UNDERSTANDING THE SELF AS HYPOSTASIS

A Phenomenological View on Therapeutic Presence

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Abstract: Natural scientific views on the human being have the tendency to reduce selfhood to a static object. This tendency arguably derives from the need to objectify the present in which the human being is found. Phenomenology avoids such a reduction by engaging with the present instead of distancing from it for the sake of analysis. This beneficence that derives from a phenomenological view of reality is argued to be a warranted view a counseling therapist should adopt. Not only can a therapist who involves phenomenological perspectives in their practice succeed in viewing their clients non-instrumentally, but such a therapist can also "Be" genuine. The paper conceives of the therapist capable of performing these phenomenological tasks in therapy as adopting a mode of Being which we highlight as akin to the ancient concept: *hypostasis*. This conception in turn is shown to have epistemological ramifications for the meaning of "understanding", which is shown quite suitably in the example of therapeutic presence. Heidegger's Dasein serves as conceptual example of self in the paper to elucidate the connection between hypostasis and understanding throughout.

Keywords: authenticity, hypostasis, objectification, phenomenology, therapeutic presence.

1. Introduction

The relationship and communication between client and therapist in a therapeutic setting can be enhanced when phenomenological methods are entertained. The keyword for this paper to conceptualize the therapist who maintains a suspension of their judgement on their client whilst remaining authentic in this phenomenological manner we consider as *hypostasis*. Not only will this concept be considered a goal for therapists to reach as a sort of ideal form to aspire to, but also as a conception of understanding in the epistemological sense. As such, "understanding" as a process does not refer to mere knowledge acquisition and eventual possession. Rather, "understanding" which will be shown to be synonymous with hypostasis is considered a way of being which can be particularly useful for therapists. And so this paper, although taking inspiration from the notion of hypostasis found in the Christian

conceptualization of the Trinity,[1] does not delve into the issues of anhypostasis or enhypostasis which are concepts that aim to describe Jesus' humanity or Jesus' human nature. The paper aims to consider an interpretation of the human self's nature as hypostasis, through its place in the present moment and seeing this interpretation's importance in the example of counselling therapy.

It should be historically pointed out that De Tavernier informs of Hubert Eugene Langan's observation in "The Philosophy of Personalism and Its Educational Applications" that the concept of "person" for the ancient Roman philosopher Boethius derived from two different sources; the first as the Greek hypostasis (thus the Latin substantia, referring to individuality) and the second from the Latin: persona, translating to hypostasis but originally meaning mask.[2] We can see from these translations why the Trinity caused historical disputes, as the three hypostases (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) conflicted with the Nicene doctrine of the unity of substance within the Trinity, resulting in the 381 A.D. First Council of Constantinople to determine if the word persona and prosopon (its Greek equivalent) were synonymous with hypostasis.[3]

This paper aims to consider hypostasis as a form or mode of being akin to the three hypostases in the Trinity, but applies this notion of hypostasis to human existence and communication, specifically in a therapeutic setting. To do this, hypostasis is considered synonymous with understanding which will be shown to have implications for how we understand "understanding" itself, but also more specifically its possible role in human interaction and existence within therapeutic settings. Hypostasis is essentially conceived as a fluid mode of existence in which a therapist does not embrace a fixed stature to reduce themselves to their role as therapist. This lack of fixity concomitantly prevents therapists from observing their clients in a fixed manner for reductive purposes. As seen with the hypostatic personalities of Berne's ego states, in which individuals oscillate between Child, Parent, and Adult in virtue of these states being phenomenologically coherent systems of feelings linked to given individuals,[4] this paper propounds the practicality of such oscillation in itself as helpful to prevent judgement and reduction of clients in therapeutic settings through an effective therapeutic presence.

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[1] The Trinity considers that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are hypostases of God in the Christian tradition.

[2] Johan DE TAVERNIER, *The Historical Roots of Personalism*, in "Ethical Perspectives", 16, 3, 2009, p. 389.

[3] *Ibidem*

[4] Eric BERNE, *Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy: A Systematic Individual and Social Psychiatry*, The Guernsey Press, Guernesey 1961, p. 17.

The benefits of a therapist holding this phenomenological lens as hypostasis for a conception of understanding in therapy will be elucidated through a Heideggerian support of Dasein throughout the paper. To do this, this paper will firstly provide an overview on the semantics of the term hypostasis and its synonymity with understanding, aiming to conceive hypostasis and understanding alike as a mode of being. Secondly, it will show how phenomenology is able to avoid an objectifying approach to experience by countering a causally based scientific one, which is shown to be crucial for therapy. Thirdly, it will show how this de-objectification provides for a different conception of the human being from the strictly Modern Cartesian one, and the ramifications this has in therapy. Finally, it will show why authenticity for the human condition depends on phenomenology to de-objectify the present in order to "reach the essence of what humanly stands before us".

2. Hypostasis as a Concept and a Way of Being in the Present

To investigate the semantics of the term "hypostasis", we may start by observing how Flynn highlights Sartre's analysis of the term "existence", revealing how "ex" can refer to "exiting" and "sistere" can refer to "standing"; "existence" can refer therefore to "standing out" and thus we as existing humans are more than ourselves in virtue of our consciousness being in motion beyond the present towards the future and its possibilities.[5] For the sake of "hypostasis" we also need to notice that we can take the suffix "stand" within the state verb "understand" to also refer to "stasis", thus fixity, which we can see present as the second part of "hypostasis" as a compound noun. It is in this term that "standing" or "sistere" receives a different meaning, one of conflict, or inertia. The "hypo", as holding a meaning of being "beneath", changes the meaning of "standing" to one of a "standing not yet identified" or an "educated guess" as to what is standing in front of us in our observation (just as hypothesis can be considered a thesis or argument not yet proven).

Therapists who activate this transcendental sense of observation can engage with those clients sitting in front of them with a sense of humility as no possible judgements are entertained to be placed on the client, since any attempt of attaining knowledge on the client is suspended. Identity of the client for a therapist in this hypostatic sense then refers, in a Levinasian sense, to one that is a departure and a return to itself as the therapist departs from their own presuppositions and returns to themselves

[5] Thomas R. FLYNN, *Existentialism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2006, p. 108.

continually.[6] This is much like how the Trinity functions in which The Son as a hypostasis of God, will oscillate between itself and the concept of God, yet still communicate God whilst being The Son. Such oscillation requires an openness to possibility and a fluidity that does not reduce one concept over the other.

In therapeutic terms, the present moment is important for reaching hypostasis' mode of fluidity, as Letteri informs of the importance of Frank Schalow's consideration that our openness, an openness that is characteristic of hypostasis, involves a propelling the self into an ecstatic disclosedness of the present, or "there".[7] This movement into the present aligns with Levinas' conception of the present as an enchainment that is in relation to itself.[8] Hypostasis as a result of this enchainment leads to an existent that is anonymous, which is why Levinas states:

> The present is the event of hypostasis. The present leaves itself-better still, it is the departure from self […] The present rips apart and joins together again […] Positing hypostasis as a present is still not to introduce time into being […] a function of hypostasis, the ego stands directly outside the oppositions of the variable and the permanent, as well as outside the categories of being and nothingness. The paradox ceases when one understands that the "I" is not initially an existent but a mode of existing itself, that properly speaking it does not exist. To be sure, the present and the "I" turn into existents, and one can form them into a time, so that they have time like an existent.[9]

It is from this conception of hypostasis and the present being so intrinsically linked that we can take "understanding" (as an interpretation of hypostasis and vice-versa), to go beyond its commonly understood notions as a stative verb (i.e., I understand you), as a noun (i.e., Understanding is important for human communication), and as an adjective, (i.e., I am an understanding entity), to a new conception of understanding as a dynamic verb (i.e., I am understanding you). This new conception of understanding, though grammatically incorrect in Modern English usage, takes the human being as embodied, engaged, and as an intentional meaning-making being who is historical and found to be embedded in social contexts, thus a being who acts on motivations, not merely cause and effect and knowledge possession.[10] Understanding in this context can thus be considered akin to a Vichian approach to knowledge, thus one which emphasizes that knowledge or truth possession requires the capacity of the person in

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[6] Emmanuel LÉVINAS, *Time and the Other* [1947], tr. eng. Richard A. Cohen, Pittsburgh 1987, p. 55.
[7] Mark LETTERI, *Heidegger and the Question of Psychology: Zollikon and Beyond,* Value Inquiry Book Series, vol. 200, Rodopi, New York 2009, p. 77.
[8] LÉVINAS, *Time and the Other*, p. 56.
[9] *Ivi*, p. 52.
[10] Dermot MORAN, *Defending the Transcendental Attitude: Husserl's Concept of the Person and the Challenges of Naturalism*, in "Phenomenology and Mind", 7, 2014, p. 43.

possession of it to construct or even reconstruct that which the knowledge or truth related to.[11] Knowledge of a client thus involves the therapist constantly creating a relationship with the client through an openness and fluid process of understanding, trust, and empathy that is never fully possessed. We can take this conception of understanding derived from phenomenology as a key insight into how we can accept understanding as equating with hypostasis and how a therapist can enter this oscillating state.

What we experience then, phenomenology reveals, and it is contextualized in an implicit way, and so phenomenology involves horizons that are evolving constantly rather than fixed.[12] These horizons demand a non-objectified present for their grasping. Phenomenology allows us to engage with a non-objectified present because it can shift our understanding of understanding (our metaunderstanding).

Using semantics, one useful approach to understanding the "understanding" involved in this phenomenological view of hypostasis is by taking the translation of "understand" in Spanish, "entender", and replacing the vowel "E" at the start of the word with "I". This has no phonetic or semantic consequence, and we see that "understanding" can then be taken as "entending" or for our purposes, "intending", which can be synonymous in English with the noun "intentionality". Phenomenology thus allows us to see that "understanding" is not based on a mere substance dualism in which the mind performs or undergoes this process alone. Rather, in accessing consciousness' intentional structure, phenomenology can allow us to consider "understanding" as a "way of being" that depends on an interwoven mind and body, instead of mere acquisition of knowledge; hence the mentioning of the alternative creative and imaginative Vichian approach to knowledge above.

Perceiving reality as an object can be considered to equate with and depend on experiencing the present moment as an object as well, along with everything else found within such immediate experience. Perception here does not limit itself to sight, as it is the final interpretation of reality through the senses finally conceived by the mind that produces the final judgement. The objectification of reality has become a tenet of Modernity and is remnant in today's perceptions of the world in a myriad of ways throughout the contemporary cultures of the planet. Approaching what is found in reality, including other humans, from a natural scientific point of view, bases itself on presuppositions, such as the notion that everything in reality has a calculable objective

[11] Alexander L. GUNGOV, *Patient Safety: The Relevance of Logic in Medical Care*, Verlag, Stuttgart 2018, p. 21.

[12] Simon CRITCHLEY and Timothy MOONEY, *Chapter 13 Deconstruction and Derrida*, in Richard KEARNEY (edited by), *Continental Philosophy in the 20th Century* , vol. 8, Routledge, London 1994, p. 372.

nature.[13] It has to some extent been normalized as the "coherent" way of experiencing and understanding the world as we can see in the examples of private property and material consumption. In terms of how we view other humans, this can be seen in the necessary reductions and categorizations of mental illness in the DSM-V to the labelling of individuals as "homeless" objects who disrupt the mechanics of society. Such views threaten therapeutic presence by placing a veil over the transparency between individuals. Therapeutic presence aims for purity rather than skewed obscurity, which is why Meller and Porges define it as: «therapists being fully in the moment on several concurrently occurring dimensions, including physical, emotional, cognitive, and relational».[14]

Phenomenology is an important method for perceiving reality in such a way as to avoid such reductive objectification of persons. Its importance in therapy pertains to the notions of how the phenomenological method is able to de-objectify the present. Phenomenology essentially promotes intentionality of consciousness that can be interpreted as a Heideggerian Being-in-the-world, where self-consciousness, as consciousness referring to itself, is possible only in so far as it simultaneously refers to the world.[15] Such a perspective is tantamount to therapeutic presence and relationships; however it needs to be reflected on to promote its awareness and hypostasis as a conception of self assists in such reflection.

3. Why Phenomenology is Needed to Value the Present as Non-Object

Phenomenology as a method designates consciousness as playing a central role in the production and attainment of meaning.[16] Meaning is that which is articulated in a disclosure that understands, and it is not a mere property lying behind or attached to beings in a causal sense.[17] In the therapeutic sense, the present is important for meaning because in its understanding disclosure, meaning stresses the management of the

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[13] Medard BOSS, *Psychoanalysis and Daseinanalysis*, tr. eng. Ludwig B. Lefbre, Dacapo Press, New York 1982, pp. 28-29.

[14] Shari M. GELLER and Stephen W. PORGES, *Therapeutic Presence: Neurophysiological Mechanisms Mediating Feeling Safe in Therapeutic Relationships*, in "Journal of Psychotherapy Integration", 24, 3, American Psychological Association 2014, p. 179.

[15] Luisa P. R. SUÁREZ, *Antropología del yo y psicopathología desde una perspectiva fenomenológica*, in "XI Boletín de estudios de filosofía y cultura Manuel Mindán: Pensamiento español contemporáneo: Dimensions del yo: Fenomenología, antropología y psicopatología", 11, Barcelona 2013, p. 50.

[16] FLYNN, *Existentialism: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 108.

[17] Martin HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time* [1953], tr. eng. Joan Stambaugh, Suny Press, New York 1996, p. 142.

present to achieve a future that is more effective and meaningful.[18] It can be extrapolated from this aspect of the present that we should not understand the human being via the sciences of extra-human nature which constantly refer to the future and past as causal links that are causally linked.[19] Knowing reality is not contingent upon only having the correct representation of what we find in the world represented as objective teleological goals to be reached and eventually possessed in the mind. Instead, living in the present that is engaging with our experience of it and allowing it to transcend any object/subject dichotomy can provide deeper meaning.[20] Searching for meaning with a client/patient in need of purpose thus demands a resistance to possessing the knowledge derived from them, but also from possessing them as objective beings, which is why a continual creation of meaning is warranted.

When the present and consciousness are not subjected to the processes of thought which are processes that aim to objectify what is experienced, they prove to be intrinsic rather than instrumental. The present and consciousness can both share the attribute then of being taken as non-physical when not analyzed, which is argued to mean that they are not known directly through thought processes. The implications this has for identity is that it shows that our dependence on the present and likewise consciousness for identification of and for ourselves as humans, is a dependence that implies that we and objects of reality, cannot be known merely through our direct causal experience. We see this non-causal rationality in psychological terms in Sartre who embraced phenomenology in order to give us access to the inner life of the human being; access to the purposes and intentions that provoke humans to act, which contrasts with any natural causal interpretation of behaviour.[21]

Phenomenology deserves admiration for approaching the world and other human beings with clarity by entering reality without presuppositions upon reality's alterity. It takes reality as a phenomenon that is also free from presuppositions itself; presuppositions which leave open the possibility of skewing our understanding.[22] The process of phenomenology interpreted here as an entrance and so an opening or a disclosure is thus free from judgements. The phenomenological process is a liberation from analysis and so that which is processed through phenomenological means neither provokes analysis nor is analyzed through phenomenology. Even the suspension of the

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[18] LETTERI, *Heidegger and the Question of Psychology: Zollikon and Beyond,* p. 28.
[19] Charles TAYLOR, *Sources of The Self: The Making of Modern Identity,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1989, p. 80.
[20] *Ivi*, p. 144.
[21] FLYNN, *Existentialism: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 121.
[22] Irvin D. YALOM, *Existential Psychotherapy*, Basic Books, Harper Collins Publishers, New York 1980, p. 16.

recognition of such judgmental presuppositional analysis allows presuppositions to be viewed and scrutinized, and in turn set aside.[23] Presence in therapy requires such suspension if there is to be authenticity between client and therapist. Removing the layers of judgment on a client is thus done so through phenomenology, allowing hypostasis to be considered one conceptual manner to strive for in which to attain such suspension.

4. Phenomenological Understanding vs. Scientific

The present moment which phenomenology values involves an essence of a situation and identity which unfold within this autonomous present. The importance this has in therapy is genuine engagement between the client and therapist. It is through a present that is not viewed as an instrumental object that we are able therefore to engage with a different reflection from the scientific Cartesian one. For Taylor, reality depends on humans, not physics, so the human sciences require less of a distance from the world than a natural scientific one as humanness in therapy is not known through science and physics.[24] Likewise can be said of Heidegger's aim to understand human reality from the "inside" through to an "outside"; such a process is not done in a subjectivist way, but keeps in view the human being's essential loci in the universe.[25] This can be considered an ascientific approach to understanding, and so we can see that phenomenology's role in this approach to grasping the human self, rejects the causality of science. We are not products of causal entities determining our body or psychology, thus we are not to conceive of ourselves as biological objects.[26]

We now see the repercussions of accepting only a scientific view on reality and the possible skewed results this can have in therapy. Perhaps one of the most important revelations from recognizing the potential fallacies inherent in a natural scientific view of the world is that humans are entities that are so spontaneous and creative that they require a field of study that is less objective than mechanized scientific analysis. Such a revelation not surprisingly is powerful enough to change not only our conceptions on knowledge and its existence, but also the human being itself. Science is built on a world that is directly experienced through causal means, and so phenomenology's "take" on the world, in which the world is already there, is not an objective world with an

[23] Bernard CULLEN, *Philosophy of existence 3: Merleau-Ponty,* in Richard KEARNEY (edited by), *Continental Philosophy in the 20th Century,* vol. 8, Routledge, London 1994, p. 91.
[24] TAYLOR, *Sources of The Self: The Making of Modern Identity*, p. 59.
[25] LETTERI, *Heidegger and the Question of Psychology: Zollikon and Beyond*, p. 4.
[26] CULLEN, *Philosophy of existence 3: Merleau-Ponty*, pp. 89-90.

objective present. The human being is the world's source, which means that our existence does not derive from causal antecedents (social and physical environment), rather it comports or tends towards them.[27] This tendency is what the hypostatic conception of the human coheres with, as it respects the client's presence through a suspended judgment.

Such fluid suspension avoids the purpose of analyzing the perceptual foundations upon which knowledge finds itself, but which also precede knowledge.[28] In virtue of not fixing what is encountered in reality, the client is not manipulated for the sake of analysis but rather "left alone". We will now explore this new conception of the human being as a result of avoiding causal identification.

5. The Non-Causal Interpretation of the Human Being

Heidegger's interpretation of phenomenology assists us in exploring the "unfolding essence" of the self which is a notion that can be applied to clients.[29] Defining the "I" as a subject in a scientific sense, is to consider it as always and already objectively present; hence the need to question if in saying "I", the human, or Dasein (Heidegger's "there-being") really does express itself as being in the world or not. The Dasein's everyday saying "I" may not truly take itself as being in the world.[30] For our purposes, the therapist needs phenomenology to shift their perspectives on time and experience in order to unfold their own and their clients' essence through hypostasis/understanding, without mundane everydayness. The process of unfolding has been shown to transpire through non-causal means that allow authenticity and congruence to flourish. This requires phenomenological activities that can be, in existentialist terms, "followed through" in a present that is not "taken" nor "given" as a mere object.

De-objectifying refrains from a causal interpretation of reality and can be understood through the "de-realizing" of the world, which is an activity we see in Sartre. For Sartre, images in the mind are not mere miniature objects projected on the external world for their comprehension, which has raised the issue of corresponding the inner and the outer world. Consciousness' imagining power "de-realizes" the world of perception; a power requiring a non-objectified present in which objects are not merely to be found in the mind, but rather allows for the revelation of the features found in

[27] *Ibidem*
[28] *Ibidem*
[29] LETTERI, *Heidegger and the Question of Psychology: Zollikon and Beyond*, p. 27.
[30] HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 296.

phenomenological description.[31] Modern reason that depends on natural science is procedural, and so what this reason aims to do is not contemplate order, but build pictures of things found in reality and its accompanying present via rational thinking which objectifies what is perceived through a first-person point of view.[32] Applying this reason to a client is detrimental to their selfhood, as their potential projection as a hypostasis is reduced to a static object (stasis) whilst a therapist performing the application also reduces themselves in the process. This interpretation of hypostasis as a potential mode of being for therapeutic use is to therefore be contrasted with any connotation of reification. Hypostasis equates in this project as an identity of movement, and the "not-yet", not a reduced object or concept, because hypostasis cannot exactly be "pinned down". Stasis, on the other hand, represents such objectified reduction, referring to being stymied, immobilized and static.[33]

Taking the self and other individuals as hypostasis involves conceiving their identities as a representation that is found in present reality. This representation supervenes on its essence rather than being a mere effect or epiphenomenon of it. Considering Levinas' linkage of the present and hypostasis by stating that the present is at the same time an event, but not yet anything existing, yet also a pure event expressed through a verb,[34] we can consider hypostasis as having therapeutic benefits through its grounding of settings and clients in the present moment. Phenomenological reduction takes place in a present that is experienced as phenomena rather than a fixed object in a spatialized time. Phenomenology's reduction thus provides a manner of perceiving the world that allows us to witness the extent to which a therapist and a client are embedded in the world.[35]

Human existence involves pure and invisible capacities for receiving and perceiving (*Vernehmen*), and so an "understanding" is in demand in therapy that is not akin to any "capsule-like" mind filling process in the scientific sense. Phenomenology, rather, supports an "understanding" that is unquenchable and so "open textured".[36] It serves as the method that can provide such open textural interpretation, as it aims to deal with that which is before conceptualization. This signifies that it deals with experience which is indirect and subjective. Applying this phenomenological method in therapy thus allows for discovering clients as present representations through hypostasis (just as God

[31] FLYNN, *Existentialism: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 20.
[32] TAYLOR, *Sources of The Self: The Making of Modern Identity*, p. 168.
[33] Robert J. LIFTON, *The Protean Self: Human Resilience in an Age of Fragmentation*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1993, p. 81.
[34] LÉVINAS, *Time and the Other*, p. 52.
[35] CULLEN, *Philosophy of existence 3: Merleau-Ponty*, p. 91.
[36] LETTERI, *Heidegger and the Question of Psychology: Zollikon and Beyond*, p. 5.

can be understood through the Son) rather than understanding them through interpretations of labels and categories that are developed through analysis.

Phenomenology uncovers the origins or fundamental notions of clients to provide for a clearer view of the essential core for all the aspects of their being. This allows us to explore the embodied human being (for example Heidegger's Dasein) and self by not treating the self, nor the present as spatial objects, but rather recognizing their "making room" and how this interweaves with the present.[37] Such space making can be considered a phenomenon of human existence, which considers the human being as dwelling in a primordial ontological clearing.[38] Consequently, phenomenology can be hermeneutical in therapy, as its task can provide for a phenomenological description that brings forth our "inkling" or pre-understanding of a client and their issues, which can be considered an implicit awareness of Being; a precognitive and immediate comprehension.[39]

The present when treated non-objectively acts as the portal within this sort of "understanding" that is non-cognitive based and non-objective based, in turn being considered pre-theoretically based. This sort of process persists as an "understanding" that does not involve an objective present, since conceiving of an objective present implies that one has already disengaged from the world in order to gain the stance toward it required to objectify it analytically. Disengagement for analysis contends with an authentic presence by a therapist, since the intellectual activity of disengagement in therapy will prevent the phenomenological stance of appearing to the client as the therapist "really is" and vice-versa. Promoting a hypostatic presence in the therapy setting will allow for clearer disclosure and authenticity by allowing the client and the therapist to be congruent without requiring the intellectual activity of reification.

Understanding then is not merely dependent on the receiver of information being present and the communicator successfully disseminating the information. The state of being of both parties is also important, and so being in a state of hypostasis not only permits understanding by allowing the flow of information to proceed to the other person, but also by provoking the process in the first place to transpire authentically without intellectual distancing from the reality presented in which the other individual is present. Contrasting between Freud and Rogers is relevant here, as though they may have had similarities between their approaches, the former could be interpreted to inhibit ordinary human interaction with clients in order to reach a pure scientific

[37] *Ivi*, p. 7.
[38] *Ivi*, p. 8.
[39] FLYNN, *Existentialism: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 120.

objectivity whereas the latter would inhibit ordinary interaction to display acceptance of emotion and feeling.[40]

Adopting Heidegger's view that genuine and primordial truth rests in pure intuition, not in mere scientific cognition,[41] we can consider a purity that allows for non-judgmental perceptions of clients. Cognition of an objectified present, on the other hand, involves possibilities of disclosure that fall short of an understanding of being, as they negate the moods of primordial belonging where we are presented before our Being as a "there".[42] The therapist needs to be aware of themselves within therapy in order to ensure they are not "falling prey" to the client or disengaging from the setting. Heidegger informs that such an inauthentic present, as the Now, lacks the Moment, and is irresolute, as it is a making present that takes place via falling prey to the "world".[43] Hypostasis ensures that a therapist does not become vulnerable to labelling or reduction by their clients and even vice-versa, by not remaining in a static state for such reification. Therapeutic presence thus involves resisting disengagement, as it starts with therapists producing a present before therapy itself. This is done in order to meet clients from this presence in order to maintain a state of being that is characterized as grounded, open and aware.[44] Such a presence we have seen thus contrasts with cognition as a form of understanding. We can understand "cognition" coming from *cogitare* and *cogere* which mean to gather or collect, so as cognition involving a meta-understanding that considers thinking as an inner order we build not create; an order Descartes would use in a new way with his *cogito* subject (the I think therefore I am).[45] In therapy, we have seen the importance of aiming to accept clients as they are rather than as sources of information to be processed cognitively for categorical collection. Presenting oneself as hypostasis, thus as fluidly open and receptive, is key to preventing causal interpretations of the world, but also to allow for conceptions of oneself to be free from objective analysis. Whether or not both therapist and client perform such phenomenological interpretation within therapy is an important question; however, the therapist should put themselves in a position to promote it for the sake of authenticity and congruence.

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[40] Kyle ARNOLD, *Behind the Mirror: Reflective Listening and its Tain in the Work of Carl Rogers,* in "The Humanistic Psychologist", 42, 2014, p. 357. DOI: 10.1080/08873267.2014.913247.
[41] HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 160.
[42] Rudiger SAFRANSKI, *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil*, tr. eng. Ewald Osers, Harvard University Press, Harvard 1998, p. 158.
[43] HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time,* p. 311.
[44] GELLER and PORGES, *Therapeutic Presence,* p. 179.
[45] TAYLOR, *Sources of The Self: The Making of Modern Identity*, p. 142.

6. Essence or Authenticity: if there is any?

Phenomenology is necessary for disclosing authenticity in any relationship. Historicity through phenomenology can prevent a therapist for example from accepting a vulgar interpretation of the client's or their own history. Such inauthenticity refers to an inauthentic covering over and disguise which presents itself when disengagement from reality for objective analysis takes place.[46] This inauthenticity involves a masking of authenticity through a vulgar understanding of not only "understanding" itself, but Dasein (Heidegger's there-being) and its history. Inauthenticity of a person or of another involves objectifying the present in order to hide from it, which also objectifies the person(s) present in the process. Avoiding the vulgar conception of history then is a phenomenological task which deduces historicity purely from Dasein's primordial temporality, in turn countering the vulgar interpretation's temporal character of history.[47] The purity of Dasein is thus based on Dasein never being past because it is never objectively present, as it exists, it is never reduced to an objective presence.[48]

Heidegger's notion that "what is", thus "Being", is hidden, unthought of and undisclosed, considers that being authentic requires being creative, inquisitive, and having an open and receptive attitude to possibilities. Authenticity is thus a way of being, and so the creative manner in which we communicate our hypostasis and our hypostasis itself are reflections of our authenticity and congruence. Being authentic thus allows us to de-objectify the present *Now* and convert it into an authentic *Moment* which is important for relating to clients in therapy settings.

Through phenomenology we can now understand personhood in a broader context than through the autonomous rationality of Modernity, as phenomenology recognizes the range of feeling, embodied selfhood, emotion and value.[49] Phenomenology thus brings us back to that first moment of valuing the present, as it allows us to bracket oneself and others, and in turn bracket the moment to provide for a clearer understanding of who we and others are. Seeing the world aesthetically is to see it phenomenologically, and so means engaging with it in a manner that does not objectify the experience of the present moment, but rather places us in the present time in such a way that we inwardly experience ourselves through every moment.[50] Such awareness

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[46] HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 344.
[47] *Ivi*, p. 345.
[48] *Ivi*, p. 348.
[49] Dermot MORAN, *Let's Look at it Objectively: Why Phenomenology Cannot Be Naturalized,* in "Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement", 72, 2013, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2013, p. 51.
[50] Petruska CLARKSON, *Gestalt counselling in Action*, Sage, London 2004, p. 15.

is important for the therapist to recognize their "blind spots", but also to suspend their judgment on their clients; a suspension that clients should be learning to appreciate in therapy. Phenomenology thus seeks sources of knowledge through concentration on immediate experience that is without presuppositions and assumptions, as description is valued over interpretation.[51]

We can be considered less aware of ourselves the less we find ourselves engaged in phenomenological experience, since we cannot perceive a constant phenomenological experience due to the make-up of our perceptual capacities. At times, we will need to objectify the present and so we cannot be authentic all the time. In the contemporary world we eventually succumb to stasis, and thus let our actions remain in concealment because we often forget the forgetfulness of our Being.[52] Under stasis, we embrace the passing Now, which is an objectified present added to the past, whereas the authentic human which a therapist should be striving to reach, aims to be a hypostasis as a medium which moves in time, but also produces time through spontaneity and initiative.[53]

Therapists must channel what is communicated from clients in a time that is not disengaged, but rather lived through if the therapy is to involve authentic clarity. The disengagement that has derived from Modernity for example, implies an auto-objectification of self and a separation between ourselves through the first person perspective, so that the human being as a subject has a consciousness of its thought to disengage from it and objectify it; in turn denying its way of being.[54] We will see that this disengaged perspective on the world is neither conducive nor productive for living in the world and should be limited in therapy, as it denies our experience of the "things and individuals themselves", especially clients. Disengagement can be said to be responsible for the superficiality of ourselves and our worlds. Such disengagement means disengaging from our embodied perspective which is a perspective that involves seeing objects as qualified and thus in themselves rather than analytically as objects of information.[55]

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[51] *Ibidem*
[52] HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time,* p. 202.
[53] SAFRANSKI, *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil,* p. 53.
[54] TAYLOR, *Sources of The Self: The Making of Modern Identity,* p. 175.
[55] *Ivi*, p. 145.

7. How Does Phenomenology Allow Us to Interpret Time and Self?

Cognition is one of action's functions, and so Heidegger claims it is a mistake to attempt to understand in virtue of recognizing awareness that is outside itself through collecting information.[56] Understanding is thus no mere cognition as we have seen in its conception as hypostasis, but involves engagement with a present that is non-objectified for any detached analysis. Heidegger and Husserl have different interpretations on this, as Heidegger is against the phenomenological exploration of awareness in Husserl. For Heidegger, "real understanding" derives from dealing with the world practically and so explored via life's practical activity through engagement.[57] Humans are the only creatures we know of that are caring beings because they experience such a horizon open ahead of themselves, allowing them to take the time to care as "lived temporality".[58] Caring in therapy thus requires a practical engagement with clients in order to understand them fully. It is not only how others, especially in therapy, appear to us but how we appear to them. Rogers' trance-like state in therapy, which aims to allow therapists to be genuine/congruent, empathetic and display unconditional positive regard, encapsulates the conception of the therapist as hypostasis rather than an objectified stasis in therapy; this trance-state refrains from internal and external objectification.[59] Entering such a trance reflects the fluidity and openness of the being of hypostasis, and allows understanding to be considered a continual state rather than an act of possession.

To refrain from objectification, Heidegger gives priority to being over thinking which undermines any subject/object dichotomy for interpreting reality and other human beings. The human being deals with the possibility of being toward different modes of behaviour, ways of being, or hypostasis with inner-worldly beings; the ego, the present moment, and such modes are not objectively present as they would be for Cartesian natural science.[60] This is why we are looking at how this should be done through a shift in our meta-understanding by reorienting ourselves to the present non-objectively with hypostasis representing the mode for this shift. To counter the scientific understanding of self and remain authentic, Heidegger informs that Dasein is not objectively present in space, because it never fills out space as a useful or real thing does

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[56] SAFRANSKI, *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil,* p. 156.
[57] *Ibidem*
[58] *Ivi*, p. 157.
[59] Carl R. ROGERS, *A personal formulation of client-centered therapy*, in "Marriage and Family Living", 14, 4, 1952, p. 344.
[60] HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 195.

by having boundaries divide them from surrounding space.[61] Dasein rather takes space in, so it is not merely objectively present in a piece of space or an objectified present in which its body fills out.[62] The features of Dasein here are reminiscent of the state of hypostasis this paper is propounding, which is considering understanding as an engaging process rather than one of mere analysis.

Heidegger supports the notion that objectification avoids Dasein's temporality which we have seen is a notion that is detrimental to an authentic therapist-client relationship.[63] Today, science continues on with Dasein's detrimental tendency to understand itself in terms of the world, thus as a thing that is among other things.

The phenomenological "lived experience" in a therapy session is thus conducive to presence rather than cognitive analysis of the client and what they communicate. We have seen that this strays from any theoretical conceptualization of the world, such as Cartesian natural science, which relates the human being to the world through thinking.[64] Phenomenology can be considered then a scheme which shows there is a subjective internal space that confronts an objective outer space without strict object/subject dichotomies; showing our thoughts and perceptions as acting differently from the normal scientific understanding of how they act.[65]

8. Existence as a Non-Object

Through the consideration of Dasein as represented by hypostasis, and by designating objective presence as *existentia* and existence as Dasein's being, we see that Heidegger aims to show that Dasein's being requires a new characterization, apart from *existentia.*[66] Heidegger stresses that the beings that are not Dasein have objective presence as their mode of being and that when we thus question the formal reflective perceptions of the "I" as a given, we gain access to a phenomenological problem with its meaning in the formal phenomenology of consciousness.[67] The self, or the "I" therefore, along with others, are to be understood not as objective presences, but in a non-committed formal indication of something which reveals itself in the phenomenal

[61] *Ivi*, p. 336.
[62] *Ibidem*
[63] *Ivi*, p. 151.
[64] FLYNN, *Existentialism: A Very Short Introduction,* p. 61.
[65] SAFRANSKI, *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil,* p. 77.
[66] HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time,* p. 39.
[67] *Ivi*, p. 109.

context of being as that being's "opposite"; hence "not I" does not mean something like a being lacking "I-hood", but instead means a mode of being of "I" itself.[68]

Heidegger critiqued objectivization in order to allow human life to reveal itself in its own specificity because since human life escapes our understanding in the scientific sense, attempting to capture it from the objectivizing and theoretical attitude, we lose the references of the life-world. The theoretical-natural attitude de-experiences experience through an objectified present which in turn de-worlds the world we find ourselves in.[69] Such an approach to reality is not conducive to therapy, as therapy is perhaps one of the most essential activities in which authenticity and truth should be embraced if it is to be effective, and we see how objectification of the present is detrimental to such novel representation and experience.

9. The Authentic Moment vs The Inauthentic Now

The anticipation of resoluteness involves an authentic present which is non-objectified. Heidegger characterizes this maintaining a resolution as disclosing our situation, because within resoluteness the present is brought back from objectification.[70] The authentic present held in temporality that is authentic is the Moment for Heidegger which contrasts with the Now, as we have seen above.[71] We thus see there is an inauthentic and authentic present for Heidegger, the former of which objectifies the present. On the contrary, Heidegger considered that the authentic present, or Moment, refers to:

> the resolute raptness of Dasein, which is yet held in resoluteness, in what is encountered as possibilities and circumstances to be taken care of in the situation. The phenomenon of the Moment can in principle not be clarified in terms of the Now. The Now is a temporal phenomenon that belongs to time as within-time-ness: the now "in which" something comes into being, passes away, or is objectively present.[72]

Resoluteness is thus a useful term for therapy, in that its characterization of disclosure should be kept in mind when considering the therapeutic relationship. The client's "situation" is perhaps the main content of interest in the therapy session and to skew its presence through causal means signifies interpreting it as a reduced experience within an objectified spatio-temporal present. We now see the interrelatedness between

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[68] *Ibidem*
[69] SAFRANSKI, *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil*, p. 146.
[70] HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 311.
[71] *Ivi*, p. 311.
[72] *Ibidem*

the concepts of hypostasis, understanding, authenticity, Dasein, and the present moment. What can we conclude from this?

10. Conclusion

We can now frame understanding as synonymous with hypostasis, and so deviating from natural scientific work, as it can be seen, along with interpretation (for Heidegger and likewise for Gadamer) as a fundamental way of being in the world.[73] For Heidegger, understanding along with attunement are the fundamental existentials constituting the "there's being", constituting the being-in-the-world's disclosedness, as Heidegger states: «Understanding harbors in itself the possibility of interpretation, that is, the appropriation of what is understood».[74] Letteri concedes, that under this Heideggerian view the present is not objectified because we are beings in time who are already and always engaged with an understanding of self, others and things in the world; understanding is circular as we are only able to start where we are.[75] This understanding devalues the need for objectifying the present for scientific purposes in order to understand what we encounter in the world. Heidegger considers the engagement we are involved in with the world before any such objectification takes place. Therapists should aim for this primitive engagement in therapy in order to engage in empathy with clients, and we have seen how Rogers considered this a state of being in a trance. Within this trance there will be no need for therapists to inhibit themselves, as the trance appears to undermine all desires except for the one that is eager to understand.[76]

Phenomenology is important for such preunderstanding because we are interpreting what we are already and always in contact with "as it is". This interpretation requires a recognition of that which shows itself in the way it shows itself; a process of understanding that takes place over time, and in turn needs an orientation to the present as a non-object to respect such speculation.[77] For Heidegger then, the present and its world is not treated as a thing or assemblage of things that is merely "out there", but is the entire manner which Dasein moves in a concerning way. This movement we have been characterizing as hypostasis and as synonymous with understanding. Dasein projects its own Being on its possibilities, and this projecting of understanding also has

[73] FLYNN, *Existentialism: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 118.
[74] HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, p. 150.
[75] LETTERI, *Heidegger and the Question of Psychology: Zollikon and Beyond*, p. 93.
[76] Kyle ARNOLD, *Behind the Mirror,* p. 362.
[77] LETTERI, *Heidegger and the Question of Psychology: Zollikon and Beyond*, p. 93.

a proper possibility of self-development through authenticity.[78] We can apply this in therapy as a therapist and client express themselves as tacitly already "outside" when they understand each other, thus they are not considered "cut off" as something internal from the outside of themselves.[79] Heidegger thus opposes a Cartesian view of the subject that is disengaged from the world in this manner, as Heidegger claims that: «Essentially understanding, Dasein is initially together with what is understood».[80]

This phenomenological epistemology is important for therapy in which it is crucial that authenticity is present between therapist and client. Hall informs that for Heidegger, understanding is not objective nor an objective, rather it is something that we do.[81] Considering a quote from Heidegger that: «Understanding is the being of such a potentiality of being which is never still outstanding as something not yet objectively present, but as something essentially never objectively present, is together with the being of Dasein in the sense of existence»,[82] we can see the importance of resisting an objectivist view in therapy. Understanding is an existential that is fundamental, it is not a definite sort of cognition nor a cognition in general that would grasp something or someone like a client, thematically.[83]

When we engage in (or as we have propounded engage as) understanding, we are not just supporting a mere "staring" at *prima facie* reality to value the present. Such a *tabula rasa* character of experience can lead to a failure to understand a client fully and purely and could be conceptualized as the polar opposite of objectifying the present moment.[84] Rather, a therapist resisting their own objectification provides a state of existence as a tentative hypostasis that prevents their reality from being objectified as well. Such an existence is necessary in therapeutic settings in which therapists and clients are to feel they are not "falling prey" to what Heidegger would term the "They" or to each other.

Although there are occupations that might embrace or benefit from being inauthentic and succumb to the "They", where superficiality, dishonesty and persuasion are key, hypostasis can be understood as a mode of being that allows therapists to authentically rise to their clients and their needs whilst remaining true to their core values. Understanding in this mode has been shown to be akin to being

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[78] *Ivi,* p. 18.
[79] HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time,* p. 152.
[80] *Ivi*, p. 153.
[81] Jonathan HALL, *Understanding and Interpretation in the Clinical Setting: A Heideggerian Perspective,* in "Existential Analysis", 15, 1, 2004, pp. 109-115.
[82] HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time,* p. 135.
[83] *Ivi*, p. 309.
[84] *Ivi*, p. 140.

"under a trance" rather than involving a process of finding information "under a rock". It is hoped that therapists develop ways to consider how to enter this mode of hypostasis in their practice. Whether a mask is involved in this process is a questionable point of contention. As mentioned above with the concept of prosopon in which it was questioned if persona and mask equate with hypostasis, the question arises, do and should we wear a mask in therapy as therapist or client? One possible answer to this question can be whether or not we interpret the mask as a true representation of our self of our own creation or as a tool to hide our true selves.

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