

within a relatively autonomous French tradition of philosophy of science, surely hold resources for the critical theorist willing to break with orthodoxy. Hopefully, Kompridis has made this move easier.

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Rephrasing Heidegger: A Companion to Being and Time

Richard Sembera

Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2007; 309 pages.

Although two English translations of *Being and Time* have already been produced, perhaps now a third is needed. Sembera's systematic "rephrasing" of not only Heidegger's thought but, more basically, his technical vocabulary just might be the kick that gets such a formidable ball rolling.

Most of us are familiar with the most commonly used, 1962 translation of *Being and Time* by Macquarrie and Robinson, and perhaps less with Stambaugh's mainly stylistic improvements in 1996. But what most of us do not realise is that, concealed within these translations is an illuminating but flawed interpretation of *Being and Time*, one which has played no little part in establishing the predominant "existentialist" view of Heidegger common to most of the English-speaking philosophical world. More specifically, these translations have lent themselves to what I would describe as a popular "classroom" reading of *Being and Time*, according to which *das Man* or "the they" (third person plural) is an oppressive society against which *Dasein* exists *eigentlich* or "authentically" in a quasi-bohemian state; this *condition humaine* is overcome to the extent that *Dasein* grasps *den Sinn von Sein überhaupt* or "the meaning of Being in general," an "existential"(-ist) grasping that requires *Entschlossenheit* or "resoluteness" on the part of *Dasein* toward its own finite *Zeitlichkeit* or "temporality"; *Dasein* thereby maximises *Seinkönnen* or "potentiality of being." Now, the ultimate blame for such a socio-psychological, that is, *non-ontological* reading lies squarely on Heidegger's shoulders, a philosopher who failed pedagogically in his published writings. Nonetheless, the current English translations and their "existentialist" rapport represent an earlier stage of Heidegger scholarship, one which the English-speaking philosophical world is slowly outgrowing. And *Rephrasing Heidegger* goes a long way in freeing us from this en-

trenched “*Verstellung*” of Heideggerian thought, and it does so by uncovering the conceptual underpinnings of *Being and Time* through clear and unambiguous English for both the beginner and Heidegger specialist.

The author, who studied under von Herrmann (the editor of the most important volumes of Heidegger’s *Gesamtausgabe*), leads the reader onto this path of disentanglement by phrasing *Being and Time* anew (hence *rephrasing*) in three basic ways: retranslation, reordering and reinterpretation.

Firstly, Sembera retranslates Heidegger’s technical vocabulary in *Being and Time*. A few translations are especially noteworthy: *Sinn* is rendered as the more referential “sense”; *Zeug* and *Bewandtnis* as the more intuitive “tool” and “connection,” respectively; *Zuhandenheit* and *Vorhandenheit* as the more literal “to-handedness” and “at-handedness,” respectively; *das Man* and *das Man-selbst* as the appropriately neutral “the One” and “the one-self,” respectively; *Befindlichkeit* as the suitably vague “sensibility”; *Seinkönnen* as the more active “being-ability”; *Gewesenheit*, *Gegenwart* and *Zukunft* as the more radical “continuance,” “encounter” and “advent,” respectively; *Zeitlichkeit* as the more *Dasein*-like “timeliness”; and *Geschick* as the collective and, to be sure, less mystical “lot.” In addition to a German-English lexicon (Appendix B) cross-referencing Heidegger’s original German terms with his own translations, Macquarrie and Robinson’s, and Stambaugh’s, Sembera includes a glossary of technical terms (Appendix A) with an explanation of their meaning and a discussion of the various translations as well as a justification for his own. (Sembera also includes a third addendum, Appendix C, which summarises in table format all of the important conceptual divisions and structural parallels in *Being and Time*—a handy tool for any Heidegger scholar.)

Perhaps the only translation in which the author “streamlines” Heidegger’s vocabulary too much is his rendering of *Entwurf* as “plan.” Although here the problematic psychological connotations of Macquarrie and Robinson’s “projection” and Stambaugh’s “project” are avoided, were this a full translation of *Being and Time*, some confusion would occur on page 145 of the original, where Heidegger sharply distinguishes “*das Entwerfen*” from anything like an “*ausgedachten Plan*.”

Secondly, Sembera reorders the way in which *Being and Time* is presented. By “reorders” I speak not in terms of sequence but, rather, tidiness. In other words, Sembera brings a systematic orderliness to *Being*

and Time otherwise lacking on first exposure. Most notable in this regard is Sembera's making good on a criticism he lays against Heidegger and the latter's perhaps performatively consistent *un-ausgedachten* style: "one frequently discovers indispensable information, absolutely essential to the understanding of earlier sections, remarked in passing in later sections." (xvi) Two sections in particular stand out for their house-cleaning: "Understanding versus Perception," in which Sembera introduces the reader to the ontological lynchpin of Heidegger's early thought—*Dasein*'s act of understanding—and does so, in stark contrast to Heidegger's own presentation, *before* discussing the question of Being; and "Heidegger's Concept of Phenomenology (§7)" in which Sembera assembles Heidegger's dispersed remarks on methodology (from §§7, 18, 32, 44 and 63 of *Being and Time*) in order to dispel the common mischaracterisation of Heidegger's phenomenology as purely descriptive. More positively in this latter section, Sembera argues that *Being and Time*, "being [itself] an interpretation, shares in the circular structure of understanding" (62); "works out the foundation of any possible ontology" (59) including the much neglected *Geisteswissenschaften*; "envisions [*läßt sehen*] phenomena" through the apophantic structure of *Rede* or "talk" (57); and thus that its method, far from being purely descriptive in nature, is in fact a much more radical, *hermeneutic phenomenology*.

Lastly, Sembera reinterprets *Being and Time* on the basis of his retranslation and reordering. Cutting through the obscurity and awkward neologisms often associated with Heidegger scholarship in translation, Sembera often pauses "to take stock of the results of our explanations" (43), "to reformulate our conclusions in more precise and more familiar...terms" (18), and perhaps a godsend to any first-time reader of *Being and Time*: "It is probably worth rephrasing this argument in completely non-philosopher's terms, since its essential sense can be preserved at a much simpler level." (153) Supplementing this reader-friendly style are many examples, a number of which are perhaps prime for becoming pedagogical classics; examples such as solving Zeno's "Stadium" paradox through phenomenological analysis (14–17), referentially understanding a piece of chalk in a classroom (36–37), Being as observability under laboratory conditions (39–41), restructuring one's comprehensibility of the world by defining a "zayzax" (96–97), and love as the usually implicit and, to be sure, disagree-*able* sensibility of a successful marriage. (113)

Structurally, *Rephrasing Heidegger* consists of an initial chapter on “The Origins of Phenomenology” and two further chapters containing detailed section-by-section analyses of *Being and Time*. Most important to the beginner is Chapter 2, “Hermeneutic Phenomenology as Fundamental Ontology,” in particular sections 2.5 b), “The One-self,” and 2.9, “The Primeval Structure of Dasein as Concern,” according to which authenticity is “not a question of eliminating the one-self” (82) but a “shift of emphasis” (88) onto *Dasein*’s selfhood, and thus ultimately “a question of *not being caught in the one-self as the only and exclusive way for Dasein to exist*” (82); inauthenticity and the one-self, however, are “a necessary foundation of any common enterprise” (124), the deciding factor for which is whether “giving up some of one’s own possibilities of existence...is done *from deliberate choice or without explicitly choosing*.” (124)

Most important to the Heidegger specialist is Chapter 3, “The Timing of Timeliness,” in particular the initial sections (3.1–3.4), in which Sembera works out in detail the oftentimes blurred because simplified connection between *existenzialem Vorlaufen* or “existential fore-running” and *existenzieller Entschlossenheit* or “existentic decidedness,” a connection which, according to Sembera, authorises [*bezeugt*] *Dasein*’s *eigentliches Ganzseinkönnen* or “authentic ability-to-be-a-whole,” and thus initially brings into phenomenal view the *zeitlich* or “timely” structure of *Sorge*, “concern.” In Sembera’s own words, “The authentic structure of the conscience *must* be linked with the authentic structure of being unto death in order to characterise adequately the essential, authentic, and primeval ontological structure of Dasein” (191), that is, *forerunning decidedness*.

Perhaps the only interpretation in which the author slightly diminishes Heidegger’s (overall) thought is his second “nominal” definition of Being as “that by means of which we understand the difference between existence and non-existence.” (44) My perceived diminution does not lie in the definition itself; rather, in it an opportunity is missed at bridging Heidegger’s later *seinsgeschichtlich* or “ontohistorical” thinking (to which the author admits he is largely unsympathetic) by pointing out the connection between *das Nicht* of (Being’s) *non-existence* (what Heidegger calls “the horizontal schema of absence” in *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*) and Heidegger’s more radical, ontohistori-

cally *geschickt* experience of *Seinsvergessenheit*, “the forgottenness of Being.”

In sum, then, *Rephrasing Heidegger* systematically retranslates, reorders and reinterprets *Being and Time* in clear and unambiguous English for both the beginner and Heidegger specialist. In so doing it lays the groundwork for future Heidegger scholarship in the English-speaking philosophical world, perhaps even a new translation of *Being and Time*. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in engaging Heidegger as a truly systematic thinker.

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Kierkegaard's Instant: On Beginnings

David J. Kangas

Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007; 198 pages.

This important book directly interrogates the relationship between time and subjectivity in Kierkegaard's early works. Kangas also provides a fresh interpretation of Idealism, using Kierkegaard's conception of “the instant” in order to show that Kierkegaard's critique of Idealism actually takes the form of an appropriation. According to Kangas, Kierkegaard in effect reads Idealism backwards by focussing attention on the continual beginning that the instant is. The instant is the “beginning presupposed in any beginning.” (183) As such, it is what gives birth to both past and present.

Kierkegaard's Instant primarily treats the individual's existential condition as a relationship to time. Kangas argues that, for Kierkegaard, the individual has an anarchic relationship to time, since her beginning always precedes her. Whereas Greek and Hegelian thought obscures this truth, Kierkegaard exposes it. According to Kangas, the instant “is the pre-eminently real event through which self-consciousness is opened up, or first of all born, again and again.” (5) The book focusses on how in Kierkegaard's early works the instant is understood as a continual beginning that never becomes present. Kangas examines the instant as paradigmatic for time, asserting that for Kierkegaard time is groundless. The instant is the point of contact between the temporal and the eternal, yet