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**The Phenomenological Kant:  
Heidegger's Interest in Transcendental Philosophy**

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“Any appeal to Kant against  
phenomenology basically collapses  
already in the first sentence of the  
*Critique*.”

—MARTIN HEIDEGGER

Heidegger's philosophical breakthrough, as Theodore Kisiel has so carefully demonstrated, occurs in the 1919 war emergency semester, when he happens upon his lasting topic: pre-theoretical inquiry into the “primal something” (*Ur-etwas*) that makes experience possible.<sup>1</sup> In subsequent lecture courses, Heidegger seeks illumination for this project in St. Paul and St. Augustine before turning in a sustained way to Aristotle. The Scholastic Aristotle becomes, in Heidegger's hands, an able phenomenological partner in this project. During this time, Kant's philosophy is kept at arm's length. In 1925, for example, Heidegger criticizes Kant's “old mythology of an intellect which glues and rigs together the world's matter with its own forms.”<sup>2</sup> But during the 1925-26 lecture course, *Logik*, Heidegger's interest curiously shifts from Aristotle to Kant. Suddenly and seemingly inexplicably, Kant is Heidegger's precursor of choice. The Kantian influence on the 1927 *Being and Time* is noticeable, and Kant continues to occupy Heidegger's thoughts throughout the late 1920s, an occupation which culminates in the

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<sup>1</sup> *The Genesis of Heidegger's "Being and Time"* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1993), 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs, Gesamtausgabe* 20, ed. Petra Jaeger (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1979) [*History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena*, trans. Kisiel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985)], hereafter P, 96/70. I have silently modified the translations to render technical terms with a uniform vocabulary.

1929 publication of *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*. Abruptly, however, his interest wanes. Heidegger later admits that Kant was “a refuge” and that he had greatly misread Kant.

The turn to Kant is a curious and significant fact, occurring as it does at a crucial juncture of Heidegger’s development, and it calls for explanation. Based on their masterful studies of Heidegger’s earliest way of thinking, John van Buren and Kisiel understand the interest in Kant and the Kantian *Being and Time* as a departure (*Abweg*) from his early and later thought.<sup>3</sup> These commentators think that the turn to Kant and transcendental philosophy leads Heidegger to falsify his most original intentions. Under Kant’s influence, *Being and Time* speaks of philosophy as scientific and construes the happening of world as the accomplishment of time and its horizontal schematisms. The later Heidegger will rejoin the young Heidegger in denying the scientific character of philosophy and the adequacy of the schematism. For these commentators, *Being and Time* is therefore an aberration in these fundamental respects.

Daniel Dahlstrom also subscribes to this “aberration” thesis, but he notes its fundamental problem, namely, it leaves “unexplained why Heidegger took the Kantian turn.”<sup>4</sup> This is an excellent question, and its answer, I argue, undermines the aberration thesis itself. The interest in Kant, which culminates in *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, follows from the deepest motivations of Heidegger’s phenomenological method. The Neo-Kantian Kant becomes, in Heidegger’s hands, an able phenomenological partner. His motive is to defend and safeguard phenomenological givenness against Neo-Kantian objections to the immediate, and he wants to press further into the givenness of being in terms of time. Later, Heidegger admits that his own question is foreign to Kant, and that Kant and not Heidegger was falsified in the exchange.

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<sup>3</sup> See, for instance, van Buren, *The Young Heidegger: Rumor of the Hidden King* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 366-7; Kisiel, *Genesis*, 451 and 458.

<sup>4</sup> *Heidegger’s Concept of Truth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 435n64.

Heidegger then tries to correct the distortion by reading Kant according to his own horizon of questioning. Surprisingly, though, the Kant that becomes visible is still close to his original and final phenomenological impulses; Kant still has a phenomenological understanding of knowledge though he is only obliquely concerned with the givenness of the ontological horizon as such. The promise of the phenomenological Kant, then, is what interests Heidegger in transcendental philosophy. While he thrice revises his assessment of Kant's phenomenological competence, the continuous thread is precisely Kant's phenomenological character. There are, then, four versions or phases of the Kant-interpretation: an original and three revisions.

The four can roughly be indicated as follows. First, from the beginning of his mature teaching career Heidegger is interested in Kant ("Kant" was the originally announced title of the breakthrough course from 1919), but Heidegger is bothered by Kant's non-phenomenological character. Second, in the 1925-26 course, "Logic," he turns to Kant with renewed interest in connection with his thesis regarding the centrality of time and finds in Kant a phenomenological forerunner. Third, soon after *Being and Time*, he develops an *even more phenomenological* interpretation of Kant in which the subjectivity of the subject discloses the finite and temporal ground of being; this reading bears fruit in *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*. Fourth, beginning in the 1930s Heidegger offers a more distanced but still broadly phenomenological interpretation of Kant as undermining the dominance of modern science by establishing the limits of its mathematical project. Each phase is carried out with explicit or implicit reference to Husserl's phenomenology. At first, Husserl surpasses Kant, then Kant surpasses Husserl to varying degrees, and finally, from the vantage of Heidegger's later thinking, both anticipate his own thought to the same degree. Our aim is to distinguish these phases, not to provide a comprehensive interpretation of their details.

Unless we understand and keep distinct the four phases of Heidegger's Kant, we will misunderstand what is at stake in Heidegger's relation to Kant. We might think Heidegger's Kant offers an alternative to phenomenology in general and Husserl's phenomenology in particular, we might think *Being and Time* betrays his pre-theoretical phenomenology, we might misunderstand the Kant-book as the fulfillment of the announced destruction of Kant scheduled for the second half of *Being and Time*, or we might think that because the later Heidegger retracts the center of the Kant-book, he rejects the phenomenological Kant. As this paper will show, not one of these commonplace views is correct. Heidegger does not see in Kant an alternative to his pre-theoretical phenomenology but an important forerunner and then collaborator; later, when he can no longer see Kant as a collaborator, he continues to read him as a phenomenological forerunner. The phenomenological Kant, as peculiar as that might seem, is what motivates the turn to Kant and subsequent phases are but variations on this theme. Heidegger's interest in Kant does not betray his original phenomenological project.

### **1. Non-Phenomenological (1919-1925): A Remote Interest in Kant Who Falls Short of Husserl's Phenomenology**

The first phase of Heidegger's Kant-interpretation begins with Heidegger's breakthrough lecture course and continues through 1925. Heidegger sharply distinguishes phenomenology from the Neo-Kantian proclivities for construction. Kant himself is applauded for his interest in constitution, but only phenomenology has the means to disclose the structure of experience from experience, while Kant imposes such a structure onto experience. In this phase, Heidegger's phenomenology does not skip over Kant, but it advances his problematic in a wholly new way.

In 1919, against Natorp's objection to the claimed immediacy of phenomenological intuition, Heidegger exhibited a manner of bringing the phenomena to explicit givenness which

he was to call “formal indication.” Formal or hermeneutical indication as it was also sometimes called is the way to achieve an “experience of experience,” to bring the phenomena of phenomenology to immanent articulation and not, with the Neo-Kantians, to make a model of it. Phenomenology does not theoretically construct experience by appeal to principles but discloses experience sympathetically. In this connection, Heidegger introduces a crucial distinction between the principle in Neo-Kantianism and in phenomenology. Discussing Husserl’s “principle of principles,” Heidegger writes:

If by a principle one were to understand a theoretical proposition, this designation would not be fitting. However, that Husserl speaks of a *principle* of principles, thus of something that precedes all principles, in regard to which no theory can lead us astray, already shows (although Husserl does not explicitly say so) that it does not have a theoretical character. It is the primal intention of genuine life, the primal bearing of life-experience and life as such, the absolute *sympathy with life* that is identical with life-experience.<sup>5</sup>

As the fruit of a radical sympathy with life, phenomenology uncovers the “primal something” (*Ur-etwas*) of pre-theoretical life. Phenomenology experiences experience out of its motivation, thereby grasping its dynamic interplay. Consequently, phenomenological logoi “are at once preconceiving and reconceiving [*vorgreifend zugleich rückgreifend*], i.e. they express life in its motivated tendency or tending motivation” (ZBP 117/99). Here Heidegger recapitulates Husserl’s protentive and retentive analysis of time shorn of its theoretical flavor.<sup>6</sup> Formal indication is Heidegger’s way to turn from latent theorizing and return to the experience of

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<sup>5</sup> *Zur Bestimmung der Philosophie*, 2d ed, *Gesamtausgabe* 56/57, ed. Bernd Heimbüchel (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1999) [*Towards the Definition of Philosophy*, trans. Ted Sadler (London: The Athlone Press, 2000)], hereafter ZBP, 109-10/92. For Husserl’s discussion of the “principle of principles,” namely that intuition is the ultimate cognitive authority, see *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und Phänomenologischen Philosophie*, Erstes Buch: *Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*, Husserliana III/1, ed. Karl Schuhmann (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976) [*Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. First Book: General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology*, trans. F. Kersten (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1998)], § 24.

<sup>6</sup> See Husserl, *Ideen I*, §§ 81-82, and *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewußtseins (1893-1917)*. See also Kisiel, *Genesis*, 57.

experience and its articulation. “A phenomenological criterion is just the understanding evidence and the evident understanding of experience, of life in and for itself in the *eidōs*” (ZBP 126/107). Heidegger calls phenomenology “primal science” (*Urwissenschaft*), not because he thinks it is “theoretical” in an ontic sense, but because it is the knowing saying of the *eidōs* which engenders the “primal something.”

Also in 1919, Heidegger wrote that phenomenology, which he took to be identical with historical method, aims to make headway into genuine problems. The only philosophy which can lead into these genuine problems is a philosophy “which is also determined to advance the great traditions of Kant and German idealism in their enduring tendencies” (ZBP 128/109). What Heidegger then criticized in transcendental philosophy was its constructivist and non-phenomenological character. In the winter semester 1920-21 lecture course, “Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion,” Heidegger gives the most extended treatment of his method of formal indication. In the context of introducing that discussion, he says that Husserlian phenomenology first enabled concrete research into the Kantian problem of constitution: “This problem was posed by Kant; but phenomenology (Husserl’s) first had the means to carry out this study concretely.”<sup>7</sup> Kant happened upon something worthy of inquiry, but he was sadly non-phenomenological. Again, in the 1925 lecture course on time, Heidegger still regards Kant as an epistemologist whose *a priori* belongs to the subjective sphere. Phenomenology demonstrates, by contrast, that “the *a priori* is not limited to the subjectivity, indeed that in the first instance it has primarily nothing at all to do with subjectivity” (P 101/74). At this stage in the game, Heidegger had not yet caught sight of the phenomenological Kant.

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<sup>7</sup> *Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens, Gesamtausgabe* 60, ed. Matthias Jung, Thomas Regehly, and Claudius Strube (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1995) [*The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004)], 57/39.

## 2. Precursor (1925-1927): Conversion to the Quasi-Phenomenological Kant Who Anticipates Husserl

With the second phase, Heidegger thinks Kant is not only on the right topic but now that he is a phenomenologist who anticipates and in part supersedes Husserl. The sudden advent of this phase is well documented. Toward the middle of the winter semester 1925-26 lecture course, “Logic,” published as *Logic: The Question of Truth*, Heidegger abruptly abandons his planned outline and begins an in-depth exploration of the Kantian doctrine of schematism and time.<sup>8</sup> Two years later he alludes to his sudden interest in Kant: “Several years ago as I studied anew the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and read it as it were against the backdrop of Husserl’s phenomenology, the scales fell from my eyes, and Kant became for me confirmation of the correctness of the way for which I was seeking.”<sup>9</sup> Heidegger had discovered the phenomenological Kant.

Husserl was trained as a mathematician and is not known for his understanding of the history of philosophy. It makes it all the more surprising that he should have opened the door for Heidegger, renown for the depth of his historical-philosophical investigation, to understand Kant. As presented in *Ideas I*, Husserl sees the history of modern philosophy develop toward phenomenology. “Phenomenology is, so to speak, the secret nostalgia of all modern philosophy” (*Ideen I*, 118/142). Based on Husserl’s own hard-won insight into the nature of phenomenology’s province he is able to see that Kant happened upon it though he did not grasp as such.

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<sup>8</sup> *Logik: Die Frage nach der Wahrheit, Gesamtausgabe 21*, ed. Walter Biemel (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1976), hereafter L.

<sup>9</sup> *Phänomenologische Interpretation von Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Gesamtausgabe 25*, ed. Ingtraud Görland (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1977) [*Phenomenological Interpretations of Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997)], hereafter PIK, 431/292-3.

And then the first to correctly see it was Kant, whose greatest intuitions become wholly understandable to us only when we had obtained by hard work a fully clear awareness of the peculiarity of the province belonging to phenomenology. It then becomes evident to us that Kant's mental regard was resting on that field, although he was still unable to appropriate it or recognize it as a field of work pertaining to a strict eidetic science proper (*Ideen I*, 118-9/142).

Though Heidegger does not think the field involves a strict eidetic science, he does think nonetheless it needs to be brought to view and interpreted. So, in the first place, Husserl gave Heidegger a Kant trained on phenomenology's subject-matter. But not only that. Husserl goes further in this passage and observes, "Thus, for example, the transcendental deduction in the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* was actually operating inside the realm of phenomenology, but Kant misinterpreted that realm as psychological and therefore he himself abandoned it" (*Ideen I*, 119/142). This is the key to the phenomenological Kant and the reason why Heidegger had no problem adopting the corresponding vocabulary of Kant and Husserl, namely transcendental horizon and schema, in order to explicate time as the sense of being.

The 1925-26 lecture course worked out an immanent critique of phenomenology by appropriating Husserl's refutation of psychologism. Husserl refuted psychologism by proving that truth cannot be a real process, but he did so by introducing a distinction between the real and the ideal.<sup>10</sup> Heidegger finds this cleft between the ideal and the real troubling, and he wants to uncover the ground of the distinction and thus the possibility of their relation. As he would soon write in *Being and Time*, "How are we to take ontologically the relation between an ideal entity and something that is real and on-hand? . . . Is not psychologism correct in holding out against this separation, even if it neither clarifies ontologically the kind of being which belongs to the

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<sup>10</sup> See, in particular, *Logische Untersuchungen, I: Prolegomena zur reinen Logik*, ed. Elmar Holenstein (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975) [*Logical Investigations*, trans. F. N. Findlay (Amherst, N.Y.: Humanity Books, 2000)], § 51.



thinking that which is thought, nor is even so much as acquainted with it as a problem?”<sup>11</sup> To be sure, Heidegger does not take truth as a real process, but he handles truth in terms of the phenomenology of the *Sixth Logical Investigation*. Truth is not, as it is in the refutation of psychologism, the experienced identity of the ideal meaning and the real state of affairs, but the showing of an entity in its self-sameness across the interplay of presence and absence. This interplay, in turn, is made possible by being-in-the-world, which Heidegger terms truth in the most original sense, and this in turn, is made possible by time.

Beyond the ideal-real divide, Husserl discovered the primacy of givenness, widening intuition over the categorial sphere. With this discovery, Heidegger thinks “Husserl has thought to the end the great tradition of Western philosophy” (L 114). Phenomenology is a recovery of this theme, which Heidegger immediately connects with a radically new Kant: “. . . Kant was no Kantian” (L 117). Husserl’s principle of all principles confirms what Kant himself maintained in the very first line of the *Critique* proper, that intuition is the essential ingredient in knowing (L 114-8). Heidegger’s real interest is in the possibility of such intuiting, and he senses in its very terms, “making present,” a connection with time (cf. SZ 363/498). This is Heidegger’s central insight, signaled in the very schematic title of his magnum opus, *Being and Time*, and so what caught Heidegger’s eye and instigated the interest in Kant was the central role given time in the *Critique*’s analysis of the possibility of intuition. As a refrain, Heidegger formulates the claim that Kant was the first thinker to intimate the relation of being and time (L 194 and 200; cf. SZ 23/45). Specifically, Kant’s doctrine of the schematism connects receptivity and spontaneity in terms of time. In this problematic Heidegger senses a collaborator in his project of formally indicating the primal something of experience.

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<sup>11</sup> *Sein und Zeit*, 18th ed. (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2001) [*Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1962)], hereafter SZ, 216-7/259-60.

While Heidegger's enthusiasm for Kant is beyond question, he is still extremely critical of Kant and his epistemological point of departure (L 407). Under the spell of Descartes and formal logic, Kant bungles "the critical phenomenological question concerning the relation of time and I" and conceives the self as an "empty I combine" (L 347 and 407-8). He therefore cannot see that time is "the fundamental existential of Dasein" (L 403). The chief difficulty is Kant's inadequate doctrine of time:

Aside from all dogmatic motives, the main obstacle for Kant seeing the time-character of the I think lies in the inadequate interpretation of time itself; although Kant made use of the more primordial structure of the now in the schematism, he took the now and the now-series in the theory always in the sense of the traditional comprehension of time (L 408).

Though Kant intimated the connection of being and time, he could not see that time was the structure of Dasein itself, because he lacked a phenomenology of time. Without such an understanding of time, Kant remains epistemological and negligent of the timely being of the subject.

Heidegger's discovery of the quasi-phenomenological Kant occurred just before the ultimate draft of *Being and Time*, largely written in March 1926, and the effect of the conversion on the latter is noticeable.<sup>12</sup> Heidegger does not become a Kantian, but Kant becomes phenomenological; the debate with Neo-Kantianism continues. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger still distinguishes sharply between rationalistic construction and phenomenological experience. He says that phenomenology provides the method for "genuine philosophical 'empiricism,'" because it enables the disclosure of the apriori rather than its rationalistic construction: "But to disclose the *a priori* is not to make an '*a-prioristic*' construction. Through Edmund Husserl, we

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<sup>12</sup> Kisiel observes that in this draft he is "suddenly enthusiastic over Kant" (*Genesis*, 489). He is still, however, highly critical of him. See Frank Schalow, *The Renewal of the Heidegger-Kant Dialogue* (Albany: The State University of New York Press, 1992), 191.

have learned not only to understand once more the sense of every genuine philosophical ‘empiricism’ but also to handle the necessary tools for it” (SZ 50/490). The difference is that Heidegger no longer reads Kant as a Neo-Kantian but instead as a quasi-phenomenologist or rather, in one respect, as the *proto*-phenomenologist: “The first and only person who has gone any stretch of the way towards investigating the dimension of temporality or has even let himself be drawn hither by the coercion of the phenomena themselves is Kant” (SZ 23/45). For Heidegger, Husserl has been superseded by the phenomenological Kant he made visible.

With Kant, Heidegger distinguishes two levels of phenomena, the ontic and the ontological. The two levels are analogous in that they call for the subordination of logos to phenomena, but they are different in that they require fundamentally different inquiries and modes of investigations. Philosophy is phenomenological ontology, the exhibition of ontological phenomena. The ecstatic-horizonal unfolding of timeliness engenders Dasein as thrown-project as well as the other senses of being. Time, then, opens the context for philosophical investigation. Fundamental ontology uncovers the contexture in the schematic interrelation of time and being. The aim of this investigation is to grasp what is at work in the primal something, to return to the pre-theoretical basis of experience and elucidate it from out of itself. Heidegger employs “schema” not because he has abandoned his phenomenological project in order to return to the “old mythology of an intellect which glues and rigs together the world’s matter with its own forms” (P 96/70). In fact it is precisely the schematic horizon of time that, in Heidegger’s mind, justifies his claiming the opposite: “Thus the significance-relationships which determine the structure of the world are not a network of forms which a wordless subject has laid over some kind of material. What is rather the case is that factual being-here [Dasein], understanding itself and its world ecstatically in the unity of the here [Da], comes back from these horizons to the

entities encountered within them” (SZ 366/417). The schematic horizon of temporality names the *eidos* of time in and for itself. With temporality, Heidegger thinks he has discovered what Kant attempted to bring to expression: “Only when we have established the problematic of temporality, can we succeed in casting light on the obscurity of his doctrine of the schematism” (SZ 23/45). Heidegger here echoes Husserl in claiming Kant as his phenomenological precursor.

The summer semester 1927 lecture course thrusts Kant to the fore, and clarifies the status of the Kant-interpretation just before the fully phenomenological Kant emerges in the following semester. Kant’s transcendental method is not yet identified with phenomenology, but it needs to be transferred onto a properly phenomenal basis. The sticking point is the very place of convergence, the interpretation of being in terms of time, in which Kant shows himself to be in contact with the ancient Greek interpretation of being in terms of presence.

But the reason why Kant calls being a logical predicate is connected with his ontological, that is, transcendental, mode of inquiry, and it leads us to a fundamental confrontation with this type of inquiry, which we shall discuss in the context of the interpretation of the *Critique of Pure Reason* next semester. With reference to the temporal interpretation of the being of the on-hand by means of praesens, in comparison with the Kantian interpretation of being as positing, it should have become clear how only a phenomenological interpretation affords the possibility of opening up a positive understanding of the Kantian problems and his solutions of them, which means putting the Kantian problem on a phenomenal basis.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, due to the peculiarity of Kant’s methodology, “the phenomenologically decisive thing remains obscure” (GP 451/317). In this second phase of the Kant-interpretation, Heidegger unveils the proto-phenomenological Kant, a Kant who brings the apriori to givenness and who surely though obscurely was interested in the givenness of being in terms of time.

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<sup>13</sup> *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie, Gesamtausgabe* 24, ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1975) [*The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, rev. ed., trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), hereafter GP, 452/317-8.

### 3. Collaborator (1927-1929): *An Even More Phenomenological Kant Who Surpasses Husserl*

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger writes that two things stood in the way of Kant's full insight into temporality: "In the first place, he altogether neglected the problem of being; and, in connection with this, he failed to provide an ontology with Dasein as its theme or (to put this in Kantian language) to give a preliminary ontological analytic of the subjectivity of the subject" (SZ 24/45). The 1929 *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* has as its central theses the opposite of these two assertions, though commentators typically neglect the difference between the two interpretations of Kant.<sup>14</sup> The 1929 preface to the Kant book, however, makes it clear that he there departs from the Kant interpretation of *Being and Time* in that he offers "by contrast, a progressive interpretation of the *Critique of Pure Reason*."<sup>15</sup> Rather than simply working out the destruction foreseen for part two of *Being and Time*, Heidegger writes a historical introduction to the manner of questioning operative in the systematic part one, and Kant alone can be the subject of such a study because he alone anticipated its horizon of questioning. The third phase takes Kant as a phenomenologist but in a still more robust sense, for Kant is no longer entangled in epistemology but is specifically interested in grounding metaphysics.

Heidegger provides the key to understanding this intensified interest in transcendental philosophy, which we can date to the 1927-28 lecture course.<sup>16</sup> He finds in Kant a *confirmation* for his approach. Just what is this approach that the backdrop of Husserlian phenomenology

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<sup>14</sup> Otto Pöggeler, for instance, downplays any difference between *Being and Time* and the book on Kant; he maintains that Heidegger continued to think that Kant's subject was something merely on-hand. See *Martin Heidegger's Path of Thinking*, trans. Daniel Magurshak and Sigmund Barber (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1987), 65.

<sup>15</sup> *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik, Gesamtausgabe 3*, ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1991) [*Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 4th ed., trans. Richard Taft (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996)], hereafter KPM, xvi/xix.

<sup>16</sup> In the preface to the fourth edition (1973) of the Kant-book, Heidegger dated the book's interpretation of Kant to this lecture course (xiv/xvii). Stephan Käufer thinks Heidegger's memory here failed him; he should have said the interpretation began in 1925-26. See his "Schemata, Hammers, and Time: Heidegger's Two Derivations of

enabled him to see? In the first place, this is certainly the correctness of phenomenological method and its devotion to intuition as the foundation of knowledge, whether ontic or ontological.

At the present time and independently of Kant, Husserl, the founder of phenomenological research, rediscovered this fundamental thrust of knowledge in general and of philosophical knowledge in particular. It is precisely this basic conception by phenomenology of the *intuitive character of knowledge* that contemporary philosophy resists. But any appeal to Kant against phenomenology basically collapses already in the first sentence of the *Critique* (PIK 83/57).<sup>17</sup>

Kant constitutes, moreover, a confirmation of the kind of intuition at work in philosophical, i.e., ontological knowledge: “If *knowledge as such* is primarily intuition . . . then ontological, i.e., philosophical, knowledge is also originally and ultimately intuition—but intuition in a sense which is precisely the central problem of the *Critique*” (PIK 83/57). Pure intuition cannot be intuited thematically as something on-hand but only “in an original, formative giving” (KPM 144/101; cf. 155/108). Kant confirms, then, both that thinking is in service to intuition and the peculiarity of the intuition at work in ontological knowledge. What Heidegger found in Kant, then, was not a “new linguistic model” that had the effect of stilling the stream of factual life;<sup>18</sup> instead he found a partner in the *phenomeno-logical* project of articulating the givenness of ontological truth. In this he sees Kant more than Husserl as his predecessor.<sup>19</sup> Heidegger’s own

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Judgment,” *Topoi* 22 (2003): 86. When we, by contrast, distinguish the second and third phases, there is no need to think that Heidegger was mistaken.

<sup>17</sup> Heidegger’s professed reliance on Husserl in his interpretation of Kant qualifies Schalow’s claim that Heidegger’s engagement with transcendental philosophy moves phenomenology “even further from its Husserlian beginnings” (*Heidegger-Kant Dialogue*, 150). Heidegger thinks his attempt to work out, alongside Kant, the peculiar givenness of the ontological holds on to what is essential in Husserl even as it moves deeper into the problematic he opens up.

<sup>18</sup> van Buren, *The Young Heidegger*, 365.

<sup>19</sup> Husserl’s marginalia to his personal copy of the Kant-book show him uneasy with Heidegger’s phenomenological Kant. First, he wonders about the extent of the primacy of intuition (“Is this Kant?”), pointing to the issue of the thing-in-itself. Second, he affirms that he too is interested in “an essential unveiling of transcendence,” thus indicating that he too is a phenomenological partner in Heidegger’s program. And yet, in the end, he wants to distance himself from the Kantian and Heideggerian discussion of finitude and anthropology, which, he thinks, indicate a failure to understand the transcendental reduction: “In this unclarity Heidegger joins Kant.” *Psychological and Transcendental Phenomenology and the Confrontation with Heidegger (1927-1931)*, ed.

method of formal indication now becomes expressed in terms of the *Critique of Pure Reason*'s "ground-laying" (*Grundlegung*) and architectonic. The interest in Kant, then, is occasioned by the phenomenological interest that guides his thinking throughout the whole of the 1920s and beyond. His turn to Kant and transcendence *deepens* the phenomenological inquiry into the pre-theoretical apriori and its indifference to the distinction between subjective and objective (KPM 170/119).

Heidegger offers a re-reading of the nature of "principle" operative in Kant's highest principle of synthetic judgments. Rather than something on-hand that is posited for experience to be possible, the *Grundsatz* is a phenomenologically disclosed articulation of transcendence.

The basic proposition [*Grundsatz*] is no principle [*Prinzip*] that is arrived at in the drawing of a conclusion that we must put forth as valid if experience is to hold true. Rather, it is the expression of the most original *phenomenological knowledge* of the innermost, unified structure of transcendence, laboriously extracted in the stages of the essential projection of ontological synthesis that have already been presented (KPM 119/84, my emphasis).

As we have seen, the crucial distinction between a principle imposed on experience and an expression disclosed from experience is already present in Heidegger's first mature lecture course of 1919. Now, ten years later phenomenology and transcendence go hand in hand. Heidegger even interprets Kant's "analytic" as a phenomenological exposition, a *Sehenlassen*, of transcendence: "In Kant's own words, such an analytic is a bringing of 'itself to light through reason,' it is 'what reason brings forth entirely from out of itself.' (A xx). Analytic thus becomes a letting-be-seen [*Sehenlassen*] of the genesis of the essence of finite pure reason from its proper ground" (KPM 56/29). This identification helps clarify his characterization of *Being and Time* as an "analytic" of Dasein, that is, a phenomenology of transcendence. "Philosophizing happens

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and trans. Thomas Sheehan and Richard Palmer (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997), 442, 447, and 453, respectively.

as the explicit transcendence of Dasein” (KPM 231/162 and 242/170). Kant’s transcendental philosophy, as interpreted by Heidegger, is no static theory that stills the stream of factic life; rather, it is a “happening” (*Geschehen*) that occurs in the ground-laying, a happening which is nothing other than Dasein itself. Heidegger thus finds in Kant’s transcendental philosophy an important anticipation of his own phenomenological method of formal indication.

The ground-laying of metaphysics is the full exposition of the essence of metaphysics which is the same thing as unveiling its inner possibility and thus reality. Reality, here, does not mean actuality in the sense of modern epistemology but instead names the essential content: “As Kant himself aptly translates it, ‘*realitas*’ means ‘fact-ness’ [‘*Sachheit*’], and it alludes to the content [‘*Wasgehalt*’] of the entity which comes to be delimited by means of the *essentia*” (KPM 86-7/61). This explains the central role Heidegger accord the so-called “inner” rather than the “external” architectonic. The ground-laying is “the architectonic circumscription and delineation of the inner possibility of metaphysics, that is, the concrete determination of its essence” (KPM 2/2). This is nothing other than the disclosure of the possibility of ontological knowledge. Retracting a key criticism of *Being and Time*, Heidegger thinks Kant’s *quaestio juris* names “an analytic of the subjectivity of the subject.”

The problem of the “origin and the truth” (A 128) of the categories, however, is the question of the possible manifestness of being from entities in the essential unity of ontological knowledge. If this question is to be grasped concretely and taken hold of as a problem, however, then the *quaestio juris* cannot as such be taken as a question of validity. Instead, the *quaestio juris* is only the formula for the task of an analytic of transcendence, i.e., of a pure phenomenology of the subjectivity of the subject, namely, as a finite subject (KPM 87/61-2; cf. 205/144).

Returning judgment to evidence and ontic truth to ontological knowledge or transcendence turns on a methodological development, namely the emergence of phenomenology. Kant’s method of universalization in which ontological knowledge is achieved thus approximates Heidegger’s



method of formal indication. “For the first time, the question of the ground-laying requires clarity concerning the manner of universalization and the character of the stepping-beyond which lies in the knowledge of the constitution of being” (KPM 12/8). Though Kant may not have brought “full clarification” to the problem, he at least “recognized its necessity” and “presented it.”

Heidegger interprets the following principle as the full articulation of transcendence: “The conditions for the *possibility of experience* in general are at the same time conditions for the *possibility of the objects of experience*.”<sup>20</sup> Not surprisingly, Heidegger focuses on the seemingly incidental phrase in the formulation, “at the same time.” This expresses the intimate relation between the two conditions: “the letting-stand-against which turns itself toward as such forms the horizon of objectivity in general” (KPM 119/84). Transcendence, then, because it is ecstatical is horizontal. “The going-out-to . . . , which was previously and at all times necessary in finite knowing, is hence a constant standing-out-from . . . (*Ecstasis*). But this essential standing-out-from . . . , precisely in the standing, forms and therein holds before itself: a horizon. In itself, transcendence is ecstatic-horizontal” (KPM 119/84). Finite knowing can accept an entity it encounters, because in transcendence it is open to such an encountering in its very essence. Retracting his 1926 criticism, he now thinks primordial time enables the “I think.”<sup>21</sup>

What the formally-indicative ground-laying uncovers is human finitude as the site for experiencing something. This site is thrown open in our disposed understanding by means of the ecstatic-horizontal unfolding of time. The Kant-book points to transcendental imagination and its schematisms as enabling the interface at the heart of experience between receptive spontaneity

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<sup>20</sup> *The Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1965), A 158, B 197.

<sup>21</sup> “Kant brought both of them together in their original sameness—without, to be sure, expressly seeing this as such for himself” (KPM 192/134).

and spontaneous receptivity. Heidegger thereby finds in Kant something of the interplay of factual life experience of his phenomenological project. Heidegger thinks the “primal something” is the target of Kant’s question of the ontological synthesis.

The identification of phenomenological and transcendental methodology is not widely admitted. Charles Sherover’s otherwise excellent study, for instance, sees *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* as offering “an alternate approach to his doctrine” which represents a non-phenomenological introduction to the issues of *Being and Time*.<sup>22</sup> Sherover writes, “His implicit claim here is that the method [of *Being and Time*] . . . is not crucial.” Sherover concludes that Heidegger’s close identification with Kant’s “theory of knowledge” “places Heidegger into the heart of the modern philosophic tradition.” Bringing out the centrality of phenomenology, however, suggests a different topology. The book on Kant offers a phenomenological reading of Kant; its result is not to place Heidegger into the heart of the modern tradition but rather to situate transcendental philosophy within the phenomenological movement. That is, Heidegger and Heidegger’s Kant are interested in truth and being and not a theory of knowledge. With this third phase, Kant is a phenomenological researcher into the happening whereby being is given.

#### **4. Precursor Again (1930 and later): *Kant Is Still Phenomenological But on a Par with Husserl***

In the 1930s, he came to distance himself from the interpretation of Kant developed in the 1929 book. As he would write in 1973, “Kant’s text became a refuge, as I sought in Kant an advocate for the question of being which I posed” (KPM xiv/xvii). He needed such an advocate, because *Being and Time* was “susceptible to misinterpretation,” and he came to think that Kant

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<sup>22</sup> *Heidegger, Kant, and Time* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), 5.

could become an ally in posing the question of being in terms of time. In this, he admits, he was mistaken:

The refuge . . . determined in this way, led me to interpret the *Critique of Pure Reason* from within the horizon of the manner of questioning set forth in *Being and Time*. In truth, however, Kant's question was subordinated to a manner of questioning foreign to it, although conditioning it (KPM xiv/xvii).

Scholars who cite this passage as proof that Heidegger's way of philosophizing was distorted in the exchange with Kant overlook the fact that, as he makes clear, it is *Kant's* horizon of questioning that is overlooked, not his own. In the *Contributions* he accordingly denies that the horizon from which he interpreted Kant in the Kant-book can be called Kantian: "But, if one contends—and rightfully so—that historically Kant here is distorted, then one must also avoid presenting as Kantianism the basic position from which and into which the distortion took place."<sup>23</sup> Heidegger wrote the Kant-book to make his phenomenological inquiry more accessible, but the book got Kant wrong and made Heidegger out to be an updated Kantian. Is this the end of the phenomenological Kant?

In the late 1920s, Heidegger saw Kant as a formally-indicating phenomenologist who illumines the schematic source of experience from out of itself. By the early 1930s, however, Heidegger had problems with formal indication and its targeted schematic essence. Schema is too infected with the theoretical and objectivating gaze to name the pre-theoretical context of experience. Heidegger keeps to the central insight of his phenomenology into the givenness of the pre-theoretical, but he employs more poetic tropes to evoke the requisite pathos.

Accordingly, the happening occasioned by the transcendental horizon of time becomes named with the event of appropriation. The horizon is not the correlate of our researches, but

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<sup>23</sup> *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*, Gesamtausgabe 65, ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1989) [*Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*], trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 253/179.

appropriation appropriates us via fundamental moods which we name in poetic terms.

Phenomenological research is insufficiently phenomenological because it aims to uncover an *eidōs*, but such an *eidōs* is in fact a methodological imposition; formal indication remains infected with the objectification that it aims to overcome. The later critique does not simply rejoin the early phenomenological breakthrough. It leaves behind its concern for research and thus primal science, and it leaves behind the search for an *eidōs* of experience, an *eidōs* that Heidegger thought he found in the phenomenological Kant.

At the end of the 1929-30 lecture course, soon after the publication of the Kant-book, Heidegger accordingly questions the science of ontology as adequate to his problematic: “Yet what are we then to put in place of ontology? Kant’s transcendental philosophy, for instance? Here it is only the name and claims that have been changed, while the idea itself has been retained. Transcendental philosophy too must fall.”<sup>24</sup> The following semester, Heidegger devotes his course to the examination of the relation of freedom and nature in Kant, arguing, in the end, that Kant failed to grasp freedom adequately.<sup>25</sup> Kant does not universalize the problem of being, but treats only on-hand entities (VWF 192/134 and 213/147). “. . . also in the case of Kant the traditional guiding question of metaphysics — what are entities? — is not developed into the fundamental question bearing and leading this question: what is being? In it there lies simultaneously the question concerning the primordial possibility and necessity of the manifestness of being” (VWF 203/140). Along with this, Kant “lacked a metaphysics of Dasein”

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<sup>24</sup> *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik. Welt—Endlichkeit—Einsamkeit, Gesamtausgabe* 29/30, ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1983) [*The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 522/359.

<sup>25</sup> Heidegger praises Kant as the first thinker who brought freedom into connection with problems of metaphysics though he understands freedom in terms of ontic causality. *Vom Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit: Einleitung in die Philosophie, Gesamtausgabe* 31, ed. Hartmut Tietjen (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1982) [*The Essence of Human Freedom: An Introduction to Philosophy* (London: Continuum, 2002)], hereafter VWF, 21/15 and 246/167, respectively.

and “did not make the finitude of the human being into a sufficiently primordial problem,” because he left obscure the connection of time and “I think” (VWF 157/112 and 168/119).<sup>26</sup> Now Heidegger maintains that the time that comes to exposition in Kant is not the primordial time of *Being and Time* (VWF 159n25/114n38). Heidegger also takes to referring to “phenomenology of consciousness” in a dismissive way, and now says that Kant’s transcendental philosophy is “directed to what from the outset makes possible the cognition of objects as such” (VWF 205/142 and 288/197, and 264/183). The phenomenological partnership seems dissolved. This far more critical distance, however, is balanced by a new historical-motivational role that Heidegger finds for Kant, whose “new determination” of the essence of ontology is “on the whole a renewed solidification of the ancient approach to the question of being” (VWF 203/141). But is this historical-motivational role yet phenomenological?

Heidegger’s interest in the phenomenological Kant wanes but does not extinguish. Kant plays a privileged historical role in motivating the broadly phenomenological thinking that Heidegger aims to inaugurate. While Heidegger no longer thinks Kant is interested in the givenness of the ontological itself, as with the third phase, he still thinks Kant is broadly phenomenological in his concern for the condition for the possibility of judgment and experience. In 1962, Heidegger issues two publications in an attempt to “make up for what the writing *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* . . . lacked.”<sup>27</sup> One is the winter semester 1935-36 lecture course, “Fundamental Questions of Metaphysics,” published as *What Is a Thing? Toward Kant’s Doctrine of the Transcendental Principles*, and the other a 1961 lecture, “Kant’s Thesis about Being.” Both seek then to interpret Kant from within the horizon of his own manner of

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<sup>26</sup> Heidegger refers the reader to the Kant-book where these criticisms are present but downplayed.

<sup>27</sup> *Die Frage nach dem Ding: Zu Kants Lehre von den transzendentalen Grundsätzen, Gesamtausgabe* 41, ed. Petra Jaeger (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1984) [*What Is a Thing? trans.* William Barton and Vera Deutsch (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1967)], hereafter FD, 127/125.

questioning.<sup>28</sup> And yet, the result is “not new discoveries in Kant philology” but an interpretation that finds a path into Heidegger’s own manner of questioning. The later Heidegger does not disavow Kant; rather, by allowing Kant to speak from within his own horizon of questioning, there is the opportunity for a true “fusion of horizons”—to use a phrase from Gadamer—in which Heidegger unearths something wholly other within Kant’s horizon of questioning. Heidegger reads Kant as seeking to grasp the objectivity of the object (and thus in a refracted way the being of the entity) rather than the givenness of the subjectivity of the subject (Dasein).<sup>29</sup> In this shift in interpretation Kant in fact comes somewhat closer to the emphases of the later Heidegger while remaining essentially phenomenological. In the face of modern subjectivity, Kant recovers something of the Greek experience of the phenomenological space more fundamental than subject and object.

In the 1920s, Heidegger sought to find the place of phenomenology within the history of philosophy. At first, he saw contact with religious thinkers, especially Augustine, before finding it in Aristotle and then, as we have seen, Kant. In the 1930s and later, Heidegger retains the identification of phenomenology and Kant and sees Kant as a recovery of Greek philosophy, which, in contrast to modern rationalism, is phenomenological in character. The significance of Kant for the later Heidegger is precisely this recovery of (Greek) phenomenological philosophy. In the lecture course from 1935-36, Heidegger does not connect his reading of Kant to the phenomenological breakthrough, but this is likely due to his reticence throughout the 1930s and

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<sup>28</sup> In 1962 Heidegger publishes the 1961 lecture and the lecture course from 1935-36; in 1965 he points to these two writings as supplements to the Kant book; in 1973 he calls them retractions of the Kant book (KPM xiv/xviii).

<sup>29</sup> On the change in questioning from transcendence to the thing, see Hansgeorg Hoppe, “Wandlungen in der Kant-Auffassung Heideggers,” in *Durchblicke. Martin Heidegger zum 80. Geburtstag*, ed. Vittorio Klostermann (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1970), 284-317.

1940s to use the name “phenomenology.”<sup>30</sup> Heidegger suppresses the name, but he does not suppress the idea, and he holds to the intuitive character of knowledge. Transcendental thinking, which entails the subordination of thought to intuition, recovers the classical Greek theme of the subordination of logos to phenomenon, indicated in the title, phenomeno-logy (cf. SZ §§ 7, 33, and 44). The first sentence of the *Critique*, by prioritizing intuition in the definition of knowledge, offers the “first and completely decisive blow” against rationalism (FD 137/135). In phase three we saw that this passage demonstrated the basically phenomenological character of Kant’s philosophy, and now that phenomenological character is set in opposition to rationalism. Neither intuition nor thought alone suffices for knowledge, and yet it is nonetheless the case that thought is directed toward intuition or, as Heidegger formulates it, thought “stands in the service of intuition” (FD 138/135). The rest of Heidegger’s analysis is dedicated to showing that Kant’s exclusive concern is with rethinking thought on the basis of its essential relation to intuition. Consequently, with Kant’s new “characterization of judgment, the primordial sense of *logos* as *gathering*, though dimmed, shines through” (FD 190/186-7).<sup>31</sup>

The transcendental attitude traces judgment and thing back to “something more primordial” (*etwas Ursprünglicheres*) out of which they can arise (FD 182/179). This more primordial something or between becomes opened up through the reciprocity of anticipating and encountering, a reciprocity named in the highest principle of synthetic judgment. “[T]his *between* as a pre-conception reaches beyond the thing and likewise back behind us. Pre-

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<sup>30</sup> Though he says “not—as is often thought—in order to deny the meaning of phenomenology, but in order to let my path of thinking be nameless,” “A Dialogue on Language,” a text from the early 1950s, in *Unterwegs zur Sprache* (Pfullingen: Verlag Günther Neske, 1959) [*On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1971)], 121/29.

<sup>31</sup> In the 1961 lecture, Heidegger repeats this claim but puts more emphasis on its partial subjectivizing in transcendental apperception, “Kants These über das Sein,” in *Wegmarken* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1967) [“Kant’s Thesis about Being,” trans. Ted E. Klein, Jr., and William E. Pohl, in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)], 287/347 and 289/350.

conception is thrown-back [Vor-griff ist Rück-wurf]” (FD 245/243). Kant is phenomenological in that he defines knowledge in general as essentially grounded in intuition, but he suffers from a number of phenomenological failures. The first is that he altogether neglects the familiar realm of surrounding things and focuses exclusively on objectivity (FD 131/129). The second is that he approaches being as the objectivity of the object; he thinks rather than experiences the relation of thought and being (FD 188/184). Nonetheless, his exposition of the highest principle of synthetic judgment uncovers the pre-theoretical open between.

The ground which [the principles] lay, the nature of experience, is not an on-hand thing, to which we return and upon which we then simply stand. Experience is a happening circling in itself through which what lies within the circle becomes opened up [*eröffnet*]. This open [*Offene*], however, is nothing other than the between [*Zwischen*]—between us and the thing (FD 244/242).

The principles articulate the interplay of thought and intuition, anticipation and encounter, by means of which entities are accessible in their intelligibility. Within this domain phenomenological experience is possible. In phenomenological fashion, transcendental philosophy considers an entity “in regard to how this object is an object *for us*, in which respect it is meant, that is, how our thought thinks it” (FD 181-182/178). Kant uncovers the domain of experience but he does not grasp it as such nor does he situate it within the deeper happening of the domain’s discovery, neglect, and recovery.

The Kant who emerges in the 1930s, in the ambit of the *Contributions*, and in contrast to the 1929 Kant-book, is quasi-phenomenological. Such a reading continues, though in somewhat more critical form, through the last days of Heidegger’s philosophical itinerary. Heidegger does criticize Kant severely, but only for being insufficiently phenomenological in Heidegger’s own sense. Consider the famous letter to William Richardson, in which Heidegger recounts the phenomenological character of his own path, and sharply contrasts this phenomenology with that



of Husserl and Kant: “Meanwhile ‘phenomenology’ in Husserl’s sense was elaborated into a distinctive philosophical position according to a pattern set by Descartes, Kant and Fichte. The historicity of thought remained completely foreign to such a position.”<sup>32</sup> To justify such a reading, Heidegger refers the reader to Husserl’s 1910-11 essay, *Philosophy as a Rigorous Science*. We might be led to think, then, that Heidegger’s *Being and Time*, as the aberration theory holds, momentarily fell prey to such a position, but Heidegger immediately corrects this view: “The question of being, unfolded in *Being and Time* parted company with this philosophical position, and that on the basis of what to this day I still consider a more faithful adherence to the principle of phenomenology.”<sup>33</sup> But in the ambit of *Being and Time*, as we have seen, Heidegger prizes Kant and Husserl (though *not* Descartes and Fichte) precisely for their adherence to the principle of phenomenology. Just after *Being and Time*, with the advent of phase three, Heidegger did not become Kantian, but Kant became phenomenological in Heidegger’s sense. By 1930, Heidegger saw that this was partially incorrect, because Kant’s horizon of questioning was geared to the givenness of the thing not the historical givenness of intelligibility. With the fourth phase, Heidegger continues to regard Kant as phenomenological but now in the Husserlian sense, not in the more pregnant sense as a partner in his own brand of phenomenology.

The fourth and final phase of his Kant-interpretation has Kant recover a phenomenology of judgment in the face of modern rationalism and thereby renew contact with Greek philosophy. As Husserl had independently and accidentally stumbled upon Kant’s position, so Kant independently and accidentally stumbled upon Greek philosophy. “Frequently, without expressly knowing it, Kant comes with the certainty of a sleepwalker, or better, by virtue of genuine

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<sup>32</sup> “Letter to William J. Richardson,” April 1962, in Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, 2d ed. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), xiv.

philosophical congeniality, back to the fundamental meaning of the primary philosophical concepts of the Greeks.”<sup>34</sup> Heidegger has in mind, chiefly, the phenomenological subordination of thought to intuition: “Reason is the faculty—we can say—of anticipatory gathering—*logos, legein*.” In this fourth phase, then, Heidegger translates Husserl’s recovery of Kant into a Kantian recovery of Greek thinking. The phenomenological Kant thereby achieves a decisive significance in Heidegger’s reading of the history of philosophy.<sup>35</sup> Rather than a return to the first phase of relative disinterest, the fourth phase rejoins the second in finding a quasi-phenomenological Kant. Now, however, he is accorded decisive historical significance for the recovery of Greek thought.

## Conclusion

The motive for Heidegger’s interest in Kant is phenomenological. He sought and found a phenomenological ally who shared the same goal of articulating the origination of experience. The interest in Kant, then, was not a detour but, as Heidegger himself maintained, a confirmation of his earliest insights. If this was the motive for his interest in Kant, what was the motive for his later distancing? Such a motive can be found in two interconnected places: first, Heidegger’s growing dissatisfaction with formally indicative research and second his recognition that the interpretation of Kant said more about Heidegger than it did Kant. Heidegger retains the phenomenology in principle but cultivates within it an eye for history and the historical

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<sup>33</sup> “Letter to Richardson,” xiv.

<sup>34</sup> *Schellings Abhandlung über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit (1809)*, ed. Hildegard Feick (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1971) [*Schellings’s Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1985)], 45/37.

<sup>35</sup> For more on Kant’s role in the history of philosophy, see my “Heidegger on Overcoming Rationalism through Transcendental Philosophy,” *Continental Philosophy Review* 41 (2008): 17-41.

transformation of the phenomenologist. Even for the later Heidegger, Kant as well as Husserl remain critical forerunners to Heidegger's own historical reinterpretation of phenomenology.

The interest in Kant was at first a confirmation and later a distraction (or "refuge" as Heidegger termed it), but it was not an aberration. With *Being and Time*, penned in 1926, Heidegger is only tentative in his reading of the phenomenological Kant. Only the third phase, from 1927-29, sees Kant as a phenomenological partner. The Kant-book, belonging to the third phase, does not fulfill the projected plans of *Being and Time* for a destruction of Kant, but instead presents a "progressive," though still critical reading, which offers a new, collaborative interpretation of Kant. The reading of Kant from 1930 and later rejects the specifics of the progressive reading, and it thereby rejoins the quasi-phenomenological Kant first glimpsed in late 1925 and discernible in *Being and Time*. The aberration thesis cannot recognize the basic identity of the second and fourth phases, because it does not distinguish the second from the third phase. Heidegger's 1925 turn to Kant, phenomenological in motivation, was not an aberration, though the 1927-29 reading of Kant according to *Being and Time*'s horizon of questioning was undoubtedly a distraction.

The promise of the "phenomenological Kant" gave Heidegger entrance to a rich domain of investigation. As he sought to find the place of phenomenology in the history of philosophy, he found points of contact with Aristotle and then, through Husserl, Kant. Heidegger's phenomenological Kant became the means for him to surpass Husserl, and yet the phenomenological Kant at the same time signals Heidegger's continued indebtedness to Husserlian phenomenology. In four phases and with reference to Husserl, Heidegger interpreted Kant as first *falling short of* phenomenology, then *approaching* phenomenology, then *advancing*

phenomenology, and finally *recovering* phenomenology. Heidegger's Kant is not an alternative to Husserl's phenomenology but its attempted advancement.

Registering the junctures of his reading allows us to get the history right. When we do the philosophical issues themselves can come to light. At no point in his life did Heidegger think his peculiar brand of phenomenological thinking sprang like Athena fully formed from the head of Zeus. Husserl, Kant, and certain Greek thinkers anticipated and prepared the way for the appropriation of the tradition undertaken by Heidegger. In the end, Heidegger took phenomenology and transcendental philosophy further in the direction he wanted to go than anyone had before, but he took them so far they ceased to be recognizable to others. Husserl, for one, came to realize he could "have nothing to do . . . with this brilliant, unscientific genius."<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, the phenomenological Kant remains one of the principal reference points for the variations of Heidegger's own peculiar "transcendental" and "phenomenological" thinking, whatever we (or Heidegger) might wish to call it.

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<sup>36</sup> Husserl, "Letter to Alexander Pfänder, January 6, 1931," in *Confrontation with Heidegger*, 482.