

An Analysis of Time and Phenomenology by Husserl and Heidegger

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Abstract

This paper mainly discusses some important internal connections between Heidegger's early philosophical thoughts, especially the phenomenological theory of time and Dasein's existentialism, and Husserl's phenomenology of inner time consciousness, so as to provide some favorable perspectives for a clearer understanding of the overall ideological context of the two thinkers. Correcting the inconsistencies and contradictions that we have formed in our minds and resolving some of these doubts, especially through the analysis of time and phenomenology, we can more clearly understand some important clues of 20th century continental philosophy and its position on the historical stage. The key is how Heidegger successfully completed his Dasein existentialism innovation and its "hermeneutic" transformation.

Keywords

Phenomenology, Hermeneutic, Ontology, Dasein time

1. Introduction

In fact, the study of time and phenomenology of Husserl and Heidegger can be regarded as a central "problem" in the study of European philosophy in this century, which is not only the clarification and summary of philosophical problems in the last century but also the exploration and promotion of philosophy in this century.

The history of the phenomenological movement is a philosophical tradition started in the first half of the twentieth century by Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Paul Sartre. In that movement, the discipline of phenomenology was most valuable as a proper basis for all philosophical fields - as opposed to ethics or metaphysics or epistemology. The methods and characteristics of this discipline were widely debated by Husserl and his successors, and these debates continue.

There is a general view of the history of European philosophy in the twentieth century, beginning with Edmund Husserl at the beginning of the century, but also troubled by what he called Western cultural historical determinism and relativity, and then Husserl proposed phenomenological methods as a way to ensure that philosophy can grasp the eternal truth in the end. The original meaning of phenomenology is primordial-the description of present things in our experience and the description of our experience of them. The phenomenological movement was heralded by Husserl's slogan "Return to the thing itself". Because Husserl's "bracket" is to suspend the belief that all metaphysical structures are designed to make the things of our present experience manifest to us entirely alone, the discovery is indeed unquestionable, beyond all possible doubt.

According to the exact historical facts, Heidegger has been following Husserl through the transformation of “hermeneutics” and raised questions about the viability of Husserl’s phenomenology. The most important is the existentialism of Heidegger’s “hermeneutics,” and then soon he became aware of the significance of finitude, of the world and of the historicity of our human awkwardness - aware that our approach to the thing itself is infected and reshaped by the ideas of the thing that have been formed in our historical culture.

The criticism that Heidegger’s ontological hermeneutics owes its success to the supposition of Husserl’s phenomenology. A close study of Heidegger’s early texts reveals that the truth is not so simple. For example, the phenomenological hermeneutics established by the famous thinkers Gadamer and Ricoeur on the basis of Heidegger’s “hermeneutics” is clearly preconditioned by phenomenology. Heidegger himself is considered separate from Husserl, according to which his hermeneutic view of time not only agrees with many aspects of Husserl’s view but also seems to use the same phenomenological approach as Husserl’s. Phenomenological time, however, serves as the key to understanding not only the relationship between Husserl and Heidegger, but also the development of continental philosophy as a whole in the twentieth century. The distinction between Husserl and Heidegger is clear, but if we do not see the extent to which Husserl’s phenomenology provided the theoretical framework for Heidegger’s method, we will not understand the precise meaning of Heidegger’s content in *Being and Time*, and why he did not complete it.

In this paper, we will focus on Heidegger’s early phenomenological theory of time and its basis in Husserl’s works. This was Husserl’s first work on phenomenological ontology - an attempt to distinguish between the general field of ontology, and, as we have seen, he regarded the phenomenological theory of time as central to this task. Heidegger’s *Being and Time* directly and frankly takes the relation of existence to time as a task, following closely with Husserl’s work. By showing the relationship between Heidegger and Husserl’s thought, as well as the similarity between them and Kant’s transcendental philosophy, we can explain why time, as the protagonist, allows itself to appear on the stage of European thought. But it became clear that serious problems were raised in Heidegger’s and Husserl’s theory of time. These questions can also help us understand why *Being and Time* was never finished. But they also point to deeper questions about the possibility of phenomenology in general. At the same time, these questions can also provoke some of the recent actions of post-structuralists, postmodernists, and so-called post-philosophical cultural philosophers.

2. Husserl and Time

The problem of time as a phenomenology of Husserl has been running through the whole time, especially in *Form and Transcendental Logic* of 1929, which studies time as a transcendental category. Of course, this also gives rise to the critical significance of the similarity between Kant’s phenomenology and Husserl’s phenomenology. Husserl argued that in order to distinguish between descriptions of objects and to understand ourselves as descriptors, in addition to careful consideration of attitudes and methods, we should also think about what we are describing and how it is possible - that is, phenomenology must not only think about the possible conditions of objects but also the possible conditions under which we describe them. Thus, Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology is related to Kant’s transcendental philosophy. Kant wrote in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, the transcendental philosophical tradition he pioneered: “I entitle transcendental all knowledge which is occupied not so much with objects as with the mode of our knowledge of objects

in so far as this mode of knowledge is to be possible a priori “Translated by Chinese as “I call all knowledge of the mode of knowing, so far as it ought to be a priori possible, which is not so much about objects as it is concerned with them in general”.

Kant regarded transcendental as necessary in his transcendental theory, while Husserl understood Transcendental as the key in his phenomenology. In fact, it is clear that Husserl and Kant’s empiricism are fundamentally different in principle ---- Husserl holds that we can know things that exist in themselves as objects, and how Husserl develops such comments on his’ transcendental idealist ‘is no further consideration here.” Kant regarded “transcendental” as necessary in his transcendental theory, while Husserl understood “transcendental” as the key in his phenomenology. In fact, it is clear that Husserl and Kant’s empiricism are fundamentally different in principle ---- Husserl holds that we can know the things that exist in themselves as objects, and how Husserl develops such a comment on his “transcendental idealist” is no further consideration here. Both of them, of course, considered the theory of transcendental sensibility to be the basis of the theory of transcendental logic (which Husserl did not agree with), and Husserl believed that in our experiential consciousness everything except temporality could be suspended.

In fact, at different stages of Husserl’s life, his thinking on different aspects of time often showed different characteristics, and sometimes even contradictory views. Here we will briefly introduce Husserl’s different thoughts and characteristics of different stages of thinking about time. First, in the winter semester of 1904-1905, Husserl gave the famous lecture “Phenomenology in the Main Part of Epistemology”, of which the fourth part, under the title “on the Phenomenology of Time”, was devoted to the analysis of the consciousness of inner time, and in fact he had been thinking about this problem for more than ten years, and had given a lecture on it as early as 1893.

This situation lasted until 1911. 1916, Edith Stein served as Husserl’s assistant, and a year later began to work on some manuscripts selected by Husserl, mainly the time section of the lectures “Phenomenology in the Main Part of Epistemology” in 194-1905, until 1926, following Heidegger’s “Being and Time” issue, which was published in volume IX of Husserl’s Yearbook of Philosophy and Phenomenology. The Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Time in Husserl, published in 1928, is the first part of the “Part A” here, and the second part is the thirteen appendices of the “Additions and additions to the analysis of the consciousness of Time in the period 1905-1910”, of course there are many problems here that even Husserl would not have been aware of, in view of this Rudolf. Bohm added “Part B” to the book as an addition, thus reproducing the historical context and original context of Husserl’s time consciousness thinking from 1873 to 1911.

Secondly, the 1917-1918 “Bernau Manuscript” known as the “L Manuscript” consists of two parts, until 2001 as the Complete Works of Husserl thirty-three volumes by R. Second, the 1917-1918 “Bernau Manuscript” known as the “L Manuscript” consists of two parts, until 2001 as the Complete Works of Husserl thirty-three volumes by R. Published by Knight and D. Norma as the Bernau Manuscript on Time Consciousness, Husserl attaches great importance to the phenomenological research of time consciousness and calls the Bernau Manuscript a masterpiece, mainly because it contains two innovations that have never appeared before, one is the problem of time and individuality, and the other is the problem of time and individuality. This is what Husserl called the “individual phenomenology” in the analysis of time consciousness

and its further development. Second, Husserl has concentrated analysis on “proactive”, “expectation” and “future” in the phenomenology of internal time consciousness, which has changed the previous phenomenological analysis of internal time consciousness which is inclined to “past” and “present”.

Finally, Husserl’s last in-depth discussion of the problem of time was carried out between 1929 and 1934, that is, from the finishing of the Bernau manuscript until he began to write the *Phenomenology of the European Scientific Crisis* and the *Transcendental Wheel*. During this period, the code of the new manuscript on time produced was C, so it was called “Document C”. He expected to publish “Document L” and “Document C” in two volumes, but neither was published until 2001 and 2006, respectively. There will be no more analysis of these texts here, but the first sentence in Husserl’s *Phenomenology of Time Consciousness* can be borrowed to indicate the intention of his research: “The analysis of time consciousness has always been the oldest burden of describing psychology and epistemology.” There will be no more analysis of these texts here, but the first sentence in Husserl’s *Phenomenology of Time Consciousness* can be borrowed to indicate the intention of his research: “The analysis of time consciousness has always been the oldest burden of describing psychology and epistemology.”

3. Early Heidegger and time

Whatever judgment Heidegger may have tried to make of Husserl, it is not difficult to find, if one pays attention, that early Heidegger’s work is almost identical to Husserl in methodological and ontological questions. As we can see developed in *Being and Time* and soon manifested in later and earlier works: “The Fundamental Problems of Phenomenology” (1927), “Kant and the Problems of Metaphysics” (1928), “On the Nature of Truth” (1928), and some papers published in the Marburg period (1927-1928), although it is impossible for us here to examine these problems and the details associated with them, But we can give a brief overview of some key issues.

The question I am concerned with here is not directly related to Heidegger’s earlier work (ontological, phenomenological, transcendental, hermeneutic, etc.), but it is indeed an important question that has always influenced Heidegger.

In *Being and Time* Heidegger leads to phenomenology, through the fundamental meaning of “reason” and “phenomenon” in quasi-poetic idioms, so that phenomenology is defined as art or the practice of “making things manifest themselves”.

In *Being and Time* (1927), Heidegger developed his phenomenological interpretation. For Heidegger, we and our activities have always been “in the world”, our existence is existing-in the world, and therefore we should not suspend our world to study our activities, but rather we understand our activities and the things that are meaningful to us by exploring our contextual relationships with things in the world. Indeed, for Heidegger, phenomenology included what he called “fundamental ontology.” We must distinguish existence from their existence and begin our investigation of the meaning of our existence in our own instance, examining our existence in the activity of “being whose being is in each case my own.”

When discussing Husserl’s 1917-1918 Bernau manuscript of time consciousness, the first feature of time



and individualization, which Husserl called the “phenomenological problem of individualization” in the analysis of time consciousness, is closely related to Heidegger’s analysis of time and *dasein* in the *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. Starting from Aristotle’s theory of time, Heidegger elaborated Aristotle’s theory of time and naturally put forward *Dasein* - the original constitution of time and existence. “*Dasein*, for its existence, is more external than every object, and at the same time more internal (more subjective) than every subject, i.e., soul, because time as transcendence is openness.” Here it is clear that Heidegger is transcending the “subjectivized” and “objectivized” understanding of time in another way. This is also the first time that he put forward the concept of *Dasein*, and it is also the concrete embodiment of his question about the viability of Husserl’s phenomenology.

It can be said that there is an obvious reference relationship in Husserl’s Bernau time consciousness manuscript, and more importantly, Husserl talked about this issue in his correspondence with Heidegger in 1918, and Husserl frankly said that this work was a great work for himself. In particular, the problem of time and individuation has remarkable similarities with Heidegger’s *Dasein* analysis. In this sense it [i.e., this ‘I’] is not a ‘being’, but the antithesis of all beings, not an object but a meta-object of all objective objects. This ‘I’ should not be called ‘I’, it should not have any name, because then it has become an object; He is the nameless and unspeakable, not stagnant, floating, nor existing above anything, but ‘functioning’ as a comprehender, evaluator, etc. This ‘I’ should not be called ‘I’, it should not have any name, because then it has become an object; He is the nameless and unspeakable, not stagnant, floating, nor existing above anything, but ‘functioning’ as a comprehender, evaluator, etc.” (hua33/277-288) ④ This is a passage by Husserl in the Bernau Manuscript of Time Consciousness. If we simply look at the thoughts contained in these two texts, it is not difficult to judge that the direct theory proposed by Heidegger’s *Dasein* comes from Husserl’s analysis of time consciousness. “At the same time, time is in *enpanti*, everywhere, in *en ge*, on the earth, *en thalatte*, on the sea, *en ourano*. Time is everywhere, and yet it exists in nothing but the soul. “What is certain here is that Heidegger never understood the soul as a” being “or an” object, “and in this respect the two of them agree. Aristotle also doesn’t seem to think of the soul as a “being,” though its formulation is somewhat vague. It is also worth examining how time relates to the soul, and why time is supposed to exist in everything.

With regard to the latter question, because time is the number of movements, it is the property or condition of movement, and all these things can be moved (for they are omnipotent in place), so time and movement coexist, both in potential and in realization.” Heidegger’s *Dasein* emphasizes ontological meaning and prepares for his ontological phenomenological method. “*Dasein*” is originally a word commonly used in the philosophy of Kant and Hegel, which initially has no deep meaning and generally only refers to concrete existence, but Heidegger uses it to refer to a phenomenological ontological meaning of “man”, which simply refers to a primitive state of “man” that does not distinguish subject and object, object and self, thinking and existence. At this time, consciousness is very hazy, but there is very clear - the so-called “hazy” is relative to empirical scientific knowledge, the so-called “clear” because it has no external experience, but is only aware of its own existence. This “being” is not abstract, it is not a generalization of a concept, a deduction, or an induction of experience, but it is also not concrete, and it goes without saying that there is no idea of “I” and that even the idea of “man” as a scientific concept may not arise, so the consciousness of “Da” is absolutely inseparable from *sein*. It seems as if Heidegger evolved *dasein* from Aristotle, but imported it directly from Husserl, otherwise his later hermeneutic transformation and existentialist innovation would

not have been possible.

4. Conclusion

Over the years, phenomenologists have delved into all classical questions, such as Husserl, Heidegger and so on, including intentionality, intrapersonal consciousness, intersubjectivity, practical intentionality, and the social and linguistic circumstances of human activity. The interpretation of the historical texts of Husserl and others has played a very important role in the work in recent years, because of the number and difficulty of the texts, and because of the historical dimension of the part of the continental philosophical tradition itself. Since the 1960s, philosophers trained in analytical philosophical methods have also delved into the foundations of phenomenology, looking at twentieth-century philosophy of logic, language, and mind.

Funding

- [1]The Shaanxi Provincial Philosophy and Social Science Research Special Project (No. 2023HZ0710)
- [2]Project of China Mechanical Political Research Institute (No. SZ23B047)
- [3]Project of Shaanxi institute of technology (No.ZY23A03)

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