*ens*) is said in multiple ways. Intentional being is not a being *rationis*, that is to say, a being that arises only from the consideration of our reason. Intentional being is a real being, belonging (at least) to the realm of created beings. However, it is not to be found among the Aristotelian categories, unless by analogy. We may say that the *relation* of the subject to the object is a categorial one, founded in a certain categorial *quality*, called “species” by the Scholastic. But the presence of the object is not explained away only by the subjective presence of a species. A subjective quality is an accident of the subject, and the object is instead an “other.” The species in its subjective being may certainly be considered the reason of the concrete disposition of the subject towards the object, but this is not enough. We need to recognize in the species a double being: one subjective and another one objective. The subjective quality contains a transcendental reference to the object (whatever it may be!), similarly to a picture that, being one, has besides its own real being a reference to what is represented in it.

It is important to underline that “how it is possible that the perfection of the *other as such* is present to the subject” is a valid question, but a question about a fact. This perfection is not present in a physical-subjective way, because it is the perfection of “other.” Nor is it present as a copy, because what is known is the other, not a substitute (the same thing happens in the example of the picture). The presence is a fact, and although its kind of being invites to questioning and understanding, the presence itself is a primordial phenomenon, in the sense of a point of departure in the study of knowledge.

In the following, the text of St. Thomas will help us in two respects, namely the description of the phenomenon of knowledge in its essence and the metaphysical explanation of its possibility. We will treat then the question of the common field in which something like a relationship can be established. It must also be explained how a theory of the species does not fall in idealism.

Aquinas in the article quoted above gives us an account of the two kinds of being that we experience. There is one perfection that belongs to things insofar as they are themselves.

But there is another kind of perfection that we find in some things, in which case one thing can have the perfection of another thing, and this is knowledge. What defines knowledge is the alterity or objectivity of the perfection.

He also gives us the reason of knowledge, which is the progress of the universe towards perfection. The perfection proper to a knower subject is the intentional presence of other things. This higher degree of perfection is possible because of a higher degree of subjective perfection (immateriality).⁶⁴ In that way, we see the suture of the physical-subjective and intentional-objective orders, in which one is oriented towards the other as its higher perfection.

This leads us to the problem of the common field in which something like a relation between object and subject could be established. The fact that everything is in the realm of reality, although in different degrees, provides us with a good starting point. But a complete answer should take into account the necessity of an intentionality that is not only present in the subject, but also in the object and in the *medium*.⁶⁵ One should also work out the difference between what is known and the way it is known (sense) and the relationship of this problem with the former. Indeed, the reason why we know the same entity in this way or the other refers to our natural faculties on the one hand, and to the "visibility" of the object on the other.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Because matter is related to potentiality and therefore to imperfection, knowledge, as a higher "act" and perfection, will be found in those beings who are less determined by potentiality (matter). This is, in my view, the meaning of "spirituality" when talking about intentionality in St. Thomas. It is not to be intended as if subjective spirituality were required for intentionality, since St. Thomas attributes intentionality also to the senses. It is rather to be intended as opposed to a physical or material way of having a perfection, what we have called "physical-subjective" perfection.

⁶⁵ Cf. Fabro, *Pensiero*, 66-68. He refers to Aquinas, *De Potentia*, q.5, a.8.

⁶⁶ I think that this is the role of the *species impressa*. It has to do with this visibility of the object, with the fact that the object is offered to the subject as an intentional perfection. Cf. Fabro, *Pensiero*, 478-482.

The Aristotelian-Thomistic theory of the species does not prevent an immediate contact with reality. Fabro says:

The Aristotelian species, with regards to the objective-objective species of Democritus and Gassendi – to which I suggest Ottaviani’s theory of the ontological summation returns – and with regards to the subjective-subjective species of Descartes and more of Berkeley, could be said objective-subjective. That is to say, the Thomistic species has a double function: one it is to inform the mind [anima] as an entitative quality (ut accidens); the other it is to produce knowledge, that is to say, to put the mind in relation to the object. It is the famous intentional function of the species, resumed in modernity by the School of Brentano.⁶⁷

Also, according to St. Thomas, “the first movement of the spirit towards the image or idea is first of all a movement towards the thing that is represented.”⁶⁸

I suggest that the recognition of the subject-object duality in the phenomenon of knowledge is related with the syntheticity of the object of knowledge. The object of knowledge is initially not being-*Sein*, but being-*Seiende*.⁶⁹ The object appears with a

⁶⁷ Fabro, *Pensiero*, 472.

⁶⁸ Fabro, *Pensiero*, 473. He refers to the text of Aquinas, *De Veritate*, q. 8, a.3, ad 18 “[I]mago rei *duplíciter* potest considerari. Uno modo in quantum est *res quaedam*; et cum sit res distincta ab eo cuius est imago, propter modum istum alius erit motus virtutis cognitivae in imaginem, et in id cuius est imago. Alio modo consideratur prout est *imago*; et sic idem est motus in imaginem, et in id cuius est imago; et sic quando aliquid cognoscitur per similitudinem in effectu suo existentem, potest motus cognitionis transire ad causam IMMEDIATE, sine hoc quod cogitetur de aliqua alia re.” Fabro’s emphasis.

⁶⁹ And this, in turn, must be the *ens* that makes knowledge initially a fact, that is to say, not the subject itself but the “other.” As we have said, in our

particular content, it is a synthesis of content and presence. The *esse* instead, first as *esse in actu* (existence as a fact or a result) and finally as *esse ut actus* (being as a finite principle of being belonging to the thing itself), are the result of the different moments of the Metaphysics, and not a starting point. This will also be related with the theory of truth.⁷⁰

I have focused on the starting point of Heidegger, and made a slight reference to the other problems of knowledge. This is because I believe that if there is wrong in Heidegger, it is at the beginning, and if there is a reason to assume or reject his system *as a whole*, it is at the starting point. I gladly welcome his contribution to Philosophy and human culture. I had the opportunity to express my admiration for his geniality, which is out of question. In my view, however, Thomistic (and not Scholastic) realism gives a better account of reality as it is and as it *shows up*.

V. CONCLUSION

Awe is the beginning of Philosophy. One cannot but admire the perfection of the universe. A woman receives life and happiness from a man, and vice versa. Intelligence receives life and complementarity from the finite being that perfects it. Man and woman are made to attain fullness of perfection and happiness from the Supreme Being.

Perfection in living subjects is always attained by a communion with an "other." Communion cannot be attained by

view the knowledge of knowledge and of the knower are always posterior to the knowledge of the "other."

⁷⁰ Cf. Dahlstrom, xv-xxvi, 49-65, 103-174, especially 130. Heidegger's rejection of the *logical prejudice* and his conception of truth depend on his idea of Dasein's being as (pure) disclosedness. It must also be noted that the doctrine of truth as a copy may be characteristic of some line of the Scholastic, but not of Aquinas. Cf. Aquinas, *De Veritate*, q. 1, a. 3; Idem, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 16, a. 2.

abolishing the distinction, but by recognizing and appreciating it. The tendency to look for perfection without the other is sometimes a form of pride, sometimes something else. "I can do it alone," "I don't need anyone to be happy" we say, but it is not true. "It is not good that the man should be alone."⁷¹

There is no communion without distinction, but that distinction implies also a different function. The communion that perfects us is a communion of distinct beings. One has a perfective role and the other one is receptive (subject). The role of the subject in the communion is to receive spontaneously its perfection, and this is its "activity." The role of the subject is not to produce the perfection that it does not have (immanentistic pride) but to receive it, because from nothing, nothing comes out. Distinction is the condition of development to perfection. The subject is in potency of its perfection, but at the same time actively and vitally receives the object. There is in the subject a perfection that makes communion possible, and another perfection that comes only with communion itself. Human love, human knowledge and human happiness need an-other-one to be.

⁷¹ *Genesis* 2:18.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aquinas, Thomas. *Commento alla Metafisica di Aristotele: e testo integrale di Aristotele*. Vol. 1. Bologna: ESD, 2004.
- Aquinas, Thomas. *Quaestiones Disputatae De Veritate*, q.2, aa.2 and 5. Editio Leonina, 1970. Accessed May 3, 2013, <http://www.corpus-thomisticum.org/qdv02.html>.
- Aquinas, Thomas. *Quaestiones Disputatae De Veritate*, q.8, a.3. Editio Leonina, 1972. <http://www.corpusthomisticum.org/qdv08.html#53174>. (accessed May 3, 2013)
- Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Contra Gentiles*. 1934. Reprint, Jacob Wood, 2012.
- Carman, Taylor. *Heidegger's Analytic: Interpretation, Discourse, and Authenticity in Being and Time*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 1-7, 44-45, 101-154.
- Dahlstrom, Daniel O. *Heidegger's Concept of Truth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 45-64, 103-174.
- Dreyfus, Hubert L. *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991, pp. 1-16, 46-55, 89-99.
- Fabro, Cornelio. *La Fenomenologia della Percezione*. Opere Complete, vol.5. Segni: EDIVI, 2006.
- Fabro, Cornelio. *Introduzione all'Esistenzialismo*. Opere Complete, vol 7. Segni: EDIVI, 2009 (1st. ed. 1943).
- Fabro, Cornelio. *Partecipazione e Causalità secondo S. Tommaso D'Aquino*. 2nd. ed. Torino: Società Editrice Internazionale, 1961.
- Fabro, Cornelio. *Percezione e Pensiero*. Brescia: Morcelliana, 1962.
- Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*. Translated by Joan Stambaugh. Revised by Dennis J. Schmidt. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010.
- Heidegger, Martin. *Sein und Zeit*, 12° ed. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1972.
- Tavuzzi, Michael. *Husserl's Logical Investigations*. Course. Pontifical University St. Thomas Aquinas. Rome, Fall 2004.
- Tavuzzi, Michael. *The Distinction of the Divine Attributes*. Course. Pontifical University St. Thomas Aquinas. Rome, Winter 2005.
- Tavuzzi, Michael. *Aquinas' Comment to Boethius' De Trinitate, qq.5-6*. Course. Pontifical University St. Thomas Aquinas. Rome, Winter 2005.
- The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1966.

Verneaux, Roger. *Epistemologia generale*. Brescia: Paideia, 1967.
Zuidervaart, Lambert. *Notes on Martin Heidegger's Being and Time:
Introduction*. Lecture's hand-out. Toronto, Winter 2013.