

## Preface to the Second Edition

The goal of this second edition is the same as that of the first: to provide a relatively complete collection of Heidegger's occasional writings in English translation and paraphrase from the young Heidegger's formative years to his breakthrough to his lifelong topic in the lecture course of *Kriegsnotsemester* (KNS) 1919 to the end of 1927, after the first major explication of that topic in his magnum opus, *Being and Time*, was published and subjected to its first public reception. All the works that precede KNS 1919, before Heidegger became *Heidegger*, give us a different Heidegger than the one we have come to know through his later works: the young seminarian writing apologetic essays in defense of the Catholic faith, the newly graduated university instructor dedicated to a "life's work" in medieval philosophy that would be "equiprimordially" systematic and historical. The one thread that endures out of these earliest works is that of phenomenology, first as a phenomenological logic in 1912 and then as a phenomenology of religious consciousness/life in 1917, which culminates in KNS 1919 with a definition of phenomenological philosophy as the pre-theoretical proto-science of originary experience. Other elements of Heidegger's distinctive thought soon emerge in his lecture courses and his more extracurricular occasional writings: the formal indication of *Existenz* as the sense of being of the "I am," of the *self* that I *myself* am in my unique existential situation; the hermeneutics *of* factic life (double genitive); the hermeneutic situation out of which each generation of philosophers comes to terms with its time; the temporal ontology of Dasein prefigured in statements of self-identification like "I myself *am* my time" and "We ourselves *are* history!" At this point, we can break off this progression of Heidegger's central insights and leave him to continue following his one guiding star, namely, the intimately inter-rogative Dasein-Sein relationship, in a lifetime of fundamental questioning.

This collection of vitae, reviews, journal articles, talks in a variety of concrete contexts and occasions, philosophically revealing letters, etc. thus constitute the occasional writings composed at various stages in the course of the life of a German academic. Some of the occasions (here usually sketched out in biographical detail) are quite mundane and routine, like the earliest reviews, and some more pressing, like the text written for academic promotion. As Heidegger polished his

retorical style and found his unique philosophical voice, he at once developed a stronger sense of the favorable occasion, the opportune moment, and even the urgent sense of an existential situation in which to frame his presentations. One would expect nothing less from a philosopher who dedicated his life to a focus on Da-Sein, being-here-and-now in its own temporally particular situation and historical context. Not to say that there were not some miscues. But then there is the Nietzschean meditation on the comprehensive situational meaning of the Great War in the 1915 article in a local newspaper. This sort of meditation-on-the-meaning (*Besinnung*) of world-historical events and trends would continue for the rest of his life, where the old Heidegger, for example, kept up with the latest developments of technology in the “atomic-cybernetic-space age,” on the basis of which he cultivated a prescient sense of the essence of modern technology as “synthetic com-posit(ion)ing” (*Ge-Stell*). Such an etymological translation (as opposed to “enframing”) immediately captures today’s technical realities of artifactual systems that network the entire globe into global positioning systems, air traffic control grids, world weather mapping, the CNN network, and the internetted World Wide Web, all of which are programmed by the composited wholes of the posits and non-positos of digital logic that was first devised by Leibniz.

The entire collection is situated deliberately at the interface of philosophy and biography, thought and life, in Heidegger’s terms, the existential-ontological and the existentiell-ontic. This is very much in keeping with Heidegger’s own sense of philosophizing, which begins in the primal act of each existing individual owning up radically to the finite existential and temporal situation in which they find themselves, and making it their very own. This act of existential self-appropriation, in accepting all that is irrevocably and inescapably given in the facticity of the “I am,” would include certain unalterable characters of a person’s situation that cannot be denied without “denying who I am,” which may well be “biographical” in nature. Heidegger illustrates this in his letter to Karl Löwith in August 1921 in which he declares that inescapably given in his concrete facticity is the fact that “I am a Christian theo-logian.” Behind this admission of self-identity lies an ontic background experience that finds itself deeply embedded in a facticity of Christian religiosity that came from a (here left unspoken and clearly ontic) boyhood spent in the still medieval rhythms of Messkirch as the son of the church sexton, and a former Catholic seminarian who had broken with the religion of his youth to become a non-denominational “free Christian” and was now on the verge of proclaiming the atheism of philosophy in close conjunction with the rigorous fideism of Protestant theology. Thus, Heidegger explains to his two prize students, Löwith and Oskar Becker, neither one of which, in view of their own respective facticities (concrete backgrounds), could be expected to accept his Christian side, where he is in fact coming from (*Herkunft*) and how he is translating “the inner obligations of my facticity” into necessary tasks and projects, like

the two courses in the phenomenology of religion that he had just completed. When each of them has come to terms with their respective facticities (concrete existential and biographical backgrounds), then they all are in a position, despite their differing philosophical approaches, to come together “in the one way in which humans can be genuinely together: in *Existenz*,” in a philosophical community of individualistic existentialists.

All translations and paraphrases have been thoroughly vetted especially for this second edition.

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