Husserl, Heidegger, and Transcendental Philosophy: Another Look at the Encyclopaedia Britannica Article

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Sometime in 1927 Husserl began work on an article he had been asked to contribute to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Eventually, in the Fourteenth Edition of 1929, “Phenomenology” was published over the name “E. Hu.,” though this version was in fact a very free — and much distorted — abridged translation by Christopher V. Salmon of Husserl’s much longer text. Husserl’s own final draft of the article¹ is of interest in itself as a rich, concise “introduction” to phenomenology, but for several decades now scholars have been drawn to “the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article” not so much as a text, but as an episode in the history of phenomenology. For Husserl’s initial work on the article seems roughly to have coincided with the publication of Heidegger’s *Being and Time* in February 1927. Husserl, who had long considered Heidegger to be his most promising student and true heir of phenomenology, but who had recently been experiencing misgivings about the “unorthodox” direction of Heidegger’s work, appears to have taken the occasion of the article as an opportunity to measure the distance between himself and Heidegger and, if necessary, to attempt a reconciliation. Thus he invited Heidegger to collaborate, and their mutual engagement yielded four drafts: Husserl’s original, a second draft with an introduction completely written by Heidegger together with numerous marginal comments, a transitional third draft, and the final version which contained little trace of Heidegger’s participation. The final version testifies to the collapse of the collaboration.

Though Husserl did subsequently name Heidegger as his successor at Freiburg, he never again considered Heidegger his “student” and came, finally, to speak of him (together with Scheler) as “my antipodes.”

Scholarly attention has focussed on the documents of this failed collaboration (especially the original version and Heidegger’s revisions of it) as evidence for the gulf which existed between Husserlian and Heideggerian conceptions of phenomenology, concluding from them that Heidegger altogether rejected Husserl’s “transcendental” phenomenology, with its characteristic doctrines of the “transcendental-phenomenological reduction” and “transcendental constitution,” in favor of a “phenomenological ontology” which would break free of Husserl’s egological “idealism.” But without denying the evident differences between Husserl and Heidegger, the texts at hand can be seen to support a very different conclusion, viz., that Heidegger’s Being and Time “represents” (as Levinas has claimed) “the fruition and flowering of Husserlian phenomenology” and that, Husserl’s disappointment notwithstanding, the real issues concern not so much Heidegger’s rejection, as his reinterpretation, of central Husserlian notions.

This paper will begin to suggest how such a conclusion might be reached by focussing on the conception of transcendental philosophy which emerges in Husserl’s article, contrasting it with the conception of transcendental philosophy evident in Heidegger’s comments thereon, a conception indicative of his position during the period of Being and Time. At the outset it will be useful to recall the distinction between “prinzipientheoretisch” and “evidenztheoretisch” varieties of transcendental philosophy, a distinction recently emphasized by J. N. Mohanty and crucial for understanding the sense in which Husserl’s phenomenology is “transcendental.” The former proceed by way of a certain kind of argument which seeks to justify, on the basis of some principle or principles, particular truth claims or categorial frameworks (quaestio juris). The latter, of which Husserl’s philosophy is an example, proceed by way of a certain kind of reflection which seeks to clarify, on the basis of an original field of evidence, the meaning structures which make possible any truth, indeed any intelligibility at all.

This distinction has not always been heeded by those who have undertaken an analysis of the relation between Husserlian and Heideggerian phenomenology. Thus, for example, commentators have interpreted the

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second, Heidegger-revised, draft of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article as showing Heidegger’s implicit rejection of Husserl’s doctrine of constitution and so his rejection of Husserl’s transcendental philosophy. But if, like Husserl’s, Heidegger’s conception of phenomenology is “evidenz-theoretisch,” then the issue can be seen to be not so much a rejection of the doctrine of constitution, as a *deepening* of it. In other words, the fault-line which runs between Husserl and Heidegger should not be seen as “phenomenology: transcendental philosophy or ontology?” (as though Heidegger rejected Husserl’s transcendental turn in favor of realism) but rather “transcendental phenomenology: epistemology or ontology?” It would not be over the interpretation of phenomenology *per se* that the two disagree, but over the interpretation of “transcendental,” i.e., the conception of what reflection on the phenomenological field of evidence accomplishes. Support for this can be gleaned from another look at the drafts of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article itself. What follows does not, however, present a full account of this episode. Its aim is simply to suggest the way in which the specific character of Heideggerian transcendental ontology can be seen to emerge from the common basis of the Husserlian/Heideggerian phenomenology of evidence.

1. The First Draft: Psychology and Transcendental Philosophy

In the first draft Husserl begins with the natural attitude of everyday experience and describes how all “natural experiencing” of things admits of a “phenomenological turn” transforming it into a “process of phenomenological experience” (Hus IX 237). Husserl argues that such phenomenological experience provides the basis for a pure phenomenological psychology by way of a reduction to the “experiencing of the experienced” as

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5 For further details of the collaboration itself, and an account of the various drafts of the text, see Biemel, “Husserl’s *Encyclopaedia Britannica* Article,” p. 303; Herbert Spiegelberg, “On the Misfortunes of Edmund Husserl’s *Encyclopaedia Britannica* Article ‘Phenomenology’” in McCormick and Elliston, *Shorter Works*, pp. 18-20; and Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement*, Third Revised and Enlarged Edition (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1984), pp. 342-44. The present essay concentrates on the first two drafts alone, both of which are found in Edmund Husserl, *Phänomenologische Psychologie*, Husserlian Vol. IX, ed. Walter Biemel (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962). References to these drafts will be to this volume and will be incorporated into the text, abbreviated “Hus IX.” All translations are my own.
such. The initial phenomenological turn from the attitude of natural world-experience is thus a reflective one. Instead of living straightforwardly in our world experience as Weltkinder, we exercise a “universal phenomenological reflection” (Hus IX 239) whereby what is implicit in such experience, viz., its intentional structure, can be made explicit. But if phenomenology is to be distinguished from psychology as a reflective positive science of inner experience, Husserl must distinguish between a psychological phenomenological reflection and transcendental phenomenological reflection. Hence Husserl introduces the notion of the “phenomenological reduction” as a move beyond psychology (Hus IX 243). This move needs to be examined in more detail.

Reflection on experience in the natural attitude suggests the possibility of a pure science of “subjective experiencing” which would thematize the intentional structure of psychic life. Just as the science of physics abstracts from all those predicates of its objects which are seen to be bound up with the experiencing of such objects, so Husserl thinks a pure psychology is possible which abstracts from those predicates of its object, experience as such, which would “go beyond” what belongs to that experiencing itself. But this is just to practice the epoché:

To grasp the purely psychical in a cogito of the type perception requires . . . that the psychologist put out of play every position-taking with respect to the true being of the perceived (of the cogitatum), that he practice in this respect an epoché and accordingly make no natural judgment of perception, to whose meaning indeed a continual assertion of objective being or nonbeing belongs (Hus IX 243).

Such an epoché, or “phenomenological reduction” (Hus IX 245), leaves us with a field of phenomena, a field of pure psychic experience which remains what it is in its descriptive features whatever the ontological status of the cogitata inscribed within it may prove to be.

What is really involved in such an epoché? In carrying it out the psychologist “sets out of play every position-taking with regard to the true being of the perceived,” he “makes no natural judgment of perception.” Such descriptions at first only make explicit that we are dealing here with a reflective procedure, one in which the theoretical interest does not extend to questions having to do with the elements of the object as a natural object. They express the truism that investigation of my experiencing of an object is not a sufficient evidential basis for ascribing ontic predicates to the (“physical”) thing. The reduction in this sense merely confirms what belongs to the essence of reflection.

To the extent that this is what the phenomenological reduction (or epoché) means, then Heidegger too “accepts” the reduction. Though Heidegger does not explicitly invoke the epoché in Being and Time, this is
only one example of several cases in that work where phenomenological procedures are in play without being acknowledged as such.\(^6\) Properly understood, Heidegger's ontological phenomenology does not "take a stand" regarding the factual presence of any particular object; as ontologist Heidegger "makes no natural judgments of perception," nor does he compromise the phenomenological field by presupposing positive or physicalistic premises going beyond what shows itself in phenomenological experience. To be sure, he speaks of phenomenology as a way of access to the Being of things; but what he means by "Being" is no more drawn from the natural attitude as a non-phenomenological presupposition than is Husserl's "transcendental" concept of being. On the contrary, Heidegger takes his point of departure from a feature which Husserl himself frequently emphasizes, viz., that in the reduction to pure experience nothing is lost from the descriptive content of what is experienced in the natural attitude. To use Husserl's example, a reflectively considered perception is still perception-of-this-house; it includes the sense of perceptual "believing in" the house as "actually existing" (\textit{wirklich Daseiendes}).

Under the \textit{epoché} the house is taken in its full descriptive content "as meaning content (perceptual meaning) of the perceptual belief" (Hus IX 243). The being-character of the perceptual object is itself a descriptive feature of the experiencing of the object for Husserl. And, I would argue, for Heidegger too.\(^7\) To describe a "natural view of the world" is not to occupy such a view; to speak of \textit{Vorhandensein} is not to predicate real being of any particular entity.

But the reduction to the pure psychical is still distinct from a transcendental phenomenology. Phenomenological psychology sets itself the task of explicating the evidential levels of constitution of intentional objects by exploring "the several forms of synthesis . . . through which in general consciousness with consciousness comes to be a unity of consciousness" (Hus IX 244). When Husserl goes on to charge the phenomenological psy-

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\(^7\) To grant this, however, does not imply that such a "being-character" will be described in the same way by Husserl and Heidegger. It is well known, for example, that in \textit{Being and Time} Heidegger revises Husserl's conception of the natural attitude in such a way that "what things are" for practical activity (their \textit{Zuhandensein}) is not derivative — as it is for Husserl — from "what they are" for theoretical consciousness (\textit{Vorhandensein}). Such revisions, however, concern how things are "given" in a primary sense, and so remain within the phenomenological horizon of investigation into modes of givenness. They do not affect the "legitimacy" of the reduction as specified here; rather, they take aim at the presuppositions about "Being" which Husserl imports into his conception of the natural attitude itself. We will return to this issue below, note 8, and Part II.
chologist with the task of seeking "the necessary structural system without which a synthesis of manifold perceptions as perception of one and the same thing would be unthinkable," Heidegger notes "transcendental questions!" (Hus IX 245). But for Husserl such phenomenology is not yet transcendental. What more is required?

Husserl admits that transcendental phenomenology and phenomenological psychology deal with "the 'same' phenomena and essential insights;" it is possible to move from one to the other through a mere Einstellungsänderung (Hus IX 247). The demand for such a "change of attitude" does not arise from the project of establishing a pure psychology, however, but from the idea of carrying out a "reform of philosophy to a rigorous science" (Hus IX 247), which for Husserl was always equivalent to establishing philosophy on a firm epistemological foundation. So the Einstellungsänderung is introduced as necessary for the "project of a theory of knowledge, a transcendental philosophy" (Hus IX 248). Toward the solution of this problem a phenomenological psychology can contribute nothing since it finds itself caught in the "absurdity of the epistemological circle" (Hus IX 249) — which Husserl in the second draft called the "transcendental circle" — namely, the attempt to ground the possibility of knowledge on a basis which itself presupposes the (unexamined) validity of certain forms of knowledge. But what sort of mere "change of attitude" can prevent such circularity? In what sense are the phenomena of phenomenological psychology both mundane and transcendental?

Husserl introduces the Einstellungsänderung by recalling the discovery of Descartes that "subjective conscious life in pure immanence is the place of all meaning giving and positing of being, all verification of being" (Hus IX 248). Inquiry into this "pure immanence" must provide the foundation, the sense, of all problems arising with regard to empirical and metaphysical modes of knowing. Phenomenological psychology has not yet revealed this realm since it is still "positive science, it has the world as pre-given ground" (Hus IX 248). The sense of the reduction to the purely psychological still carries the sense of a reduction to a "worldly" given stream of conscious experiences, to an entity within the world. The subjectivity of phenomenological psychology is thus not yet in a position to address the transcendental-epistemological question of the foundation of all worldly knowledge, including its own. Husserl thus introduces the concept of a "fully universal phenomenological reduction (the transcendental)" (Hus IX 249) which will overcome the remaining "naivete" of phenomenological psychology. Whereas the phenomenological reduction brackets the facticity of the cogitata so as to focus on them as purely given intentional
"meaning contents," the transcendental reduction carries this bracketing one step further by applying it to the "worldly" character of the subject itself, to its stream of intentional experiences. In this way the sense of these experiences is altered: from being particular properties of a human subject they become the pure intentional field upon which even this sense of "human subject" is constituted in its meaning and posited being.

Here the last vestige of "posited" being, the posited reality of human psychological subjectivity, is overcome in favor of an inquiry into the transcendental "positing" life of a "pure" subject. Thus Husserl can write that as I reflect within the reduction I grasp a subjectivity which cannot "be taken as I, this man" (Hus IX 249). But when Heidegger attaches to this the rejoinder "Yet certainly as humanity (understood as the essence of man)," we stand before the very issue over which the collaboration will collapse. How is it to be understood? Heidegger does not object here to Husserl’s move toward a transcendental phenomenology, to "transcendental subjectivity" as such. Instead he indicates the locus of a disagreement over how this field of transcendental subjectivity (or "transcendental life" as Husserl calls it) is to be interpreted. What for Husserl, guided by epistemological considerations, must be seen as prior to the naturally posited sense "human subject" is, from Heidegger’s ontological perspective, a possibility of the human subject — not qua human (in the anthropological sense) but qua subject (in the transcendental sense).

Before proceeding further with an account of this divergence it is important to recall that Husserl’s recourse to the pure subject is not based on an argument, but on a reflection carried out in methodologically controlled fashion. Transcendental subjectivity is not a principle, but a field of evidence, a context of meaning which is to be grasped as that "thematic field of an absolute phenomenological science which is called transcendental because it includes within itself all transcendental or reason-theoretical problematics" (Hus IX 250). The difference between Husserl’s concept of transcendental phenomenology and the "prinzipiethetorisch" versions of Kantian and Neo-Kantian transcendental logic stem ultimately from their different conceptions of what these "reason-theoretical problems" are. Concerned above all with the so-called quaestio juris, with the question of how (empirical and apriori) truths are to be "validated," the Neo-Kantians had recourse to formal principles of argu-

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8 A full account of the notion of "positing" (Setzung) and posited being would take us too far afield here. In the context of the theory of the reduction it is equivalent to the "taken for granted" existing of things encountered in the natural attitude, i.e., that "givenness" which it is the task of the reduction to make explicit for reflection. Thus, in "bracketing" posited being such being is not denied but made explicit as "phenomenon."

9 See Mohanty, Transcendental Philosophy, pp. xiii-xxxii; 191-212.
ment (and a formal subject) to construct a transcendental foundation for the justification of specific truth claims. Central to Husserl's advance beyond such a conception of transcendental philosophy is his claim that "meaning" is more primordial than "truth" — that truth is itself a particular type or structure of meaning. Thus the genuine transcendental project would not be to justify truth claims but to clarify the "intentional sense" of such claims, as well as that of all other "meaning unities" or "objectivities." Such a philosophy will of course make truth claims, and it will also seek to justify them. However, it will not be constructed as a special form of "meta-justification" ("transcendental argument") which would appeal to principles of justification unknown in other cognitive disciplines. Clarification of what it means to justify a truth claim points to the relation between assertion and evidence, and this conception of evidence must then be carried over to the reflexive problem of how the cognitive claims of transcendental philosophy are themselves to be justified.¹⁰

Thus Husserl’s conception of a non-formal transcendental field allows him to speak of "transcendental facts." Heidegger approvingly called Husserl's philosophy a "philosophical empiricism."¹¹

Husserl's transcendental philosophy is thus an investigation of the field of reflection as a field of meaning-constitution purified from all uncritical positing of being — "and in nothing else," continues Husserl, "consists its transcendental idealism" (Hus IX 250). "Idealism" here refers to the fact that the intelligibility of the mundane (presupposed by all positive inquiry) can be grasped only by recourse to the intentional structure of conscious experience. Because it is upon this basis alone that any "meaning of being" can be clarified, "transcendental idealism" contains within itself a "universal ontology," including the "apriori ontology" of the form of any "world" whatsoever (Hus IX 251). Transcendental idealism is thus not a metaphysical idealism. Husserl claims that it is a rejection of "every metaphysics which moves in empty formal constructions [Substruktionen!]" (Hus IX 253), a sense which Heidegger also rejects as "carried out in the natural attitude and always tailored to it in particular historical situations of life, with its merely factual possibilities of knowledge" (Hus IX 253). Against the tendency which such metaphysics has to


lose itself in aporetic dichotomies — including “ontologism and transcendentalism” — for which desperate formal (dialectical or logical) solutions are sought, Husserl demands phenomenological work which progresses “from the intuitive givens to the abstract heights” (Hus IX 253). In this way it can be shown that “transcendental idealism contains natural realism entirely within itself” (Hus IX 254), that the “sense” of natural realism is itself constituted in evident intentional ways.

This sketch of Husserl’s notion of transcendental phenomenology as presented in the first draft suggests that Heidegger is in important respects committed to the idea of phenomenological idealism. For Heidegger, too, “metaphysical” dichotomies are to be admitted only after phenomenological reconstruction of their sense, and he also finds no incompatibility between a kind of phenomenological idealism and that realism which alone can be at issue in the natural attitude. For Heidegger, too, the “transcendental” is a field of evidence embedded within mundanity rather than a formal construction of principles deduced to explain (or justify) mundanity. It is accessible solely through a reflective inquiry, through recourse to Verhaltungen of Dasein, and is concerned not with beings per se, but with their “meaning.” There is thus a good sense in which Heidegger can be said to adopt the program of inquiry into “transcendental constitution.” If there are nevertheless essential differences between the two they must be discovered further back, in terms of the issues and problems which, brought to this field by each, influence the philosophical significance it is taken to have. These issues are already quite apparent in the second draft of the article.

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11 Ibid., p. 50: “In point of fact, the issue here is a kind of ‘self-evidence’ which we should like to bring closer to us . . .”

12 When Biemel, “Husserl’s Encyclopaedia Britannica Article,” p. 303, argues to the contrary that “Heidegger . . . uses the expression ‘transcendental constitution’ . . . as a favor to Husserl” and that “Heidegger looks on the constitution problematic as an idealistic residue that must be overcome,” one might rightly object that the situation appears to be more complicated. It is true that Heidegger avoids the language of “constitution” in his writings, but the “thing itself” seems to be at work in the transcendental philosophy of Being and Time, at least if constitution (for Husserl) is not taken to mean creation, and if the “evidenztheoretisch” character of the constitution problem is kept in mind. As for “idealism,” a better term for the residues which Heidegger seeks to overcome in Husserl would seem to be “theoretism.” In any case, if Being and Time abandons “idealism” in any sense, it is not in favor of “realism.” A full interpretation of these issues would have to take into account Heidegger’s extensive criticisms of Husserl in History of the Concept of Time, trans. Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), pp. 1-134, a task which I hope to carry out in another context.
2. The Second Draft: Ontology and Transcendental Philosophy

Whereas Husserl’s first draft introduced transcendental phenomenology indirectly, by way of the project of a pure psychology, Heidegger’s introduction to the second draft begins with the question of philosophy’s claim to be “fundamental science.” The “totality of beings,” writes Heidegger, is parcelled out to the various positive sciences as “object domains” for their research. What then can be left for philosophy? Not the determination of entities in their particular factual constitution, but rather the determination of entities as entities, “to understand them with respect to their Being” (Hus IX 256).

Next Heidegger notes that whereas the positive sciences pursue their task by immersing themselves in the object as theme, philosophical inquiry has at every stage of its history sought “illumination of Being” by way of a reflective turn “from entities to consciousness.” Is this an accident? To see in it an essential necessity is the epoch-making contribution of phenomenology, which Heidegger defines as

the fundamental clarification of the necessity of the recourse to consciousness, the radical and explicit determination of the way and the laws of the stages in this recourse, the principled delimitation and systematic exploration of the field of pure subjectivity which discloses itself through this recourse . . . (Hus IX 256)

In keeping with his conviction that the article should emphasize the transcendental nature of phenomenology from the outset, Heidegger writes that this “pure subjectivity” can be called “transcendental” since in it “the being of all that is experienceable for the subject in varying ways, the ‘transcendent’ in the widest sense, is constituted” (Hus IX 257).

To this point, in spite of the unfamiliar language of “Being” in which it is expressed, nothing in Heidegger’s introduction would necessarily conflict with Husserl’s idea of phenomenology. The various object domains of the positive sciences (including psychology) all contain

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14 Morrison, “Husserl and Heidegger,” pp. 50–51, purports to locate a fundamental source of the disagreement between Husserl and Heidegger in the latter’s “ultimate rejection of the possibility of a scientific philosophy” and claims that in the second draft of the Encyclopaedia Britannica article Husserl’s “emphasis on subjectivity and science” is “subordinated to an ontological problematic” by Heidegger. However, what Heidegger rejects is not “scientific philosophy” but rather Husserl’s conception of what “scientific” means as applied to philosophy. Materials for understanding Heidegger’s protracted attempts, culminating in Being and Time, to articulate the peculiar sources of “rigor” in philosophy as the Urwissenschaf are now available in the Gesamtausgabe. Especially instructive is Vol. 56/57, Zur Bestimmung der Philosophie, ed. Bernd Heimbüchel (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1987), but the theme is present in virtually all of Heidegger’s early lecture courses. If Heidegger rejected “scientific philosophy” at all, it was only after Being and Time.
"transcendent" objects in Husserl's sense and are "ontologically" grounded in the fundamental categories, regional ontologies, expressing the "essential being" of such objects. These in turn are referred to transcendental subjectivity as the source of their ultimate clarification, a "referral" which takes place through reflection on the constitution of the intentional field of meaning. The issues separating Husserl and Heidegger do not become visible until the interpretation of this intentional field, transcendental subjectivity, is explicitly addressed.

In Section II we find Husserl's revised presentation of the progress from pure psychology to transcendental phenomenology. Again Husserl's point is that the epistemological investigations of modern philosophy "continually presupposed the existential validity [Seinsgeltung] of the experienced world" and so, falling into "transcendental psychologism," did not recognize that the transcendental problem was to clarify this world's Seinsgeltung itself. Regarding the evidence of the world and worldly entities, the transcendental question is not that of whether it is valid (ob es gilt) — this is the task of positive inquiry, which tests hypotheses and secures true propositions through positive criticism — but rather that of "what meaning [Sinn] and extent [Tragweite] such validity can have" (Hus IX 265).

For Husserl it is "universally dominant naturalism" (Hus IX 267) which impedes recognition of transcendental subjectivity as a "field of transcendental experience" (Hus IX 269). Overcoming naturalism is made possible only by the "method of the transcendental-phenomenological reduction" (Hus IX 270) which "raises up the totality of the positive to the philosophical level," bracketing the lingering naivete of that psychological reflection which posits the realm of subjective experience as a natural entity, a bit of the world. With the reduction, however, a "cloud of unintelligibility" spreads over the world as the "taken for granted reality and pre-given field of all our theoretical and practical activities" (Hus IX 271). The world, whose reality before the reduction was never so much as questioned, is now seen to be "constituted in whatever meaning it may have, and whatever existential validity is attributed to it, 'in ourselves'," i.e., in the "immanence of our own perceiving, representing, thinking, valuing, etc. life" (Hus IX 271).

The problem identified here, that of the "meaning genesis of the world," is; as Heidegger notes, "the task of transcendental philosophy and must be identified as such at this point" (Hus IX 271). In a letter to Husserl, Heidegger emphasizes that what needs to be discussed is the precise sort of unintelligibility which spreads over the taken for granted world under the reduction: "In which respect is such being [Seiendes]
unintelligible? . . . [W]hat sort of higher claim to intelligibility is possible and necessary" (Hus IX 602)? Husserl envisions a transcendental clarification of the sense in which the world and all worldly objects are constituted as “an sich seiend” (Hus IX 271) in order to gain insight into the genuine sense of all epistemological problems concerning “knowledge of what transcends consciousness.” With his eyes on the same field of “transcendental experience” Heidegger envisions a clarification of the Being of entities, a clarification of that which enables these entities “in truth” to be as they are encountered in the natural attitude, disclosed through phenomenological reflection on their constitution.

Even at this stage there is no necessary conflict between the Husserlian and Heideggerian projects. The Being of which Heidegger speaks is in no sense equivalent to the “posited being” bracketed by the reduction, the admission of which leads to the absurdities of “transcendental psychology” attested in the traditional problem of proving the existence of the external world (Hus IX 265). Genuine difficulties do emerge, though, as Husserl continues his explication of the sense of the transcendental reduction. If “the transcendental problem concerns the existential sense [Seinssinn] of a world in general,” then the “decisive point” which distinguishes the transcendental from the psychological-phenomenological reduction is the “universal inhibition” of “natural experience as the pre-given ground of possible judgments” (Hus IX 273). The world as something “on hand for me” in the natural attitude is bracketed in order to reveal “pure subjectivity as source of meaning and validity” (Hus IX 273). Pure subjectivity is no longer “my ego as soul” — an idea which “already in its own meaning presupposes an existing or possible world” (Hus IX 274) — but rather “my ego” as transcendentally reduced “self-contained field of experience with all its intentional correlates” (Hus IX 275). With regard to the sense of this transcendentally reduced ego Heidegger poses the decisive question: Is it not the case that “a world in general belongs to the essence of the pure ego” (Hus IX 274)?

Before evaluating this question one must note an ambiguity in Husserl’s concept of “world.” On the one hand, Husserl tends to use the term “world” to mean “the totality of objects,” i.e., in the sense of something “present at hand” (if not as a whole) for the theorizing (and pre-theoretical) subject. Thus when the reduction is said to bracket the world, what is meant is the naive assumption of its independent being-in-itself as present at hand. The “posited” being of the world is bracketed in order to

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focus on the “positing” (including the “modes of givenness”) in which it is posited. On this view it could seem that the transcendental ego must, as reduced, be worldless to the extent that world is equivalent to naively posited being.

However Husserl also sometimes speaks of the world as a non-objective “horizon” of all positing, as the “transcendental phenomenon ‘world’,” something which has a very different structure from any posited entity. It is far from clear that the transcendental ego could be worldless in this sense. For if “nothing is lost” under the reduction, reduction to pure subjectivity as intentional field must also include the “world” as pure phenomenon. Indeed it would seem that Husserl’s claim to avoid the formal “epistemological subject” would demand that transcendental subjectivity have an apriori “content,” a “world,” as the horizon of constituting activity. Heidegger indicates this to Husserl by reminding him of “our Totnauberg conversation [1926] on ‘being-in-the-world’ . . . and its essential difference from presence at hand ‘within’ such a world” (Hus IX 274). Thus when Heidegger writes in his letter to Husserl that

[w]e agree that being [das Seiende] in the sense of what you call ‘world’ cannot be clarified in its transcendental constitution by recourse to being [Seiendes] of precisely the same sort (Hus IX 601),

one must be careful to note just what such “agreement” means. For “world” in Husserl’s sense here means all posited being which is merely present at hand, given as simply existing “in itself” in the natural attitude. This is of course precisely not what Heidegger means by “world.” Agreement consists in the fact that for both Husserl and Heidegger the being of the present at hand, its “constitution,” must be clarified by recourse to the transcendental dimension which, as reflectively disclosed, is precisely not present at hand within the natural attitude. But on Heidegger’s view such

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17 This is not the place for a full examination of the consequences of that thought-experiment which Husserl, in Ideas I, p. 110, proposes as “the annihilation of the world of physical things.” The intricacies of Husserl’s argument, and its motivation, cannot be represented briefly. But even if it is conceivable that a reduction to pure chaos would leave behind a “residuum” of “mental processes” (though processes which would not have unified “concatenations of experience” as their correlates), it is far from clear that these would be mental processes “of an Ego” as Husserl claims. If “Ego” means more than “mental processes” — as it does, for Husserl, both in Ideas and in the Encyclopaedia Britannica article — then it is likely that some phenomenological analogue of Kant’s “Refutation of Idealism” argument to the effect that ego-identity requires object-identity (though perhaps not “physical object identity” in Husserl’s sense) would come into play here. For an interesting discussion of Husserl’s thought-experiment, see Karl Ameriks, “Husserl’s Realism,” Philosophical Review 86 (1977), pp. 498-519.

HUSSERL, HEIDEGGER, AND TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY 513
a transcendental dimension would in fact be "worldly" — precisely as the "transcendental phenomenon" of world which therefore "belongs to the essence of the pure ego."

In continuing his letter Heidegger voices a related point of divergence. Even if the constituting dimension is not an entity present at hand this does not imply that that which makes up the place of the transcendental is not being [Seiendes] at all — rather it precisely raises the problem: what is the mode of being of that being [Seinsart des Seiendes] in which 'world' constitutes itself? That is the central problem of Being and Time (Hus IX 601).

The issue here concerns the meaning of the "limits" to phenomenology set by the transcendental reduction. When Husserl argues that the transition from the psychological to the transcendental standpoint is effected "in one stroke" by a "universal theoretical will" which "spans the totality of current and habitual life" (Hus IX 274), Heidegger asks "And this will itself?" Heidegger's elliptical question indicates the problem of the motivation for performing the transcendental reduction. How is a will to the disclosure of the transcendental possible, given that for Husserl there can be no motivation within the natural attitude for moving to the pure transcendental level (for engaging in reflective philosophy) since, ex hypothesi, it is altogether concealed from "man," the subject of the natural attitude?18 Heidegger, however, for whom "man" is never "merely present at hand," never merely an item in the world of the natural attitude, tries to offer an account of such motivation by interpreting the transcendental as a "marvelous" existential possibility [\'wundersame\' Existenzmöglichkeit] (Hus IX 275) of "the subject," man, already in the natural attitude. The ground and possibility of the "will" to transcendental reflection lies in the ontological constitution of the subject itself: Dasein is that being in whose "very Being that Being is an issue for it." Dasein is "ontically dis-

18 Indeed, it is Husserl's awareness of this problem which accounts for his attempt to motivate the transcendental reduction through the detour of phenomenological psychology: "On essential grounds which are easy to understand, humanity as such, and each individual human being, lives initially exclusively in the positive [Positivität], and so the transcendental reduction is an alteration of the entire form of life [Lebensform] which goes beyond [hinübersteigt] all previous life experience and, on account of its absolute foreignness, is difficult to understand with respect to its possibility and actuality" (Hus IX 276). Phenomenological psychology is supposed to serve as a "propaedeutic" to the reduction. But since what motivates it (a pure science of the psyche as worldly entity alongside a pure science of the physical) is altogether different from that which motivates the transcendental-philosophical question of the "ground" of all worldly knowledge, it is hard to see how such a propaedeutic could be of much help unless the mundane being itself ("man") did not already "understand" its "difference" from entities within the world, i.e., did not already (in some sense) understand transcendental reflection as one of its possibilities.

514 STEVEN GALT CROWELL
tinctive in that it is ontological.”

The psychological subject is not merely a transcendent entity; properly seen in its ontological constitution, it “is transcendental.” Only so is it possible to account for the fact (which Husserl continually emphasizes) that psychological reflection can be seen as transcendental experience through a simple, though decisive, “interpretive turn [Umdeutung].”

Yet for Husserl this Umdeutung meant that the question of ontology (regional or otherwise) had been left behind. If “being” is equivalent to worldly (posited) being, then recourse to the transcendental level of positing is a departure from all questions of ontology. For Husserl, the fact that the transcendental subject is “identical in content” with the psychological but “freed from its ‘seelischen’ (worldly real) sense” (Hus IX 275) means that the question of the “existence” (≡ worldly existence) of such a subject can no longer have any meaning. But though Heidegger too distinguishes between “man” and Dasein (as the Being or transcendental constitution of man) he insists, against Husserl, that transcendental subjectivity must be seen as an existential possibility of man:

Is not this act [the transcendental reduction] a possibility of man, but precisely because man is never simply on hand; a comportment, i.e., a mode of being, which it secures for itself and so never simply belongs to the positivity of what is on hand (Hus IX 275)?

What Heidegger argues against here is not the reduction per se, but the implicit ontology in which Husserl locates the entity “man” — i.e., psychology, psycho-physiology of the present at hand. Husserl’s regional ontological assumptions about “man” cloud his view of what reduction to the transcendental means. This issue comes to the fore at the end of the second draft where Husserl identifies the Umdeutung from phenomenological psychology to transcendental phenomenology as the key to the “riddle of the Copernican Turn” of Kant. Here Heidegger notes that following Husserl’s own presentation the Umdeutung is simply a “supplemental development of the transcendental problematic which you found incomplete in pure psychology so that . . . now everything positive becomes transcendently problematic” (Hus IX 277). If so, then the naive sense of the psychical with which psychology begins must itself be put into question. It will not be enough to identify it, as Husserl did, by analogy with the physicist’s reduction to the “purely physical.” Inquiry into transcendental constitution cannot avoid the quest for proper ontological categories of the psychical since, as Heidegger writes, “the focus on that which belongs purely to the soul has never grown out of consideration of the ontology of the full human being, i.e., not from a genuine per-

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19 Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 32.
pective on psychology — rather, it has emerged since Descartes primarily from epistemological considerations” (Hus IX 602). In other words, “that which belongs purely to the soul” has been misinterpreted to exclude the proper transcendental determinations of “world” (of the “soul” as being-in-the-world). This is not, as Husserl thought, anthropology; the specifically naturalistic sense which Husserl gives to “human being” plays no role in Heidegger’s transcendental phenomenological descriptions.

It would appear, then, that the essential difference between Husserlian and Heideggerian interpretations of the meaning of transcendental phenomenological reflection does not concern the “legitimacy” of the reduction, which both accept so far as it places into question the ontological presuppositions of the natural attitude. Rather, the issue turns on whether the phenomenological clarification of being (which Husserl proposes) must be extended to the being of the transcendental subject itself. For Husserl, who associates being with “being posited,” the question of the being of the transcendental subject, i.e., the being of the field of positing/constituting acts, can have no sense. But Heidegger argues quite plausibly that

[that which constitutes is not nothing, and thus it is something and in being [seiend] — though to be sure not in the sense of the positive. The question about the mode of being of that which constitutes is not to be avoided. The problem of Being is thus directed toward the constituting and the constituted alike (Hus IX 602).

Indeed, even on Husserl’s own terms there is something artificial about his restriction of the question of Being. For if, as Husserl argues in Ideas I, the “formal” sense of Etwas überhaupt is the basis of all ontology — i.e., if “to be” (formally) means to be the “subject of possible true predications”\(^\text{10}\) — then a transcendental phenomenology must leave open the possibility of an ontology of transcendental subjectivity, since there can be no denying that Husserl thinks true propositions concerning such a subject are possible.

If it is argued, on the contrary, that Husserl does indeed envision an ontology of the transcendental subject and in fact attributes to it an “absolute being,”\(^\text{11}\) one must again recall that such “ontological” characteristics of the transcendental subject arise not from an inquiry into the meaning of being per se (ontology), but from epistemological considerations which everywhere presuppose that the meaning of being is simply given (as “posited” being). Thus Husserl most often speaks of ontology as a branch of formal logic (which includes formal apophantics and formal

\(^{10}\) Husserl, Ideas I, p. 10.

\(^{11}\) Husserl, Ideas I, pp. 110 et pass.

516 STEVEN GALT CROWELL
ontology), that is, as an objective discipline concerned with what it is to be an object in general and with specific "regional" differentiations among objects.\textsuperscript{22} Such a discipline, though in need of transcendental (epistemological) grounding, is not yet transcendental. Husserl will even state that "in itself . . . ontology is not phenomenology."\textsuperscript{23} When, however, he speaks of "another 'formal ontology,'" which relates to everything that exists in any sense: to what exists as transcendental subjectivity and to everything that becomes constituted in transcendental subjectivity,"\textsuperscript{24} and helps himself (as in \textit{Ideas I}) to the language of "absolute being" in characterizing such a subject, he encounters systematic problems. For in order to bring the subject into view ontologically it must be "objectified" reflectively, i.e., turned into something "posited" for the reflective gaze. But the transcendental subject was glimpsed initially through the reduction of everything positive, i.e., as the positing or constituting origin of objective meaning. The result is that Husserl can characterize the "absolute being" of the transcendental subject only \textit{negatively} and, in particular, with regard to its \textit{epistemological} privileges. As Heidegger puts it in a detailed criticism of Husserl on just this point: "Husserl's primary question is simply not concerned with the character of the being of consciousness. Rather, he is guided by the following concern: How can consciousness become the possible object of an absolute science?"\textsuperscript{25} For this reason, Husserl's "ontological" determinations of transcendental subjectivity "are not derived by considering the intentional in its very being, but to the extent that it is placed under scrutiny as apprehended, given, constituting, and ideating taken as an essence."\textsuperscript{26} In short, by deriving the ontological characteristics of "absolute being" from epistemological considerations, Husserl closes off the possibility of a genuine phenomenological ontology based on unprejudiced recourse to the "things themselves."\textsuperscript{27}


\textsuperscript{24} Husserl, \textit{Formal and Transcendental Logic}, p. 271.

\textsuperscript{25} Heidegger, \textit{History of the Concept of Time}, p. 107.

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., p. 106.

\textsuperscript{27} For more on this issue see ibid., pp. 102-14. Of course, Heidegger's criticisms of Husserl's conception of the relation between phenomenology and ontology involve problems of their own, the investigation of which deserves separate treatment. They are recalled here only to indicate that the "parting of the ways" between Husserl and Heidegger could very well have been motivated by \textit{immanent} criticism of Husserl's phenomenological program, rather than by a wholesale rejection of its "transcendental" character. For an alter-

\textit{Husserl, Heidegger, and Transcendental Philosophy 517}
So with regard to the phenomenological investigation of the domain of transcendental subjectivity Heidegger can ask “What is the character of the positing in which the absolute ego is posited? To what extent is there no positivity (positedness) found here?” (Hus IX 602). The mode of being of the absolute ego must itself become a transcendental problem. Only so can it be phenomenologically clarified how the pure ego both is and is not “the same” as the factic ego (Hus IX 602). The ground upon which entities are encounterable explicitly in their meaning structure must itself be inquired into as to its Seinssinn. At the same time, though the point cannot be argued here, such an inquiry preserves a genuine sense and direction for Husserlian “constitutional” investigations within the projected (fundamental) ontology of Being and Time. A significant rapprochement between Husserl and Heidegger, leaving neither totally unrevised, therefore becomes thinkable.